

Finch & C^o



A FINE WOODLANDS NATIVE AMERICAN OJIBWA BEADED BANDOLEER BAG

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GLASS BEADS, TRADECLOTH, CANVAS AND WOOL THREAD

CIRCA 1900 – 1910

SIZE : 110.5 CM LONG, 33 CM WIDE – 43½ INS LONG, 13 INS WIDE

LITERATURE

NATIVE AMERICAN GLASS BEADWORK BECAME LARGER AND GREW MORE EXAGGERATED IN ITS DESIGN ON CLOTHING, BAGS AND POUCHES AS THE 19TH CENTURY PROGRESSED. THE ENHANCEMENT OF FORMAL DRESS BECAME AN IMPORTANT MEANS OF MAINTAINING PRESENCE AND PRIDE. BY WEARING SUPERBLY CRAFTED AND DESIGNED CEREMONIAL REGALIA THE INDIAN PEOPLE RESPONDED ON THEIR OWN TERMS TO EUROPEAN – AMERICAN PRESSURE TO ADOPT WHITE DRESS.

FOR A LONG TIME IT HAS BEEN BELIEVED THAT ALL NATIVE AMERICAN FLORAL IMAGERY WAS EUROPEAN IN ORIGIN AND LACKED SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE. TRADITIONAL GEOMETRIC PATTERNS, ALTHOUGH CLEARLY ABSTRACTED FROM PLANT AND ANIMAL FORMS WERE THOUGHT TO MIRROR INTACT SPIRITUAL VALUES WHILST THE ADOPTION OF EUROPEAN INFLUENCED FLORAL FORMS REFLECTED INCREASING CULTURAL TRAUMA AND IMPOVERISHMENT. THIS BELIEF IS NOW BEING CHALLENGED, AND IT IS SAID THAT THE NATIVE FLORAL IMAGERY WAS DERIVED FROM DIRECT OBSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRADITIONAL BELIEF IN THE INHERENT SPIRITUALITY OF ALL THINGS IN NATURE. THUS, THE NATIVE ARTISANS DREW ON A LONG TRADITION OF TRANSFORMING THIS SPIRITUAL POWER, OFTEN THROUGH PERSONAL DREAM VISIONS, TO CLOTHING AND ORNAMENT, AND AT THE SAME TIME CODIFYING SACRED TRIBAL BELIEFS THAT WERE BEING FORCED TO GO UNDERGROUND.

