Finch & Co



A RARE GERMAN TURNED RHINOCEROS HORN SMALL STEMMED CUP

A RARE GERMAN TURNED RHINOCEROS HORN SMALL STEMMED CUP
RHINOCEROS HORN AND BRASS INLAY
LATE 17TH CENTURY
SIZE: 13 CM HIGH, 5 CM DIA. – 5 INS HIGH, 2 INS DIA.

LITERATURE

'IF THE DRINK IS HOT AND POISON IS PRESENT, IT MAKES IT BUBBLE IN THE VESSEL THAT CONTAINS IT. IF THE POISON IS COLD IT MAKES A SMOKE Â€¦.'
SO WROTE HILDEGARD OF BINGEN IN THE 12TH CENTURY.
THE EMPEROR RUDOLF II (1552 – 1612) OWNED A TOTAL OF 13 RHINOCEROS HORN VESSELS IN HIS GREAT COURTLY KUNSTKAMMER AND FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT THEY HAD THE POWER TO DETECT THE PRESENCE OF POISON. EVEN AS LATE AS 1763 AN ENGLISH DOCTOR CALLED BROOKES WROTE 'WHEN THE WINE IS POURED THEREIN IT WILL RISE, FERMENT AND SEEM TO BOIL; BUT WHEN MIXED WITH POISON IT CLEAVES IN TWO'.