

Finch & C^o



A RARE AND UNUSUAL SOUTH AFRICAN NORTH NGUNI CARVED WOOD DANCE AND SNUFF STAFF
A RARE AND UNUSUAL SOUTH AFRICAN NORTH NGUNI CARVED WOOD DANCE AND SNUFF STAFF
IN THE FORM OF A ZULU MAN WITH A HEAD-RING. THE STOPPER NOW MISSING
LATE 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 73CM LONG – 28¾ INS LONG

LITERATURE

USED AT CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS THIS PRESTIGE DANCE STAFF WAS ALSO USED FOR THE TAKING OF SNUFF WHICH WAS A FORMAL PART OF MANY MAJOR FEASTS AND WAS BELIEVED TO BE ENJOYED EQUALLY BY THE LIVING AND THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD. GREAT SYMBOLIC POWER AND VALUE WAS OFTEN ATTACHED TO THESE ZULU STAFFS, AS IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THEY HAD A CAPACITY TO CONTAIN AN ANCESTRAL PRESENCE AT THE SAME TIME AS BEING INTIMATELY BOUND UP WITH THE IDENTITY OF THE MAN TO WHOM IT BELONGED. HEAD-RINGS WERE FIRST USED IN THE ZULU KINGDOM AND WERE MADE FROM CIRCULAR TUBES OF RESIN SEWN INTO THE HAIR. THEY WERE A SIGN OF MARRIAGE AND OVER TIME BECAME AN ELABORATE ART FORM ASSOCIATED WITH THE GENERAL IDEA OF WISDOM, MATURITY AND THEREFORE STATUS.