

Finch & C^o



AN AFRICAN SOUTH EASTERN CONGO SONGYE MINIATURE IVORY STATUETTE OF A MAN
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EARLY 20TH CENTURY
SIZE: 5CM HIGH – 2 INS HIGH

LITERATURE

THE SONGYE CARVE MINIATURE MASKS, AND MORE RARELY FULL FIGURES, IN ELEPHANT IVORY AND ALSO IN THE SOFT THIGHBONES OF HIPPOPOTAMI. SCULPTORS PREFER ELEPHANT IVORY BECAUSE OF ITS SMOOTH, COOL TEXTURE AND BECAUSE WHEN CARVED CORRECTLY, IT DOES NOT CRACK WITH AGE. ALTHOUGH WESTERN EUROPEAN COLLECTORS PRIZE A GOLDEN PATINA THE SONGYE WOULD WORK TO PRESERVE THE ORIGINAL WHITE OF THE IVORY FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. THEY WOULD SCRUB THE AMULETS FROM TIME TO TIME WITH SAND TO KEEP THE IVORY FROM DARKENING FROM THE SMOKE OF HOUSE FIRES.