Finch & Co



ANCIENT AFRICAN SOUTHEAST CONGO SONGYE CARVED IVORY HUNTING HORN OR OLIPHANT

AN ANCIENT AFRICAN SOUTHEAST CONGO SONGYE CARVED IVORY HUNTING HORN OR OLIPHANT OF ABSTRACT FORM
FINE OLD SMOOTH SILKY DARK BROWN / ORANGE PATINA
18TH – EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 39CM LONG, 6CM DIA. (MAX) 15¼ INS LONG, 2¼ INS DIA. (MAX)

LITERATURE

OFTEN KNOWN AS SIDE BLOWN TRUMPETS, OLIPHANT'S ARE AMONGST THE MOST WIDESPREAD WORKED IVORY OBJECTS IN AFRICA. THE BLOW-HOLE IS CARVED ON THE CONCAVE SIDE OF THE TUSK AND THE TONE HOLE PLACED AT THE TIP WHERE IT CAN BE MANIPULATED BY THE THUMB. THE NATURAL SHAPE OF THIS EXAMPLE HAS BEEN SUBTLY MODIFIED TO INCORPORATE THE BELT LOOPHOLE AS THE EYE OF AN ABSTRACT FLYING BIRD. THESE TRUMPETS WERE USED BY THE SONGYE IN THE DEEP FOREST AS HUNTING HORNS, OFTEN WHEN HUNTING AS A GROUP WITH DOGS. THEY WERE ALSO USED AS 'SIGNALLING DEVICES' AND AS A DIRECTIONAL AID FOR THE DISPERSED HUNTERS.