Finch & Co



GERMAN TURNED BLOND RHINOCEROS HORN CUP AND COVER

A RARE LARGE GERMAN TURNED BLOND RHINOCEROS HORN CUP AND COVER
RAISED ON AN INTEGRAL PEDESTAL FOOT
SMOOTH SILKY PATINA, TWO SMALL AGE CRACKS TO THE NECK
LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY
Â€¨SIZE: 20CM HIGH 11.5CM DIA. - 8 INS HIGH, 4½ INS DIA.

LITERATURE

RHINOCEROS HORN WAS HELD IN UNIVERSALLY HIGH REGARD BECAUSE OF THE APOTROPAIC PROPERTIES IT WAS THOUGHT TO POSSESS. DESIRED ACROSS EUROPE BY PRINCELY COURT COLLECTORS IT BECAME LITERALLY WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD. IN 1714 MICHAEL BERNHARD VALENTINI WROTE IN HIS 'MUSEUM MUSEORUM': 'Â€¦.THE POWERS OF THIS HORN ARE QUITE EQUAL TO THOSE OF THE UNICORN....BEAKERS AND BOWLS ARE TURNED FROM IT....WITH WHICH SOME WHEN THEY DRINK FROM THEM, ABOVE ALL, SEEK TO SAFEGUARD THEMSELVES FROM POISON.'
THE NEWLY INVENTED ART OF VIRTUOSITY TURNING IN IVORY, RHINOCEROS HORN AND EXOTIC WOODS WAS REGARDED IN THE RENAISSANCE AS A FORM OF ADVANCED MECHANICAL TECHNOLOGY ADMIRABLY SUITED AS A PASTIME FOR PRINCES. IN 1578 THE ARTIST GEORG WECKER BECAME DRESDEN'S 'COURT TURNER FOR LIFE' TO THE ELECTOR AUGUSTUS OF SAXONY.