Finch & Co



BERING SEA INUIT WALRUS IVORY LABRET 'TUUTAT'

A BERING SEA INUIT WALRUS IVORY LABRET 'TUUTAT' CARVED IN THE FORM OF THE TAIL OF A BOWHEAD WHALE
OLD SMOOTH CREAMY PATINA
19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 3.5CM LONG, 3CM WIDE - 1½ INS LONG, 1¼ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

MEN'S LABRET STYLES VARY FROM REGION TO REGION, BUT OFTEN IN AREAS WHERE WHALING WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE COMMUNITY LABRETS WERE CARVED INTO THE FORM OF A WHALE DIVING AND WORN WITH THE TAIL EXPOSED. MEN REMOVE LARGE LABRETS FROM THEIR CHEEKS WHEN THEY TRAVEL LONG DISTANCES IN COLD WEATHER TO AVOID FROSTBITE CONDUCTED THROUGH THE PLUG. THEY REINSERT THE LABRETS TO APPEAR AS WELL DRESSED GUESTS WHEN THEY RETURN AND ENTER THE 'QASGIQ'.