

# *Finch & C<sup>o</sup>*



## **INDIAN MUGHAL RHINOCEROS HORN RITUAL LIBATION CUP**

AN INDIAN MUGHAL RHINOCEROS HORN RITUAL LIBATION CUP FINELY CARVED WITH ACANTHUS LEAF MOTIFS ON A  
RAISED DIAMOND SHAPED BASE

17TH CENTURY

Â€'SIZE: 2.5CM HIGH, 10CM LONG, 5CM WIDE - 1 INS HIGH, 4 INS LONG, 2 INS WIDE

## **LITERATURE**

CF: A MUGHAL 18TH CENTURY JADE COVERED JAR DECORATED WITH ACANTHUS LEAVES, IN THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS; 68.8.129 A/B

IN 1525-6 THE EMPEROR BARBUR, FOUNDER OF THE MUGHAL DYNASTY OF NORTH INDIA, WROTE IN HIS DIARY THAT HE  
HAD ACQUIRED A BOAT SHAPED DRINKING CUP MADE FROM THE HORN OF A RHINOCEROS. THIS WAS REPUTEDLY  
PURCHASED OVER 200 YEARS LATER BY SIR HANS SLOANE (1660-1753) WHOSE VAST COLLECTION WENT ON TO FORM  
THE BASIS OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

RHINOCEROS HORN WAS PRIZED IN THE MIDDLE AND FAR EAST FOR ITS BELIEVED PROPERTIES AS AN ANTIDOTE TO  
BOTH POISON AND MELANCHOLY, AS WELL AS FOR ITS RARITY AND BEAUTY. THE ACANTHUS LEAF AS A DECORATIVE  
MOTIF WAS INTRODUCED INTO INDIAN ART FROM THE GRECO-ROMAN WEST AND DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD IT ONCE  
AGAIN BECAME POPULAR AS IMPORTED EXAMPLES OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART DISPLAYING SCROLLING ACANTHUS  
LEAVES WERE HIGHLY PRIZED AND ADMIRER AT THE MUGHAL COURT.