Finch & Co



ANCIENT PHOENICIAN IVORY FIGURE OF A NUDE

A RARE ANCIENT PHOENICIAN IVORY FIGURE OF A NUDE FEMALE PROBABLY A MIRROR HANDLE
8TH - 7TH CENTURY BC
SIZE: 8CM HIGH, 3CM WIDE, 2CM DEEP - 3 INS HIGH, 1¼ WIDE, ¾ INS DEEP
15CM HIGH - 6 INS HIGH (WITH STAND)

LITERATURE

MIRROR'S OCCUR IN ANCIENT EGYPT FROM AT LEAST AS EARLY AS THE OLD KINGDOM. CONSISTING OF A FLAT POLISHED DISC, MIRRORS WERE ENDOWED WITH GREAT MAGICAL POTENTIAL BECAUSE OF THEIR POWER TO HOLD THE USER'S IMAGE. THIS POWER IS EMBODIED IN THE EGYPTIAN WORD FOR MIRROR 'ANKH' WHICH IS ALSO THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN WORD FOR 'LIFE'. SYMBOLISING THE SUN, THE MIRROR DISC WAS MADE OF POLISHED BRONZE, SILVER OR COPPER WITH A HANDLE IN ALABASTER, IVORY, WOOD, BRONZE OR BONE. NAKED WOMEN WERE OFTEN USED AS DECORATIVE ELEMENTS ON TOILET OBJECTS, PARTICULARLY DURING THE REIGN OF AMENHOTEP III (1390-1352 B.C), AND WERE RELATED TO THE IMAGE OF THE GODDESS HATHOR, WHOSE ASSOCIATION WITH PHYSICAL BEAUTY AND PROCREATION RENDERED HER AN IDEAL ORNAMENT FOR MIRROR HANDLES.