Finch & Co

ANTIQUE SPECIMEN NARWHAL TUSK

AN ANTIQUE SPECIMEN NARWHAL TUSK WITH DEEP TWIST 'MONODON MONOCEROS'

(COLLECTION NUMBER: 329)

SUPERB CREAMY COLOUR AND PATINA WITH FINE SPIRAL TWIST, TIP REDUCED, OLD HOLE (FOR HANGING)

18TH - EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 204CM LONG, 5.5CM DIA. - 80¼ INS LONG, 2¼ INS DIA.

CITES ARTICLE 10 AVAILABLE

LITERATURE

IT IS NO LONGER BELIEVED THAT 'TUSKING', THE RUBBING OF TUSKS WITH OTHER MALE NARWHAL, IS A RITUALISED FORM OF BATTLE, BUT MORE LIKE THE BRUSHING OF ONE'S TEETH. IT IS A WAY FOR THEM TO REMOVE THE ENCRUSTATION SO THAT THEIR TUSKS FUNCTION MORE EFFECTIVELY AS SENSORS. ON THE TUSK'S SURFACE THERE EXISTS MILLIONS OF TUBULES THAT LEAD DOWN THROUGH A MAZE LIKE COATING TO INNER NERVES AND PULP THAT IS UNIQUELY SENSITIVE TO SUBTLE CHANGES IN TEMPERATURE AND AIR PRESSURE. WHEN THE NARWHAL HOLD THEIR TUSKS HIGH INTO THE AIR THEY ARE USING THEM AS A FORM OF WEATHER STATION. THIS ENABLES THEM TO DETECT THE FATAL FREEZING OF OPEN ICE CHANNELS AND THE SUDDEN ARRIVAL OF COLD AIR FRONTS. THUS THE MAGICAL NARWHAL IS PERFECTLY EQUIPPED FOR SURVIVAL IN THE ARCTIC SEAS.