Finch & Co



A FINE VEINED MARBLE SCULPTURE OF AN ELEPHANT, GERMAN OR FLEMISH

A FINE VEINED MARBLE SCULPTURE OF AN ELEPHANT, GERMAN OR FLEMISH
SECOND HALF OF 17TH CENTURY
SIZE : 14 CM HIGH, 19 CM WIDE, 9 CM DEEP – 5½ INS HIGH, 7½ INS WIDE, 3½ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

IN 1637 REMBRANDT MADE A DRAWING IN BLACK CHALK OF AN ELEPHANT, THAT IS NOW IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON, TOGETHER WITH TWO OTHERS OF ELEPHANTS THAT NOW RESIDE IN THE ALBERTINA, VIENNA. A YEAR LATER HE INCORPORATED THE RESULTS OF HIS STUDY INTO THE BACKGROUND OF HIS ETCHING ADAM AND EVE.
THIS MARBLE SCULPTURE WAS PROBABLY INSPIRED BY REMBRANDT'S DRAWING AS THE ELEPHANT IS SHOWN IN A SIMILAR STANCE AND ARRANGEMENT. IN 17TH CENTURY NORTHERN EUROPE ELEPHANTS WERE STILL VERY MUCH A CURIOSITY, A MIRACLE OF NATURE, AS ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF TRAVELLERS, TRADERS AND EXPLORERS HAD EVER REALLY SEEN ONE. SO CARVINGS AND SCULPTURES OF EXOTIC ANIMALS WERE HIGHLY DESIRABLE AND EAGERLY COLLECTED FOR PRIVATE 'WUNDERKAMMER'.