



Inv. no. 1/1974

POWDER HORN, CARVED IVORY

INDIA; 17TH CENTURY

L: 24.5 CM

Muslim armies had introduced firearms in the Indian subcontinent in around 1400, and at the beginning of the 16th century, firearms had become so common that they brought about great changes in the way the Indians made war and hunted. This powder horn held the primer that ignited the gunpowder in a musket; the correct amount was released through the little holes at the end.

The powder horn is decorated with animal motifs associated with the hunt. It belongs to a group that features many different types of animals that either chase one another or are imaginatively placed in different layers, exploiting the shape of the ivory to the maximum for the decoration. It is possible that the two ends were not originally part of the same horn.

As early as the 17th century, several of these “exotic” horns had found their way to European collections, including the Royal Danish Kunstkammer in Copenhagen.

Published in:

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 287;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Fabelvæsner fra Islams Verden*, Davids Samling,

København 1991, cat.no. 82;
Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 414;
Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Fighting, Hunting, Impressing. Arms and Armour from the Islamic World 1500-1850*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2021, cat.no. 108;