

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Carved Cup

South German

Date mid 17th century

Medium Rhinoceros horn

Dimensions H.: 8 3/4 in. (22.2 cm); diam.: 4 13/16 in. (12.2 cm)

Credit Line Gift of Alexis Gregory, 2021

Accession Number 2021.18.02

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 14, Enamels Room

Commentary Carved cups made from exotic materials were highly sought after during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the time of this cup's making, rhinoceros and "unicorn" horns—likely narwhal tusks—were believed to be antidotes to poison. This cup depicts a procession in which the main figure holds a staff and wears a tunic, crown, and necklaces. An attendant is fanning him, and several figures are holding or playing musical instruments, while others carry a dish and a ewer for what seems to be a banquet. The bottom part of the body of the cup is decorated with garlands of fruit, and the foot of the cup depicts several men hunting an elephant and a rhinoceros.

Collection History Sale, Sotheby's, London, December 12, 1985 (lot 290); Antony Embden, Paris; purchased by Alexis Gregory, Paris, date unknown; Gift to The Frick Collection, 2021