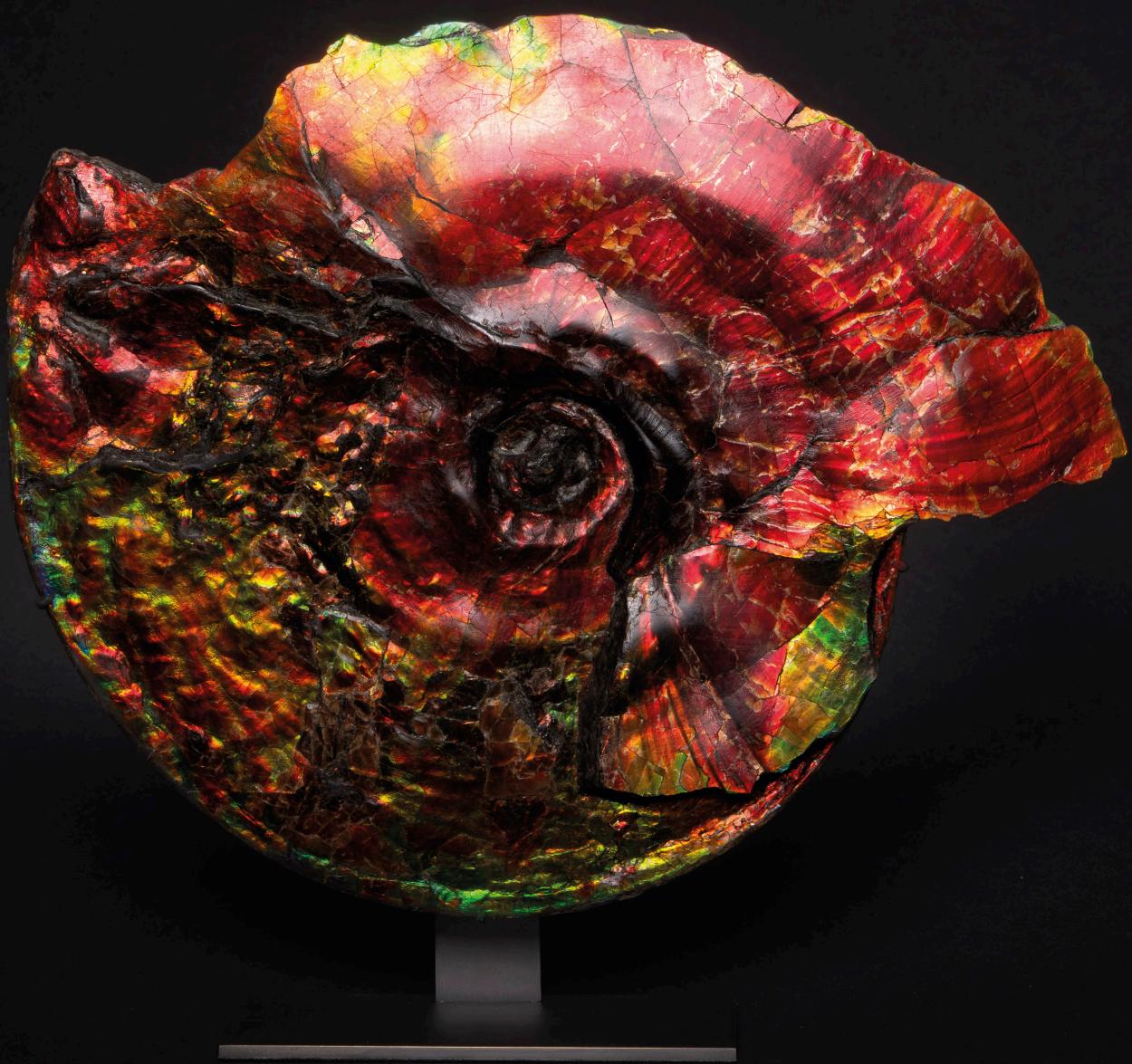


ART ANCIENT



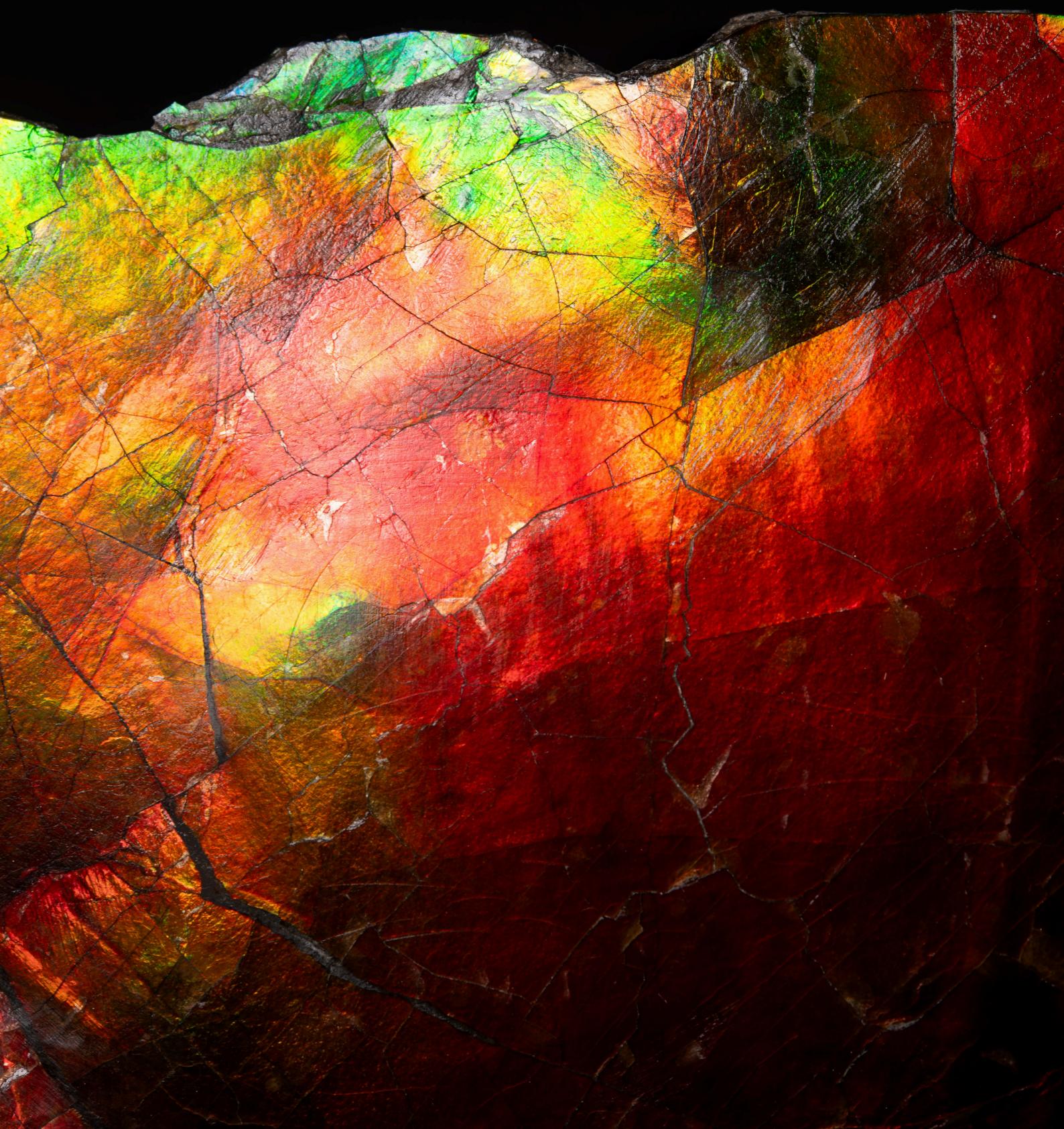
## IRIDESCENT AMMONITE FOSSIL

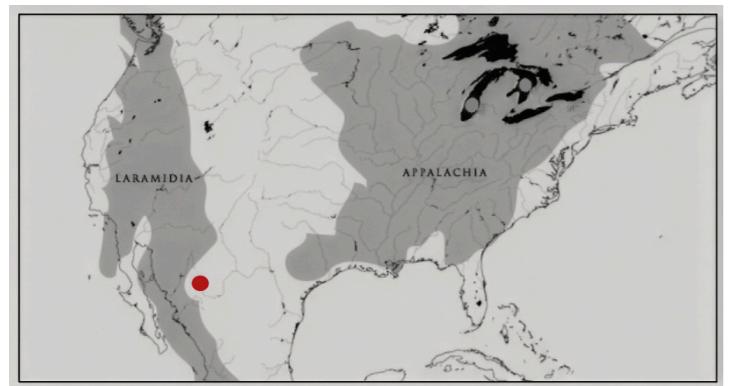
75 million years old  
Fossilised shell  
Diameter: 42 cm

## PROVENANCE

Discovered in the Blood Reserve, Alberta, Canada, and legally exported with Canadian Cultural Property Export permit

A magnificent example of one of the most spectacular fossil types known. Many of the extraordinary ammonites recovered from the Bearpaw Formation suffer from compression and losses, requiring reconstruction from multiple individuals. This specimen is notable for its original condition and intense, unenhanced rainbow iridescence.





### Iridescent Gemstone

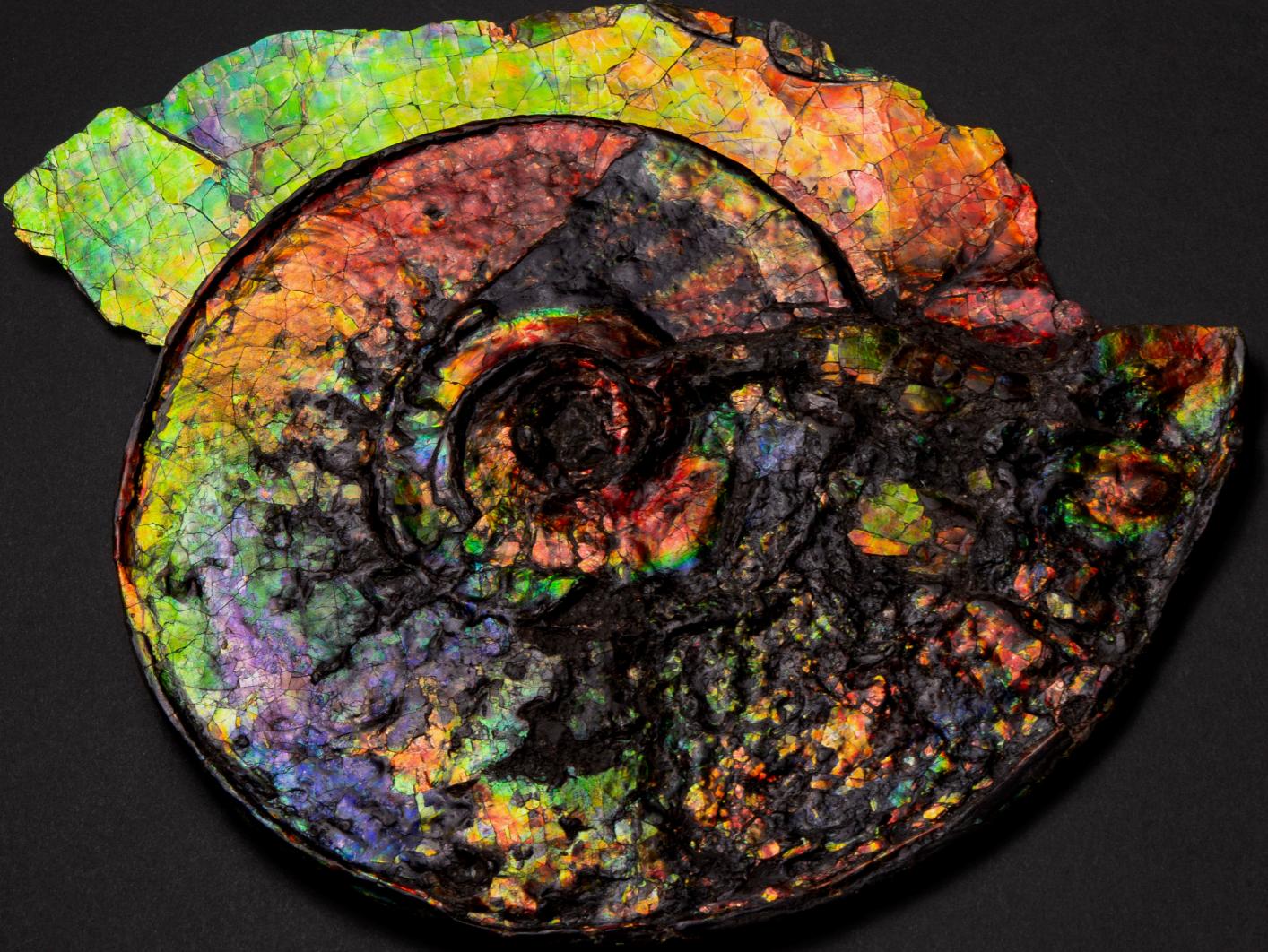
The present piece is a magnificent example of one of the most spectacular fossils. It is an intensely vibrant ammonite, *Placenticeras costatum*, from the Bearpaw formation, Alberta, Canada, dating to the late Cretaceous period, around 75 million years before present. The surface of this long extinct marine creature has transformed over millennia into a dazzling, iridescent gemstone, its colours shifting in the light from vivid reds to emerald greens, to flickers of orange and gold, purples and brilliant blues. This effect is a natural result of the fossilisation process, a unique phenomenon only found on ammonites recovered from this location.

The ammonite, an extinct branch of the mollusc family, related to the modern octopus, takes its name from an ancient belief, recorded by Pliny the Elder, that their fossilised remains were in fact the horns of the ram-horned Egyptian god Ammon, which would bring good fortune to the owner. Most fossils of this kind are heavily restored or pastiches, and their colour is often artificially enhanced with varnishes. This example is completely preserved, with its unrestored original surface - a superb piece of natural history. Remarkably, it is in fact composed of two ammonite shells. This is an entirely natural and rare occurrence - the result of a unique fossilisation event in which both shells mineralised together in situ.

**1** Map detailing the location of the Bearpaw Formation.

**2** The discovery of ammonite gemstone in the Bearpaw Formation.





'The Horn of Ammon, which is among the most sacred stones of Ethiopia, has a golden yellow colour and is shaped like the ram's horn. The stone is guaranteed to ensure without fail dreams that will come true..'

Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, XXXVII.