



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE1021)

Fri, 29th Oct 2021

Lot 36

Starting price: €1250

Estimate: €2500

¥ A RARE AND LARGE IVORY NETSUKE OF A COW-HORSE (USHI-UMA)

Unsigned

Japan, 18th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

Depicting a bulky model of a cow-horse (ushi-uma) with its legs drawn in for compactness, the head slightly lowered, its mane finely carved with tresses of hair finely flowing down its back. Large himotoshi underneath. The ivory bearing a gorgeous honey patina, polished from generations of handling and smooth to the touch, making it a true tactile pleasure in the hand.

LENGTH 7.5 cm

Condition: Good condition, gorgeous patina, some old and smoothed-out chips, few nerve channel plugs and natural age cracks.

Provenance: The Gabor Wilhelm Collection, Paris.

This curious animal, known as the ushi-uma, is said to be a true horse but with a superficial resemblance to a cow, and to live on Tanegashima island, off Kagoshima.

Literature comparison:

For a similar netsuke by Okatomo of an ushi-uma see Bushell, Raymond (1975) Netsuke Familiar & Unfamiliar, p. 177, no. 479.