



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE1021)

Fri, 29th Oct 2021

Lot 8

Starting price: €750

Estimate: €1500

A RARE WOOD NETSUKE OF A SKELETON

Unsigned

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

Boldly carved standing with the knees slightly bent, the skeleton with its hands clasped in front of the chest, the head with deep cavernous eyeholes and a row of teeth. The spine, ribs, and knees are detailed with incision work. Two large himotoshi to the back.

HEIGHT 9.2 cm

Condition: Very good condition with minor surface wear as well as simulated wear. Fine, dark patina. The faintly incised signature to the back of one leg added later.

Provenance: Ex-collection Richard R. Silverman. Richard R. Silverman (1932-2019) was a renowned Asian art collector with one of the largest private collections of netsuke outside of Japan. He lived in Tokyo between 1964 and 1979 and began to collect netsuke there in 1968. Since the 1970s, he wrote and lectured about netsuke and was an Asian art consultant for Christie's, Sotheby's, and Bonhams. His gift of 226 ceramic netsuke to the Toledo Museum of Art constitutes perhaps the largest public collection of these miniature clay sculptures in the world. After moving to California, Silverman became a member of the Far Eastern Art Council at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1984. In 1993, he joined LACMA's Executive Board. He served on the board of directors for the International Society of Appraisers from 1986 to 1994 and served nine years as chair for the City of West Hollywood Fine Arts Commission. Richard Silverman was posthumously awarded the Order of the Rising Sun for his decades-long promotion of Japanese culture.

Auction comparison:

A related netsuke of a standing skeleton, dated to the 18th century, was sold at Lempertz, Netsuke aus der Sammlung Albert Brockhaus, 27 June 2020, Cologne, lot 586 (**sold for 8,125 EUR**).