



## Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE1021)

Fri, 29th Oct 2021

### Lot 72

**Starting price:** €1500

**Estimate:** €3000

#### Y KOSHU: A SUPERB STAINED WALRUS IVORY NETSUKE OF AN AKA NAMAKO (RED SEA CUCUMBER)

By Koshu, signed Koshu 公州

Japan, Osaka, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Edo period (1615-1868)

Masterfully stained and carved as a spiny red sea cucumber (aka namako), a much-loved delicacy in Japan. An ivory chestnut is fitted on top, the inside with an eyelet for the cord attachment. The namako and chestnut are also a symbol for the new year. The rough texture is achieved with incredible realism, with distinctive high pimples on the upper side and stippling beneath. Signed within a polished reserve KOSHU – a very rare artist of the Osaka school and pupil of Ohara Mitsuhiro. Similar examples are known by Ohara Mitsuhiro and Doraku (see literature and auction comparisons).

LENGTH 5.3 cm

Condition: Excellent condition.

Provenance: French private collection.

#### Literature comparison:

Another netsuke by this rare artist, showing his superior skill in staining, is in the British Museum, accession no. 1930,1217.60. This subject of a fly on octopus arm was also treated by Mitsuhiro. For two similar netsuke of a namako and chestnut by Ohara Mitsuhiro see Davey, Neil K. (1974) *Netsuke: A comprehensive study based on the M.T. Hindson Collection*, pp. 45-46, nos. 99-100 (the latter being also carved from walrus ivory).

#### Auction comparison:

For a similar netsuke in ebony by Doraku see Var Encheres, *Art d'Asie*, 10 April 2021, Paris, lot 53 (**sold for 3,500 EUR**).