



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE1021)

Fri, 29th Oct 2021

Lot 93

Starting price: €750

Estimate: €1500

MASAYOSHI: A WOOD NETSUKES OF THE OIL THIEF

By Masayoshi, signed Masayoshi 正慶

Japan, Nagoya, 19th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

Well carved as the oil thief Abura Bozu standing and leaning forward as he holds his broken geta in one hand, trying to mend it, his eyes inlaid in dark horn. Two symmetrical himotoshi to the back, above the signature MASAYOSHI.

HEIGHT 5 cm

Condition: Excellent condition with minor wear.

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.

Literature comparison:

A closely related netsuke by Masayoshi, described as a "happy man putting on his geta", is illustrated in Lazarnick, George (1981) *Netsuke & Inro Artists, and How to Read Their Signatures*, vol. 1, p. 743.