



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE1021)

Fri, 29th Oct 2021

Lot 216

Starting price: €2500

Estimate: €5000

MASATOSHI: A RARE STAG ANTLER NETSUKE OF AN EIGHT-ARMED DEVILFISH (TAKOHACHI)

By Nakamura Tokisada (Masatoshi) (1915-2001), signed Masatoshi 雅俊 to 刀
Japan, Tokyo, April 1974

Published: Bushell, Raymond (1992) *The Art of Netsuke Carving by Masatoshi as told to Raymond Bushell*, no. 317.

Finely carved from stag antler of 'incense smoke' color, depicting a bakemono octopus (takohachi) wearing a headband and a short coat shredded into eight strips, representing the eight arms of the devilfish. The mythical being has an octopus-shaped head, large pointed ears, and it holds its forked tongue (a symbol for double-dealing) in one of its three-clawed hands. The large protruding eyes are looking in opposite directions, resulting in an amusingly grotesque expression, the pupils are inlaid in black coral. One neatly pierced himotoshi through the back, the other hidden underneath the coat. Signed MASATOSHI to [carved by Masatoshi] and inscribed takohachi.

HEIGHT 4.5 cm

Condition: Excellent condition.

Provenance: Ex-collection Richard R. Silverman, purchased from Raymond Bushell. 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.