



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE1021)

Fri, 29th Oct 2021

Lot 78

Starting price: €4000

Estimate: €8000

MASAYOSHI: A WOOD OKIMONO NETSUKE OF TWO SUMO WRESTLERS

By Unhodo Masayoshi, signed Masayoshi 正慶
Japan, Osaka, late 19th century

Finely carved as two sumo wrestlers locked in combat, the one in the front executing the kawazu gaku technique (one leg entanglement drop), as he coils his leg around his opponent's, effectively using his weight to topple him. Both with neatly detailed faces showing intense, strained expressions. Several natural himotoshi between the two wrestlers' bodies. Signed MASAYOSHI to one of the wrestlers' loincloths. Natural himotoshi.

HEIGHT 7.2 cm

Condition: Good condition with minor wear. Two feet with repairs.

Provenance: British private collection, acquired at Bonhams, 13 May 2021, London, lot 18 (**sold for 4,845 GBP**).

The two wrestlers practice the kawazu throw, so named after the famous wrestler Kawazu no Saburo Sukeyasu. When the latter was pulled up by his opponent Matano Goro Kunihisa (Kagehisa) by the loincloth, Sukeyasu prevented the hip swing by bringing down his opponent with his leg. In the present netsuke, too, it appears as if the wrestler in the back will be victorious, but the leg entanglement drop is already in process and in a matter of mere seconds he will be lying on the ground, defeated.

Literature comparison:

Compare a closely related netsuke by Masayoshi in the collection of the Linden Museum, inventory number OA 18914.