



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0422)

22nd Apr, 2022

Viewing:

You may view objects in this auction in our gallery from 19 April to 22 April 2022. We are open Monday to Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM CET, as well as by appointment. On the day of the sale, the viewing will be open until 1 PM CET.

Lot 204

Starting price: €1500

Estimate: €3000

MASACHIKA: A FINE WOOD NETSUKE OF MONKEY WITH YOUNG RIDING A HYOTAN

By Masachika, signed Masachika 正親
Japan, second half of 19th century

The finely carved wood netsuke depicting a large monkey wearing a sleeveless jacket adorned with scrolling patterns, the fur minutely incised, and the large eyes double-inlaid with slightly displaced pupils resulting in an amusingly impish expression. The simian is shown riding on a large hyotan (a double gourd known for its magical properties), pulling on its furcated stem as if it were the reins of a horse. A smaller monkey is carved below the adult, holding on to one of the gnarled stems. Signed within a stained bone tablet MASACHIKA. Natural himotoshi.

The motif of a horse emerging from a hyotan is well-documented and signifies an unlikely event. Furthermore, the motif of a monkey riding a horse means to have a good career.

According to the scholar F. M. Jonas, Masachika was the adopted son and successor of Kaigyokusai Masatsugu and the father of Kaigyokudo Masateru.

HEIGHT 4.8 cm

Condition: Very good condition with minor associated surface wear. A small split through the stem of the gourd.

Provenance: US private collection. With old collection or museum number written in white underneath: "W8LL".

Auction comparison:

A similar wood netsuke of a monkey and gourd by Masachika, formerly in the Tomkinson collection, was sold at Bonhams, Fine Japanese Art, 15 May 2014, London, lot 7 (**sold for 3,750 GBP**).