



## Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0422)

Fri, 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 218

**Starting price:** €2000

**Estimate:** €4000

### ¥ CHIKUYOSAI TOMOCHIKA: A LARGE IVORY NETSUKE OF EGUCHI NO KIMI AS FUGEN BOSATSU

By Chikuyosai Tomochika, signed Chikuyosai Tomochika □□ □□□ with kakihan

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

The courtesan reading a long calligraphic scroll held with both hands, her long hair tied at the back and falling over her loose robe, finely incised with a foliate design, as she sits on the recumbent elephant visibly delighted by her presence, smiling benevolently. Her facial features are finely carved with pronounced feminine features showing her beauty, while at the same time radiating tranquility and Buddhist compassion. The underside with two asymmetrical himotoshi and the signature CHIKUYOSAI TOMOCHIKA with a kakihan.

LENGTH 7.2 cm

Condition: Excellent condition with minor wear.

**Provenance:** French private collection. The underside with old inventory number, '123'.

According to legend, Kimi was a courtesan in the village of Eguchi and was so devoted to Buddhist scripture that she became the incarnation of Fugen Bosatsu (Bodhisattva Samantabhadra). The imagery satirizes the Buddhist bodhisattva Fugen (Samantabhadra), whose mount is the elephant, by replacing the deity with a beautifully coiffed modern courtesan. Such a visual pun (mitate) was an artistic trope, popular in the Edo period.

### Auction comparison:

Compare a closely related ivory netsuke of Eguchi no Kimi by Tomochika, 7.7 cm wide, also dated mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, with the same signature and kakihan, at Lempertz, The Papp Collection of Netsuke, 16 June 2018, Cologne, lot 1057 (**sold for 8,060 EUR**).

**Trade Certificate: The trade certificate for the sale of this lot within the EU has been granted (permit number AT 22-B-0106).**