



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 273

Starting price: €1000

Estimate: €2000

‡ A WALRUS IVORY SEAL NETSUKE OF A SHISHI WITH MOKUGYO, ATTRIBUTED TO RENSAI

Attributed to Rensai, unsigned

Japan, Tokyo, Asakusa District, late 19th century

The shishi seated on its rear haunches atop an oval base, its front paws resting on a mokugyo, the beast's curled mane and bushy tail finely incised and heightened with sumi, its spine neatly articulated, the floppy ears and fierce eyes well carved, the base with a central himotoshi, the seal face reading Mugaku □□, which means "no learning", a phrase often used by Zen priests or Japanese literati with interest in Chinese studies.

LENGTH 3.7 cm

Condition: Very good condition with some surface wear, natural imperfections to the material, traces of use.

Provenance: Christie's, Fine Japanese Works of Art, 19 November 1986, London, lot 414 (**sold for 770 GBP, approx. 2,498 GBP today after inflation**). The Gabor Wilhelm Collection, Paris.

Literature comparison:

Compare three closely related netsuke depicting shishi, two attributed to Rensai, the third signed Rensai, illustrated in Sydney L. Moss Ltd. (2016) *Kokusai the Genius: and Stag-antler Carving in Japan*, vol. III, p. 16-19, nos. 331 and 332, and p. 22-23, no. 336.