



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 280

Starting price: €1500

Estimate: €3000

A RARE BONE MASK NETSUKE OF OKAME

Signed illegibly

Japan, Meiji period (1868-1912)

Published:

Bushell, Raymond (1975) *Netsuke Familiar & Unfamiliar*, New York/Tokyo, p. 145, no. 300.

Mikimoto (1979) *Netsuke, An Unknown Japanese Art*, Raymond Bushell Collection, Tokyo, p. 71, no. 387.

Bushell, Raymond (1985) *Netsuke Masks*, pl. 242.

Netsuke Kenkyukai (1985) Vol. 5, no. 3, p. 18.

Eskenazi (1998) *Japanese Netsuke, Ojime and Inro from a Private European Collection*, p. 52-53, no. 50.

Exhibited: *Netsuke: An Exhibition of Netsuke from the Raymond and Frances Bushell Collection*, Mikimoto Hall, Tokyo, 1-17 September 1979, no. 387.

Well carved with characteristic plump cheeks, lively wide eyes, and a broad nose, the tiny mouth agape in a cheerful smile showing teeth, the parted hair neatly incised and heightened with sumi. The back with a single himotoshi and a faint illegible signature.

HEIGHT 5.1 cm

Condition: Good condition with some surface wear.

Provenance: Ex-collection Raymond Bushell. Christie's, *The Raymond and Frances Bushell Collection of Netsuke, Part IV*, 23 April 1991, New York, lot 131. Ex-collection Emiel Veranneman, acquired from the above. Sotheby's, May 2007, London, lot 784. European collection P. Jacquesson, acquired from the above.

Okame (or Otafuku) represents a lovely, always smiling Japanese woman who brings happiness and good fortune to any man she marries. She is also known as the Goddess of Mirth and is a very popular image in Japanese culture. Otafuku literally means 'much good fortune', and Okame means 'tortoise', which is also an auspicious symbol of longevity, as tortoises lead long lives.

