



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0421)

Fri, 16th Apr 2021

Lot 90

Starting price: €750

Estimate: €1500

MASAKAZU: A WOOD NETSUKE OF KOKO SENNIN

By Masakazu, signed Masakazu 正一

Japan, Osaka, early 19th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

The rather rarely depicted Koko Sennin shown here as usual inside a pot and holding his large earrings which are attached to his earlobes. His facial features are amusingly crafted, typical for the artist, and the eyes are double inlaid in bone with dark horn pupils. Quite unusually, the surface of the pot is embellished with ukibori pimples, simulating the surface of a gourd. Asymmetrical himotoshi underneath and signature within an oval reserve – MASAKAZU.

HEIGHT 3.5 cm

Condition: Excellent condition with associated surface wear and very good patina.

Provenance: Old Viennese private collection assembled within the same family over three generations. Old collection no. to the base '10570'.

Koko (in Chinese Hu Kung), according to legend, lived in China in the 3rd century and at night used to retire into a gourd-shaped pot, much to the bewilderment of his neighbors, who could not discover his whereabouts after sunset.

Literature comparison: A very similar netsuke showing the same ukibori pimples by Masatsugu is illustrated in Eskenazi (1997) *Japanese Netsuke, Ojime and Inro from the Dawson Collection*, pp. 26-27, no. 27. Another netsuke in ivory depicting the same subject by Masakazu is illustrated with a line drawing in Meinertzhagen, Frederick / Lazarnick, George (1986) *MCI, Part A*, p. 422.