



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0421)

Fri, 16th Apr 2021

Lot 10

Starting price: €400

Estimate: €800

¥ AN EARLY IVORY NETSUKE OF RIHAKU

Unsigned

Japan, early to mid-18th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

An early ivory netsuke of the poet Rihaku (In Chinese Li Bai) shown seated on a base sleeping and leaning on a scholarly table. He is wearing a traditional Chinese cap and a flowing, well-carved Chinese robe. His facial features are crafted extraordinarily well, deeply slumbering, probably after drinking some wine – a popular subject of his poems. Beautiful deep-yellow and honey patina and excellent himotoshi through the back and underside.

HEIGHT 4.3 cm

Condition: Very good age-related condition with expected age cracks and stunning patina.

Provenance: German private collection, acquired in Japan c. 1980.

Auction comparison:

Compare to a similar netsuke sold by Zackle, Fine Netsuke, Sagemono & Okimono, 2 November 2019, Vienna, lot 2 (**sold for 3,286 EUR**).

Li Bai (701-762) was a famous poet during the Tang-dynasty, often referred to as China's golden age of poetry. In 724 AD he set out from his home region of Shu and began a life of roaming—visiting Daoist sites, meeting many scholars, and leaving behind hundreds of poems about his travels, his solitude, his friends, the moon, and especially the pleasures of drinking wine.