



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0421)

Fri, 16th Apr 2021

Lot 53

Starting price: €20000

Estimate: €40000

¥ TOMOTADA: AN EXCEPTIONAL IVORY NETSUKE OF A TIGRESS AND CUB

By Izumiya Tomotada, signed Tomotada 友忠
Japan, Kyoto, late 18th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

A powerful and superb carving. The adult tigress with dark horn-inlaid eyes resting her right foreleg on her cub as it licks one of its hind paws, her tail elegantly curved over her arched back, the fur, muscles, and spine finely inked and incised. Many natural himotoshi due to the openwork nature of the netsuke, one of the tigress' hind paws incised with the signature TOMOTADA within a faint rectangular reserve.

HEIGHT 3.8 cm, LENGTH 4.6 cm

Condition: Very good condition with minor surface wear, natural age cracks, the ivory attractively worn with a fine patina.

Provenance: Australian private collection (with a valid CITES export license), acquired from Rosemary Bandini.

Literature comparison:

A closely related ivory netsuke by the same carver is illustrated with a line drawing in Meinertzhagen / Lazarnick (1986) MCI, Part B, p. 918, and another is illustrated in Neil Davey (1974) Netsuke, p. 67, no. 172. Two further examples are illustrated in Barry Davies Oriental Art (1990) Netsuke Classics, nos. 23 and 24. For other examples, see Hurtig, Bernard (1973) Masterpieces of Netsuke Art: One Thousand Favorites of Leading Collectors, p. 58, no. 163, and Nihon Netsuke Kenkyukai ed. (2005) Netsuke: Condensed Culture of Edo, p. 27, no. 16.

Auction comparison:

Compare a related netsuke depicting a tiger and two cubs by the same carver at Christie's, Art of Japan, 8 December 2016, London, lot 3 (**sold for 42,500 GBP**). Compare also with a closely related netsuke by the same carver at Bonhams, The Harriet Szechenyi Sale of Japanese Art, 8 November 2011, London, lot 126 (**sold for 27,500 GBP**).