



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0421)

Fri, 16th Apr 2021

Lot 33

Starting price: €4000

Estimate: €8000

TAKETATSU: A VERY RARE WOOD NETSUKE OF TWO CAMELS

By Taketatsu, signed Taketatsu 孟辰
Japan, late 18th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

The two dromedaries finely carved side by side, their heads resting on each others' humps. The underside showing all eight legs in a well-executed composition, along with two himotoshi and the signature TAKETATSU.

LENGTH 4.2 cm, HEIGHT 2.7 cm

Condition: Very good condition with only minor surface wear.
Provenance: European collection.

The subject of two camels is a very rare one in netsuke art. Several other examples in wood are recorded (see **Literature comparison**), and likely all from the same hand, however they are all unsigned as opposed to the present netsuke.

During the Edo period (1615-1868), Dutch traders occasionally brought large and exotic animals as gifts for the shogun. Drawing on their Indian Ocean trading networks, these exotic animals included tigers, parrots, ostriches, elephants, and camels.

Auction comparison:

Compare a similar netsuke of two camels by Yoshitomo, dated to the early 19th century, but carved from ivory in a more naturalistic manner than the present netsuke, at Bonhams, Fine Japanese Art, 11 May 2010, London, lot 211 (**sold for 7,200 GBP**).

Literature comparison:

A closely related but unsigned netsuke is illustrated with a line drawing in Meinertzhagen, Frederick / Lazarnick, George (1986) MCI, Part B, p. 1020. A closely related but unsigned netsuke is in the collection of the British Museum, museum number 1945,1017.533, and two more, once in the collection of Raymond and Frances Bushell, are now in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, nos. AC1998.249.2 and AC1998.249.19.