



Fine Netsuke & Sagemono (NE0421)

Fri, 16th Apr 2021

Lot 129

Starting price: €750

Estimate: €1500

A FINE WOOD NETSUKE OF A SKULL WITH BAMBOO SHOOT

Unsigned

Japan, first half of 19th century, Edo period (1615-1868)

A finely carved and morbidly fantastic wood netsuke of a skull with large, cavernous eye sockets, two bones underneath functioning as the himotoshi, and a leafy bamboo shoot growing out of the eye socket and resting on the apex of the cranium. Unusually, this skull only has two front teeth which are inlaid in bone. The wood bearing an excellent patina.

HEIGHT 3 cm, LENGTH 3.3 cm

Condition: Good condition with some surface wear and few minuscule nicks.

Provenance: Ex-collection Richard R. Silverman. Richard R. Silverman (1932-2019) was a renowned Asian art collector with one of the largest private collections of netsuke outside of Japan. He lived in Tokyo between 1964 and 1979 and began to collect netsuke there in 1968. Since the 1970s, he wrote and lectured about netsuke and was an Asian art consultant for Christie's, Sotheby's, and Bonhams. His gift of 226 ceramic netsuke to the Toledo Museum of Art constitutes perhaps the largest public collection of these miniature clay sculptures in the world. After moving to California, Silverman became a member of the Far Eastern Art Council at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1984. In 1993, he joined LACMA's Executive Board. He served on the board of directors for the International Society of Appraisers from 1986 to 1994 and served nine years as chair for the City of West Hollywood Fine Arts Commission. Richard Silverman was posthumously awarded the Order of the Rising Sun for his decades-long promotion of Japanese culture.

BU Behrens