Finch & Co

JAPANESE CARVED IVORY 'BACHI', A PLECTRUM USED TO PLAY A JAPANESE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT THE 'SAMSIEN'

A JAPANESE CARVED IVORY 'BACHI', A PLECTRUM USED TO PLAY A JAPANESE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT THE 'SAMSIEN'
EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 20.5CM HIGH, 6CM WIDE – 8 INS HIGH, 2¼ INS WIDE (MAX)

LITERATURE

THE SAMSIEN IS ONE OF JAPAN'S MOST POPULAR CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTS RESEMBLING A THREE-STRINGED PLUCKED LUTE THAT IS FREQUENTLY USED AS AN ACCOMPANIMENT TO SONGS. IT IS PLAYED WITH A BACHI MADE OF WOOD, IVORY OR TORTOISESHELL WHICH STRIKES THE STRING JUST BELOW WHERE THE NECK JOINS THE BODY. THE BACHI IS MADE IN IMITATION OF A GINKO TREE LEAF.

THE SAMSIEN HAS ITS ORIGINS IN THE CHINESE 'SAN HSIEN' AND CAME TO JAPAN BY WAY OF OKINAWA IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 16TH CENTURY. ON STAGE SAMSIEN MUSIC BECAME A CONSTANT FEATURE OF THE KABUKI THEATRE AND FROM THE MID 17TH CENTURY IT BECAME THE PRINCIPLE INSTRUMENT.