Finch & Co



JAPANESE NETSUKE MADE FROM THE NATURAL UPPER JAW OF A FOX THE BONE LACQUERED BLACK AND RED

AN UNUSUAL JAPANESE NETSUKE MADE FROM THE NATURAL UPPER JAW OF A FOX THE BONE LACQUERED BLACK AND RED

HIMOTOSHI TO THE TOP

MID 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 4.5CM HIGH, 7.5CM DEEP, 5CM WIDE - 1¾ INS HIGH, 3 INS DEEP, 2 INS WIDE

LITERATURE

IN JAPAN THE DRAGON IS THE OLDEST CREATURE IN MYTHOLOGY, BUT THE FOX IS THE OLDEST IN SUPERSTITION. HE IS THE MESSENGER OF INARI THE GOD OF RICE, WHO ALSO SOMETIMES APPEARS IN THE GUISE OF A FOX, AND IS THE GUARDIAN OF THE RICE CROP. HOWEVER, IN JAPANESE FOLKLORE THE FOX IS THOUGHT TO POSSESS MAGICAL POWERS AS IT CAN TRANSFORM ITSELF INTO ANY FORM OR BEING, INCLUDING THAT OF A HUMAN. THE FOX IS ALSO FEARED BECAUSE OF ITS CUNNING, BUT A HUNTER CAN TURN THIS TRAIT TO GOOD USE, AND THE JAWBONE OF A FOX WOULD POSSESS AMULETIC QUALITIES THAT WHEN WORN WOULD ASSIST THE HUNTER IN HIS PURSUIT OF GAME.