Finch & Co



JAPANESE BOXWOOD NETSUKE FINELY CARVED AS A REALISTIC GROUP OF REISHI TREE FUNGUS

AN UNUSUAL JAPANESE BOXWOOD NETSUKE FINELY CARVED AS A REALISTIC GROUP OF REISHI TREE FUNGUS ATTACHED BY A LINKED CHAIN TO A BELL-SHAPED PERSONAL SEAL SIGNED 'MASANAO YAMADA ISE'

SILKY SMOOTH REDDISH BROWN PATINA

LATE EDO PERIOD EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: APPROX: 16CM LONG - 6¼ INS LONG

LITERATURE

REISHI IS A TREE FUNGUS KNOWN IN CHINA AS LINGZHI AND IN BOTH COUNTRIES IT SYMBOLISES LONGEVITY. A POLYPORE MUSHROOM WITH A DISTINCT APPEARANCE IT GROWS IN VARIOUS TROPICAL LOCATIONS IN ASIA. THE FIRST USE OF 'GANODERMA LUCIDUINOR' WAS RECORDED IN THE EASTERN HAN DYNASTY IN CHINA AND WAS REFERRED TO AS 'THE MUSHROOM OF IMMORTALITY' IN THE BOOK OF HAN. KNOWN TO HAVE BENEFICIAL PROPERTIES SUCH AS BOOSTING THE IMMUNE SYSTEM, 'REISHI' IN JAPANESE MEANS 'SUPERNATURAL MUSHROOM'.

THE ORIGINS OF NETSUKE CAN BE TRACED TO 16TH CENTURY FUJIAN PROVINCE IN SOUTH EAST CHINA WHERE AN IVORY CARVING INDUSTRY GREW UP STIMULATED BY DEMAND FROM IBERIAN TRADERS AND MISSIONARIES FOR CHRISTIAN IMAGES. BEFORE LONG, THE CHINESE CARVERS WERE PRODUCING IMAGES OF INDIGENOUS DEITIES SUCH AS THE 'STAR GODS' OF GOOD FORTUNE AND WEALTH. EARLY JAPANESE NETSUKE STRONGLY REFLECT THESE WESTERN INSPIRED CHINESE ORIGINS. HOWEVER, NETSUKE HAVE SINCE BECOME ONE OF THE FEW FORMS OF PURE

JAPANESE ART. ONCE USED AS ACCESSORIES FOR A GARMENT THAT IS PURELY JAPANESE, THEY WERE MADE BY ARTISTS WHO CLEVERLY AND OFTEN HUMOROUSLY RECORDED EVERY FACET OF JAPANESE DAILY LIFE, LEGEND AND MYTH.

PROVENANCE

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