



Japanese bronze menuki, in the form of a running boar POA

Japanese bronze menuki, in the form of a running boar, the beast with outstretched hind legs, upturned snout and sharp tusks, the tusks and eyes in a paler shade, its body with bristle detail.

Condition: good

Notes:

Menuki (??) are decorative metal ornaments held in place under the tightly bound handle wrapper (tsuka-ito) of a Japanese sword. Until around the Muromachi period (1336-1573), the menuki served mainly to cover the 'mekugi', a sort of pin wedged through the mekugi-ana hole to secure the blade of the sword to the hilt. However, over time the function of the menuki changed, acting instead as a source of extra grip as well as a decorative ornament. It can be placed on different sections of the hilt depending on the preference and grip of the bearer. Wild boar, or 'inoshishi' are native to all except the northernmost island of Japan, and have been revered for their ferocity and tendency to charge in Japanese culture for centuries. The association of the animal with aggression and fearless attack makes it a fitting choice for a decorative element to be worn on the hilt of a katana. Several Japanese idioms refer to the headstrong boar, including the phrase '????' (chototsu moshin), which roughly translates as 'rushing headlong with the ferocity of a boar'.

Material and Technique	Bronze
Origin	Japanese
Dimensions	Length: 2.5cm. (1in.)

Antique ref: N740