



## Ath 1778, Pair Of Solid Silver Candlesticks, Master Hallmarked With A Spoon

2 200 EUR



Signature : Maître orfèvre poinçonnant d'une cuillère

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Width : 14,5 cm

Height : 26,5 cm

### Description

Extremely rare pair of Louis XVI period candlesticks in solid silver. Most of the candlesticks made in Hainaut at this time have a smooth surface. What makes these candlesticks exceptional and rare is their decoration of vine leaves and bunches of grapes which have been embossed and engraved on their bases and on their shafts and bobeche. The master goldsmith stamping a spoon is not the only one to decorate candlesticks with this decoration, another master goldsmith, stamping a unicorn, is known to have used these decorations of vine leaves and grapes on pairs of candlesticks. Outside the city of Ath, this decoration is not recorded on candlesticks. They are therefore a typically Atois peculiarity. Beautiful objects of a certain quality are rare in Ath because the goldsmiths of Ath had great

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difficulty in meeting their basic needs with orders from local customers. This is why they specialized in the manufacture of what their contemporaries called "menuties", that is to say small silver objects that could be easily exported to other cities in the Austrian Netherlands to be sold at the annual markets or at merchants. This is why the hallmark of the city of Ath is clearly over-represented on the many snuff boxes, fly boxes, shoe buckles and other costume buttons that can be found on the production of Belgian goldsmiths of the eighteenth century.

Nevertheless, the Ath goldsmiths sometimes show great originality in their important pieces of goldsmithery. The meaning of the vine leaves and bunches of grapes on the candlesticks is so far undetermined. Were they a custom order for a wealthy wine merchant or were they made to decorate and illuminate an altar or an oratory during the Eucharist? The pair weighs approximately 600 grams.