Pair Of Silver-plated Wall Lights Or Sconces, Early 18th Century



3 600 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Length : 23 cm

Height : 17 cm (platine)

Description

- Pair of wall lights - Silver-plated bronze - France, circa 1720 - Height (plate): 17 cm, arm length: 23 cm - Good condition, two screws from one plate changed, one fleuron missing, formerly replated - Provenance: private Parisian collection - Pair of single-arm wall lights in chased and silver-plated bronze. Attached to the mask crowned with vine leaves - Bacchus - on a cut-out plate bordered with scrolls on an amati background. The light arm attached to the plate is in a foliated and amati console. - In the West, since Antiquity, there have been men with their faces hidden for the benefit of their double, the mask. Its religious role in ancient civilization, in the theater, is transposed by its expressive force, sometimes playful, in the ornamental decoration of buildings. Ornamentation fully rediscovered

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during the Renaissance, the mask seems, to the modern eye, a transposition of the Gorgon's head cut off and placed on the arms of Athena to preserve its stunning power. In their creations, architects and sculptors reserved privileged locations for masks: arch keystones, consoles, corbels, capitals, fountain outlets... In an ornamental transposition, bronze workers and goldsmiths favored this ornament at the base and attachments of ewer handles, under the spout and as an ornament on the belly, on the plates of wall lights or handles, as André-Charles Boulle was able to use it extensively for the ornamentation of his furniture. Its appearance is not always strictly human; it often takes a hybrid form in which the image of man and his hyperbolically accentuated facial expressions can be mixed with remarkable attributes from the animal or plant world. During the second half of the 17th century, artists such as Paul Androuet Du Cerceau, Jean Bérain and Pierre Le Pautre composed new representations with mythological ornaments derived from the ancient model without being servile to it. The motif of the mask was the subject of a particular interpretation in the vocabulary of ornament where a distinction was gradually made between the mask, "face separated from the body", which according to the architect Charles-Augustin d'Aviler represents "the divinities, the seasons, the elements, the ages, the temperaments with their attributes" (sic), and the mascaron designating this "head loaded or ridiculous and made in fantasy, like a grimace" [Daviler]. - An identical pair in gilded bronze sold at the Fraysse study on June 6, 2024, n°460 - Ref: [Daviler] Charles-Augustin d'Aviler (1653-1701): "Dictionary of architecture, or Explanation of all the terms used in architecture and mathematics", 1693