



Pair Of Klismos Chairs By Robsjohn-gibblings And Saridis Of Athens



16 500 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Walnut

Length : 53 cm

Width : 55 cm

Height : 90 cm

Description

Pair of klismos chairs by Terence Harold Robsjohn-Gibblings and Saridis of Athens. Greek walnut, woven leather. Greece. 1960s. 53 × 55 × 90 cm (20.9 × 21.6 × 35.5 in). "Gradually we are achieving a new form of clear-cut beauty based on ancient traditions of purity of line. These forms are without period because pure beauty is everlasting -- only materials change." -- Terence Harold Robsjohn-Gibblings, quoted by Todd Merrill and Julie Iovine in *Modern Americana*, New York, 2008. This ideal lies at the heart of Robsjohn-Gibblings's work and found its most complete expression after his 1960 encounter with Eleftherios Saridis, master cabinetmaker and founder of the Saridis workshop in Athens. In May 1961, the King and Queen of Greece attended the opening of an exhibition held at the

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Saridis workshop in the heart of Athens :
twenty-six pieces designed by
Robsjohn-Gibbings and executed by Saridis were
presented alongside photographs of
archaeological artefacts -- ceramic fragments
(here a lekythos at the Ashmolean), stelae, and
other elements that had served as sources. This
collection, titled Furniture of Classical Greece,
was the result of a process that combined
scholarly research with refined craftsmanship.
Made from Greek walnut, bronze, leather, and
handwoven upholstery, the pieces designed by
Robsjohn-Gibbings and Saridis captivated a
clientèle both tasteful and well-read, through their
fusion of archaeological fidelity and modern
design. Drawing on the expertise of art historian
and archaeologist Gisela Richter, and executed by
the skilled artisans of the Saridis workshop in
Athens, each creation embodies a synthesis of
intellectual rigor and formal precision. The
klismos is perhaps the most iconic piece of the
Furniture of Classical Greece. Robsjohn-Gibbings
discovered it upon his return to England in the
1930s : 'On Saturday afternoons, he wrote, I often
went to the British Museum. And there, while
wandering around Roman Britain and ancient
Greece, I happened to see a bronze miniature
chair on the base of a Greek candelabrum. As I
discovered later, it was a Greek chair called a
klismos. Looking at the painted Greek vases with
new eyes, I saw chairs, couches, stools, chests,
and tables.' The klismos, according to Richter, is
perhaps the 'most characteristically Greek piece
of furniture', in which 'the Greek sense of
harmony and grace [...] finds its best expression',
and which principal features are 'a curved back
and plain, curved legs' and, in most cases, without
decoration, 'its beauty lying solely in the
proportion and line'. Even though their recreation
is faithful to the original, archaeological klismos,
the refined classicism of Robsjohn-Gibbings and
Saridis of Athens did not only appeal to
archaeologists and philhellenes. It was indeed
Robsjohn-Gibbings and Saridis of Athens that

Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis chose when she set out to furnish her famous "Pink House" on the island of Skorpios in 1968, the private retreat acquired years earlier by Aristotle Onassis. Among the pieces she selected was the Furniture of Classical Greece collection, designed by Terence Harold Robsjohn-Gibbings in collaboration with Eleftherios and Susan Saridis. Her endorsement helped establish the collection as a symbol of cultivated modernism -- one that soon attracted other prominent figures of twentieth-century society. Estée Lauder, Doris Duke, and others followed, drawn to the collection's fusion of classical restraint and contemporary sophistication, and to a vision of modern design that set itself apart from the fashions of the time.

Provenance
Zervos Estate, Athens.

Sources
Terence Harold Robsjohn-Gibbings, Furniture of Classical Greece, New York, 1963 ; Todd Merrill and Julie Iovine, Modern Americana, New York, 2008 ; George Manginis, "Klismos. The revival of ancient Greek furniture by T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings for Saridis of Athens", lecture given at the Bard Graduate Center, 2025.