



## Pair Of Large Klismos Chairs By Robsjohn-gibbings And Saridis Of Athens



17 500 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Walnut

Length : 73 cm

Width : 65 cm

Height : 92,5 cm

### Description

Pair of large klismos chairs by Terence Harold Robsjohn-Gibbings and Saridis of Athens.

Greek walnut, woven leather.

Greece.

1960s.

65 × 73 × 92.5 cm (25.6 × 28.7 × 36.4 in).

This gondola chair of sorts is a variation on the iconic klismos chair from the Furniture of Classical Greece collection -- here quite larger in size and more imposing, though the rather low seat and designed to accommodate a cushion, is at the same height as that of the standard klismos.

Conceived by Terence Harold

Robsjohn-Gibbings and executed by the Greek cabinetmaker Saridis of Athens, the collection emerged from the designer's 1960 discovery of the Attic workshop of Eleftherios Saridis. It

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brought together archaeological research and exceptional craftsmanship, with pieces in Greek walnut, bronze and handwoven leather upholstery, in a project that sought to reimagine ancient Greek furniture with exquisite materials, modern purity and exacting precision. In May 1961, the King and Queen of Greece attended the first opening of the collection at the Saridis workshop in central Athens. Twenty-six pieces were exhibited, presented alongside photographs of archaeological discoveries -- Attic vase fragments, funerary stelae (here that of Hegeso), and ceramics -- which had served as direct sources for the designs.

The curves and lines of the klismos remain the most emblematic leitmotiv of the collection. According to Gisela Richter, the klismos is altogether "most characteristically Greek piece of furniture" in which "the Greek sense of harmony and grace finds its best expression." Defined by "a curved back and plain, curved legs", it is typically devoid of ornaments, 'its beauty lying solely in the proportion and line.'

Robsjohn-Gibbings first encountered this 'Greek sense of harmony' in the early 1930s, after returning to England from four years in the United States : '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.'

It was this same collection, the Furniture of Classical Greece, that Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis requested in 1968 when furnishing her now-famous "Pink House" on the island of Skorpios, the private retreat acquired some years earlier by Aristotle Onassis. Her choice helped establish Saridis' reputation well beyond the academic or philhellenic world. Its appeal -- the fusion of classical restraint and

contemporary refinement -- resonated with other discerning collectors of the twentieth century, including Estée Lauder and Doris Duke, who embraced Robsjohn-Gibbings's cultivated modernism and its timeless edge on other prevailing trends.

#### 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.