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Pierre Gouthière - Delafosse Model - Pair Of Incense Burners/candles



18 500 EUR

Signature : Modèle de Jean Charles Delafosse, exécution attribuée à Pierre Gouthière

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Diameter : 11 cm

Height : 24 cm

Description

An exceptional pair of finely chased and mercury-gilded bronze candlesticks/incense burners, a first-rate French work, made in Paris during the Louis XVI period, around 1770, and attributed to Pierre Gouthière. Rarely do the exacting standards of execution and the perfection of the finish reach such a level: here, everything is mastery, precision, and luxurious detail, to the point that the discerning eye immediately recognizes a piece produced by the greatest Parisian workshops of the 18th century. The composition takes the form of a cassiole-shaped vase surmounted by a removable openwork lid, allowing its use as an incense burner while, once removed, forming the candle holder. The whole rests on an elegant tripod base composed of powerful and dynamic

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scrolling foliage, whose edges, counter-curves, and chiseled details reveal work of admirable precision. The circular base, encircled by a frieze of deeply sculpted water leaves, is enriched with moldings, beaded friezes, and finely punctuated motifs, in a neoclassical vocabulary of exemplary purity. The gilding, particularly thick, luminous, and homogeneous, possesses the warmth and depth characteristic of the great mercury gildings of the 18th century. The chasing, of exceptional clarity, offers a vibrant relief and modeling of rare intensity: no flatness, no softness, but rather a constant vibration of the surfaces. And above all, nothing has been left to chance: down to the mounting elements, the screws themselves are crafted and decorated, a detail revealing a level of finish reserved for the most prestigious works. By their design and spirit, these torches clearly belong to the grand aesthetic born from the ornamental models of Jean-Charles Delafosse, whose compositions profoundly marked the Parisian decorative arts of the 1760s and 1770s. This stylistic lineage, combined with the absolute excellence of the casting, chasing, and gilding, establishes a particularly solid attribution to Pierre Gouthière, whose renown rests precisely on this degree of perfection: a technical virtuosity pushed to the extreme of refinement, combined with an incomparable understanding of volumes and details. By way of comparison, a pair of Louis XVI candlesticks in the same style, inspired by Delafosse, was sold at Christie's for slightly more than EUR5,000 -- although it was mismatched and of significantly inferior quality. The pair presented here, on the contrary, stands out for its remarkable homogeneity, the richness of its gilding, and a chasing of a far superior level, placing it clearly above the examples commonly found on the market. We are in the presence of a rare and spectacular pair, destined for a large collection of gilt bronzes or for an exceptional setting, illustrating what Parisian gilt bronze art produced at its most accomplished under Louis XVI: a work where architecture,

ornament, and material achieve a form of
self-evidence, and where the quality, down to the
smallest detail, affirms a hand of the very first
rank.