



## Paul Sormani (1817-1877) Drop-front Secretary Desk, Circa 1860



12 600 EUR

Signature : Paul SORMANI (1817-1877)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Marquetry

Width : 100 cm

Height : 146 cm

Depth : 45 cm

### Description

Drop-front secretary desk signed Paul SORMANI. Refined marquetry combining rosewood, kingwood, sycamore and satinwood. Louis XVI style. Circa 1860. Dimensions Height: 146 cm Width: 100 cm Depth: 45 cm Description This secretary desk is more than a functional or decorative piece. It conveys a message of wealth, elegance and prestige. On the upper section of the piece, Jupiter, accompanied by his majestic eagle, pours gold coins toward a woman positioned at the center of the panel. With her hand open to receive them, she embodies Fortune, a symbol of prosperity and abundance. Every detail, from the finely chased bronze mounts to the delicacy of the marquetry, highlights the exceptional craftsmanship of the cabinetmaker and transforms

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this secretary into a true sculpted and marqueted narrative, where art and symbolism meet. The interior of the secretary reveals an elegant and well-thought-out arrangement, entirely veneered with precious woods. The upper section offers generous storage capacity with several horizontal and vertical compartments, ideal for organizing correspondence and small objects. On each side, three drawers with chevron-pattern marquetry fronts add a decorative touch while providing practical storage for writing accessories. The drop-front writing surface, when opened, offers a spacious, stable and comfortable workspace. The lower section, concealed behind two marqueted doors, provides a large storage area with an interior shelf, ideal for files, books or larger objects. The overall finish is meticulous and refined, reflecting the high standards of cabinetmaking typical of the finest Parisian productions of the 19th century.

**Biography of Paul Sormani (1817-1877)** Paul Sormani was a cabinetmaker and maker of fine furniture, born in 1817 in Canzo, Lombardy, then under Austrian rule. He moved to Paris at a young age, where he trained in cabinetmaking and marquetry techniques. From the 1840s onward, he operated his own workshop. He quickly specialized in luxury furniture inspired by the 18th century, particularly Louis XV and Louis XVI styles, combining historical models with extremely refined execution and precise finishes, often featuring precious wood marquetry and finely chased bronze mounts. His talent was recognized as early as the 1855 Exposition Universelle, where he was awarded his first medal. During the Second Empire, he became one of the favored cabinetmakers of Parisian high society and the imperial court. His furniture was commissioned for official palaces, notably the Tuileries and Compiègne. The Sormani workshop thereby gained a strong reputation for quality and prestige. During the 1860s and 1870s, his workshop on rue Charlot employed many specialized craftsmen. Sormani signed his works

with the stamp Paul SORMANI. Today, furniture by Paul Sormani is highly sought after for the quality of its craftsmanship, the finesse of its marquetry, and the richness of its bronze mounts, bearing witness to the exceptional level of Parisian cabinetmaking during the Second Empire.