



Jean-baptiste Demay's Laying Chair (received As A Master In 1784)



3 600 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Mahogany

Description

Jean-Baptiste Demay (master in 1784), Paris, Directoire/Consulate period (circa 1795-1805), solid mahogany. Historical Note - Jean-Baptiste Demay: Jean-Baptiste Demay became a master cabinetmaker in Paris in 1784. He worked at the cusp of the Ancien Régime and the Revolution, a pivotal period in the evolution of French furniture taste. His activity continued under the Directoire and the Consulate, times when the neoclassical aesthetic asserted itself with sobriety and rigor. Demay belonged to that generation of Parisian craftsmen who gradually abandoned the rocaille curves of Louis XV in favor of a refined line inherited from rediscovered Antiquity. His work is distinguished by: a masterful command of proportions, the frequent use of mahogany, discreet yet skillfully balanced carved

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Jonzac 17500

ornamentation, and meticulous craftsmanship in joinery and woodturning. His highly prized chairs catered to the new social customs of the late 18th century: reception rooms, gaming rooms, and private clubs. The JB Demay stamp attests to its Parisian production, regulated by the guild of cabinetmakers. This sumptuous "punching chair," also known as a player's chair or voyeur's chair, perfectly illustrates the evolution of furniture towards the austere Neoclassicism of the Directoire period. Designed for the gaming rooms so fashionable at the end of the 18th century, it features a unique design: the user sits astride it, arms resting on the inverted, upholstered back, in order to observe or participate in card games. The solid mahogany frame reveals a construction of great purity: tapered, turned legs of understated elegance; a perfectly proportioned circular seat rail; and an architecturally structured rectangular back framing a carved, openwork panel. The finely executed central motif depicts a vase from which a stylized fan-shaped palmette unfurls--an ornamental vocabulary directly inspired by Greek and Roman antiquity. This composition, both rigorous and decorative, reflects the influence of the "antique" taste that prevailed during the Directory period. The circular seat and the upper part of the backrest are upholstered in a fabric with a vegetal motif, highlighted by braid, respecting the decorative spirit of the period without altering the architectural character of the piece. The whole is distinguished by: the balance of volumes, the quality of the turning, the precision of the carving, and the nobility of the mahogany. This chair embodies the intellectual and social elegance of post-revolutionary Parisian salons, where furniture became more structured and geometric, while retaining a discreet sophistication. Heritage Significance: Stamped bridge chairs are relatively rare on the market, particularly those bearing the stamp of a Parisian master active during this pivotal period. This piece reflects: the evolution of the social uses of furniture, the stylistic transition between Louis

XVI and Empire, and the expertise of Parisian workshops at the end of the 18th century.

Condition: Very good overall condition, beautiful patina. One mascarón is missing (see photo #4), and there is an old restoration under the rear rail.