



Pair Of Insect Torches, Model Delivered For Versailles In 1835.



1 250 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Bronze

Description

An important and spectacular pair of torches in finely chased and gilded bronze, resting on a wide three-lobed base with a particularly lively rocaille decoration. These models feature an extremely rich decoration combining asymmetrical shells, jagged foliage, rocaille clasps, amatized backgrounds and above all a remarkable naturalistic decoration of insects in relief including butterflies, wasps and beetles admirably integrated into the ornamental composition. The general design of the torches, in particular the twisted, ascending movement of the shaft, directly evokes the great rocaille models developed in the 18th century by the famous ornamentation designers of the reign of Louis XV, notably Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier (1695-1750) and Sébastien-Antoine Slodtz

Dealer

M&N Antiquités

Antiquaires généralistes

Mobile : 06 64 02 14 84

3 grande rue

La Chapelle-sur-Oreuse 89260

(1695-1754). Here we find the characteristic taste for asymmetrical forms, effects of movement, vibrant reliefs and that naturalistic fantasy typical of the great Parisian rocaille decor. However, our pair belongs to a July Monarchy production executed around 1835, in the context of the vast decorative program launched by Louis-Philippe for the Château de Versailles, transformed from 1833 into the Musée de l'Histoire de France. These torches are reproduced and documented in the reference work *De bronze et de cristal - Objets d'ameublement XVIIIe-XIXe siècles du Mobilier national* by Marie-France Dupuy-Baylet, published by Éditions Faton. The author mentions a delivery made in 1835 by "Maury fils, Combes et Compagnie", metal merchants based on rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth in Paris and suppliers to the Garde-Meuble for Versailles. The brief, dated January 26, 1835, precisely describes: "3 pairs of gilded torches, ground gold, rocaille style, feet adorned with butterflies...". The Mobilier National still holds several examples from this delivery, intended for the apartments of the Château de Versailles under Louis-Philippe. This documentation is particularly interesting as it perfectly illustrates the historicist taste developed under the July Monarchy. During this period, the French decorative arts rediscovered with fascination the great models of the 18th century and reinterpreted the rocaille vocabulary in a more theatrical and romantic version intended for the great royal decors. The manufacturing quality of this pair is also worthy of note. The various elements making up the torches are assembled around an internal steel rod threaded only at the ends, a technique still found under the Empire, the Restoration and during the first half of the 19th century. This assembly method differs from later systems with rods entirely mechanically threaded along their entire length, characteristic of more industrial production in the second half of the 19th century. This early assembly, consistent with the general quality of

casting, chasing and gilding observed on our models, thus fully supports a dating under the July Monarchy, around 1835. The quality of the chasing is remarkable. The ribbed wings of the insects, the textured backgrounds, the foliage and shells present a particularly lively relief. The original, antique gilding is superbly preserved, with very slight wear from use contributing fully to the charm and authenticity of the whole. A pair of high decorative quality, historically documented, combining chasing virtuosity, ornamental richness and historical interest.

Dimensions: Height: 28 cm Base diameter: 17.5 cm