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Antique Louis XIV Mirror In Carved And Gilded Wood, Early 18th Century.



1 500 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Gilted wood

Description

Made in France around 1710-1715, this Louis XIV-era mirror dates from the final years of Louis XIV's reign. It reflects this transitional period in which the decorative vocabulary of the Grand Siècle retained all its architectural rigor while gradually incorporating more fluid and dynamic forms, foreshadowing the early designs of the Regency period. Measuring 121 cm high by 66 cm wide, this mirror captivates with the balance of its proportions and the quality of its carving, with its openwork pediment serving as its main attraction. The pediment takes the form of an elegant gendarme's hat, creating a highly harmonious architectural composition. Its crown is dominated by a shell with sharply defined contours; its dynamic design--characteristic of the final years of Louis XIV's reign--already

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foreshadows the freer forms that would flourish during the Regency. At the center is a bouquet of flowers, entirely openwork, whose various corollas are sculpted with a beautiful sense of relief and naturalism. The flowers occupy the heart of the composition and interact with a network of foliage that animates the entire pediment. On either side stand two antique helmets with crests, resting on corbelled terraces. These military trophies, a common feature in the decorative vocabulary of the late reign of Louis XIV, are connected to the central bouquet by broad foliage motifs that spring from delicate flowers before unfurling into elegant scrolls. Beneath the bouquet appears a shell framed by S-shaped consoles, connecting it to the upper crossbar. The entire pediment is enlivened by a checkered background that structures the composition and highlights each of the sculpted elements. The alternation of openwork sections, solid backgrounds, and reliefs lends rhythm and lightness to this particularly balanced composition. The frame echoes this same ornamental vocabulary. The side panels are punctuated by a succession of cartouches, shells, and foliage scrolls that stand out against a checkered background. The upper and lower crossbars extend this composition with the same pursuit of balance and symmetry characteristic of works from this period. Both in its design and execution, this mirror reflects the evolution of taste in the early 18th century. It retains all the majesty inherited from the Grand Siècle while revealing a new fluidity in the treatment of shells, foliage scrolls, and forms. Its ornamental vocabulary is fully in line with the decorative trends that characterized the final years of Louis XIV's reign--a period exemplified by the works of great ornamental designers such as Jean Bérain, Daniel Marot, and Jean Lepautre, though it is not possible to establish a direct link with any of these artists. The frame is carved from linden wood, a species particularly prized for the fineness of its grain and its suitability for carving.

It remains in excellent condition, revealing the great care taken in preparing the undercoats before gilding and allowing the various carved reliefs to regain their exquisite delicacy. The high-quality antique gilding harmoniously alternates between matte and agate-burnished sections. This contrast, achieved during the gilding process, accentuates the play of light and delicately highlights the reliefs of the carving. The back panel, designed to hold the mirror, was replaced some time ago. The glass currently in place is an antique mercury mirror, dating from after the frame was made, likely produced in the late 18th century or during the 19th century, to replace the original glass. The piece is in excellent condition. It has retained its beautiful antique patina as well as the slight signs of age that contribute to its authenticity. Dimensions: Height: 121 cm Width: 66 cm