



Ath 1782, "pineapple-style" Coffee Pot, Louis François Delwarde, Solid Silver, Wedding Gift



4 250 EUR

Signature : Louis François Delwarde (1717-1783)

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Height : 35 cm

Description

An exceptional and imposing solid silver tripod coffee pot, crafted in Ath in 1782 by master silversmith Louis François Delwarde, one of the leading figures in Ath's silversmithing tradition during the second half of the 18th century. Standing 35 cm tall, this coffee pot stands out not only for its particularly large proportions but above all for the extraordinary abundance and quality of its decoration, designed entirely in the neoclassical style of the reign of Louis XVI. The body, with its elegant and powerful profile, rests on three dynamically shaped feet. It is adorned with friezes of leaves, heart-shaped motifs, interlacing patterns, and finely chiseled plant motifs. Large ribbon bows suspend an oval medallion, carved on an amati background, on each side. One depicts a pastoral trophy, while

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Affligem 1790

the other features iconography clearly dedicated to love and union: Cupid's bow, quiver, and arrows; two doves tenderly pecking at each other; and a nest lined with a few eggs. The whole is suspended from a knotted ribbon, like a small emblematic composition. This accumulation of symbols of love--united doves, a nest, eggs, and Cupid's attributes--reasonably suggests that the coffee pot may have been commissioned for a wedding. The tiered lid, itself richly embossed and chiseled, is topped with a particularly charming detail: a large pineapple carved from light wood and stained green, likely using a copper oxide-based pigment, serving as a finial. The coffee pot also retains its original pearwood handle, a particularly notable feature for a piece from this period. The pineapple was by no means a trivial ornament in 1782. In the 18th century, this exotic fruit was one of the most striking symbols of luxury and refinement. While fruit was imported from the colonies, European courts and major aristocratic households also competed to successfully cultivate it in expensive, specially designed hot greenhouses, or "pineapple houses"; one could even speak of a veritable "pineapple mania" toward the end of the 18th century.

HelloIt takes several years of care and a great deal of fuel to produce a single fruit. At Versailles, Louis XV had pineapples and even coffee grown in the greenhouses at Trianon. From then on, the pineapple became as much a sign of wealth as it was a delicacy reserved for a tiny elite, and over the course of the century, its image permeated architecture, textiles, and the decorative arts. Its presence as a finial thus takes on its full meaning here: it literally crowns a coffee pot intended for a product that is itself exotic and precious, and adds to the decorative language of love a powerful symbol of prestige, abundance, and hospitality. The comparison with the works published by Jean Dugnoille and Ernest Overlau in **Orfèvrerie civile athoise** is particularly interesting. The authors reproduce four coffee pots by Louis François Delwarde that,

with certain variations, follow the same general design. However, to our knowledge, none of them features this spectacular pineapple-shaped handle. The pineapple motif, on the other hand, is well documented on other coffee pots and chocolate pots from 18th-century Ath-style silverware. Louis François Delwarde, born in 1717, son of Thomas Delwarde, is documented as a silversmith in Ath during the middle and second half of the 18th century. He married Marie-Thérèse Carlier in 1754. Dugnoille and Overlau date his documented activity to between 1752 and 1782 and reproduce his master's mark: a crowned capital D, which is also found on this coffee pot. Due to its unusual size, the preservation of its wooden handle and knob, the profusion of its decoration, and above all its remarkable iconographic program dedicated to love, this coffee pot constitutes a particularly important example of Ath's civilian goldsmithing at the end of the Ancien Régime. Reference: Jean Dugnoille and Ernest Overlau, **Orfèvrerie civile athoise**, Cercle royal d'Histoire et d'Archéologie d'Ath et de la région, Ath, 2006.