



Elkington & Co. - Important "Milton Shield" Design By Morel-ladeuil, 1866



4 400 EUR

Signature : Léonard Morel-Ladeuil

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Silver metal

Width : 65 cm

Height : 86 cm

Description

ProvenanceAn important decorative shield known as the "Milton Shield", manufactured by the Birmingham firm Elkington & Co. after the celebrated model created by the French sculptor and designer Léonard Morel-Ladeuil. The shield is signed "Morel-Ladeuil Fecit 1866" and "Elkington & Co.". The reverse also retains an oval plaque bearing the crowned "VR" monogram and an inscription relating to the Department of Science and Art, an important feature linking this example to the documented reproductions of the design. The original composition was created in 1866 for Elkington & Co. and exhibited at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867, where it attracted considerable attention. The original, executed in silver and damascened iron, is today preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum in

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London. Following the success of the design, Elkington produced high-quality electrotype reproductions intended for collectors, institutions and Schools of Art.

DescriptionThe iconographic programme is directly inspired by John Milton's epic poem "Paradise Lost". The central medallion depicts the Archangel Raphael addressing Adam and Eve and recounting the War in Heaven. Around this central scene are several large high-relief compositions showing the heavenly armies, the rebel angels, their conflict and their fall. In the upper section appears God the Father surrounded by angels and seraphim, while the lower central axis is dominated by the Archangel Michael defeating Satan. The composition is further enriched with numerous winged figures, celestial symbols, zodiacal motifs and allegorical references to Time and the cosmic order. The quality of execution of the present example is particularly notable. The reliefs remain sharp and deeply modelled, especially in the figures, draperies, wings, clouds, vegetation and armour. The contrast between the silvered surfaces, oxidised areas and gilt highlights clearly structures the composition and enhances the depth of the relief. The survival of the principal signatures, the date of the design and the official reverse plaque makes this a particularly well-documented example.

Technique and materialsElectroformed copper and silver-plated metal with gilt highlights and oxidised sections. The decoration is executed throughout in relief and high relief, enclosed by a twisted rope-pattern border. Electroforming enabled Elkington to reproduce the exceptional complexity and depth of the original model with remarkable fidelity.

DatingEngland, Birmingham, circa 1867-1870. The date 1866 incorporated into Morel-Ladeuil's signature refers to the creation of the original design.

ConditionVery good overall condition considering the age and complexity of the object. The relief remains crisp and well preserved, with strong survival of the contrasting surface finishes. Patination, minor wear and

variations in oxidation consistent with age. The historic reverse plaque is preserved. Function and display A major display and collector's object conceived as a demonstration of Victorian technical and artistic metalworking rather than as functional armour. Its scale, rich iconography and historical association with the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867 make it particularly suitable for an important collection of nineteenth-century decorative arts. Dimensions height - 86 cm width - 65 cm