

ADRIAN ALAN

Fine Art & Antiques



A Magnificent Pair of Gilt-Bronze Figural Empire Period Candelabra

Circa: Circa 1815

101 x 30 x 32 cm (39³/₄ x 11³/₄ inches)

Gilt-Bronze

France

1815

A Magnificent and Highly Important Pair of Gilt-Bronze Figural Empire Period Candelabra.

The Candelabra take the form of a male and female figure in classical dress, the male figure draped with a lions pelt. Each figure is modelled in a *contro posto* pose and support on their shoulders vases issuing six candle branches. Both figures are raised on square section plinths embellished with finely cast fronded acanthus.

In 1804 Napoleon I, crowned himself Emperor of France, ending years of political instability and signalling the dawning of the Empire period. During this time, the economy was booming and a new aristocracy was forming, with Napoleon's court as its cornerstone. The Empire Period saw the revival of classical ideas and influences, primarily in the decorative arts with Napoleon's court adopting classical designs discovered in the archaeological excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum early in the Nineteenth Century. The ancient forms of the classical Greeks and Romans, discovered in these ruins, gained a new popularity during the Empire period. Typical Empire Motifs included the acanthus leaf, anthemion (stylised honeysuckle), animal-paw feet, cornucopia, classical figures, dolphin, eagle, lyre and rosette. For ornamentation, ormolu was a prerequisite.