

ADRIAN ALAN

Fine Art & Antiques



Sèvres

An Exceptionally Rare Pair of Sèvres Porcelain Presentation Vases

Circa: Dated 1874

54 x 0 cm (21 1/4 x 0 inches)

Porcelain

France

1874

Marked to the base of each vase 'Dore A Sèvres, S74', and incised 'AD-74, 3', and 'P.V-R 73-11-A.

An Exceptionally Rare and Historically Important Pair of Sèvres Porcelain Presentation Vases, designed by Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse.

Marked to the base of each vase 'Dore A Sèvres, S74', and incised 'AD-74, 3', and 'P.V-R 73-11-A.

The incised initials almost certainly refer to François-Alexandre David, gilder and painter at the Sèvres manufactory between 1844 and 1882.

Each vase is of an unusual pale lavender colour, the distinctive 'bottle' shape with elongated faceted necks derived from early Persian metalware. They are described in the Sèvres records from 1874 as 'Vase Bouteille Persanne'. The main body is centred by a scrolling strapwork cartouche containing the inscription:

EXPOSITION DES BEAUX-ARTS, ROUSSEAU (PH), MEMBRE DU JURY, SECTION DE PEINTURE, 1874.

The Salon, the official art exhibition of the Académie des Beaux Arts in Paris, was generally thought of as the most important annual exhibition in the world. As well as being a showcase for established artists, the exhibition gave up-and-coming artists the chance to present their work to discerning viewers.

In April 1874, a group of artists, the ones rejected by the Salon jury, opened an exhibition independent of the Salon as the Société Anonyme des Artistes, Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs. This was to be the first true exhibition of Impressionist art; the contributing artists included Cézanne, Pissarro, Renoir, Degas, Monet, Manet, and his sister-in-law Berthe Morisot.

Carrier-Belleuse, Albert Ernest:

Albert Ernest Carrier-Belleuse (1824-1887), was an important Parisian sculptor who signed his work 'Carrier'.

The sculptor Fauconnier trained Carrier-Belleuse before he entered the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris in 1840, where he studied under David d'Angers. He later abandoned this formal training in order to develop his interest in a more decorative, Romantic style - in which he showed a healthy independence. Carrier-Belleuse made his debut at the Salon in 1851 before moving to England, where he worked in the design shop at Minton's ceramic porcelain works in Staffordshire until 1854. Here he trained under Léon Arnoux.

Upon his return to Paris in 1855 he embarked on a series of important pieces that included work at the Louvre, the Hôtel de Paiva, the Opéra, the Hôtel de Ville and the Théâtre Français. As one of the most prolific and versatile sculptors of the nineteenth century, he made his reputation with the group 'Salve Regina', which was shown at the 1861 Paris Salon. His later works 'Bacchante' (1863) and 'The Messiah' (1867) won him medals and the Legion of Honour - the ultimate recognition.

In the last years of the Second Empire he executed many public commissions and was highly regarded by Napoléon III, who referred to him as 'our Clodion'.

Carrier-Belleuse worked in every medium, both traditional and modern, even experimenting with galvanoplasty and electroplating. His combination of materials, such as porcelain for the features of his bronze statuettes, anticipated the chryselephantine figures of the turn of the century. In 1875 he was appointed director of Works at the Sèvres porcelain factory. He employed a galaxy of rising young sculptors as assistants, who at one time or another included Rodin and Mathurin Moreau, though his own work showed little sympathy with the modern movement which Rodin was instrumental in developing. His bronzes include many busts of historic and contemporary celebrities, classical and allegorical figures, figures in period costume, nude statuettes, bas-reliefs and even sculptural staircases and interior decoration.

Markers Bibliography:

Meyer, Jonathan 'Great Exhibitions - London, New York, Paris, Philadelphia, 1851-1900', Antique Collectors' Club, (Woodbridge, UK) 2006; p 194.

Mestdagh, Camille & Lécoules, Peter, 'L'Ameublement d'Art Français, 1850-1900', Editions de L'Amateur, (Paris) 2010, pps. 61, 150.

Segard, Achille, 'A. Carrier-Belleuse', H. Champion, (Paris) 1928.

Lami, Stanislas, 'Dictionnaire des Sculpteurs de l'Ecole Française.' H. Champion, (Paris), 1914.

Artist description:

The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory was founded to the east of Paris in the disused Royal château of Vincennes, late in 1739-40. and moved to the village of Sèvres, west of Paris in 1756, en route to King Louis XV's palace of Versailles.

Here it was also adjacent to Louis's mistress Madame de Pompadour's own château at Bellevue. She was delighted with the factory's new location - as she knew she could entice Louis to take a greater interest in it when it was so near their own residences. Indeed, the King became such a keen patron of the factory that, when it ran into financial difficulties, he bought out the shareholders and became the sole proprietor. The factory remained a royal enterprise until the French Revolution, when it was nationalised.

The popularity of the Louis XV style during the nineteenth century led to a number of companies in and

around Paris, creating exceptional Sèvres Style porcelain based on eighteenth century models, and to the same exceptional quality. Often these pieces were of exhibition quality and scale, and finely painted by the best studio painters of the day such as Poitevin.