

ADRIAN ALAN

Fine Art & Antiques



Henry Dasson (1825 - 1896)

An Unusual Boule, Tortoiseshell and Brass Inlaid Gueridon

Circa: Circa 1880

77 x 0 cm (30³/₄ x 0 inches)

Tortoiseshell and Brass Inlaid Marquetry and Gilt-Bronze

France

1880

Stamped to the top rail 'HENRY DASSON'.

An Unusual Boule, Tortoiseshell and Brass Inlaid, Marquetry Gueridon By Henry Dasson.

This rare gueridon has a gilt-bronze banded circular top, finely inlaid with boule tortoiseshell and brass marquetry inlay, with arabesque designs in the manner of Jean Berrain. The frieze is centred to each side by finely cast female masks framed by laurel leaves against panels of boule marquetry inlaid acanthus. The table is raised on tapering, square section legs, united by a hipped stretcher with a central boss and put down on acanthus banded feet.

The finely inlaid boule table top features arabesque designs after the drawings of the important seventeenth century court designer Jean Berrain (1639-1711), whose designs for ornament proved widely influential.

The table top is centred by a strapwork cartouche depicting the birth of Venus, with four further cartouches representing figures from Greek Mythology; Diana as The Hunter with her Bow and Arrow, Hercules battling with the Lernaean Hydra, Poseidon with his Trident and the Goddess Hera in her chariot. The figures which sit within a complex strapwork and arabesque background, are derived from the published designs of Jean Berrain; in particular the central cartouche of the Birth of Venus, set beneath an arabesque canopy, is taken from Berrain's drawing for 'La Naissance de Venus', published in Paris in 1696.

Artist description:

Henry Dasson (1825-1896) was one of the finest makers of gilt-bronze mounted furniture in the nineteenth century. Unlike other cabinetmakers of this time Dasson started his career as a bronze sculptor, and for this reason one of the characteristics of his work is the great quality of his bronze and

more precisely of the chiselling.

With a workshop established in Paris at 106 rue Vieille-du-Temple, he specialised predominantly in the production of Louis XIV, XV and XVI style furniture using the very finest gilt-bronze mounts.

In 1871, he purchased the flourishing business and remaining stock of Charles-Guillaume Winckelsen, who had established a reputation for furniture of the highest quality. Dasson almost certainly inherited the craft of ciseleur from Winckelsen.

At the 1878 and 1889 Paris Expositions Universelles Dasson exhibited a number of pieces in the Louis XV and XVI styles, as well as pieces of his own modified eighteenth-century design. The exhibits in 1878 included a table entirely in gilt-bronze, purchased by Lord Dudley. His copy of the celebrated Bureau du Roi sold at the same exhibition to Lady Ashburton.

Dasson ceased production in 1894, and at this time held a sale of his models, listed in 'Catalogues of drawings for art bronzes, style furniture and important decoration with rights of reproduction by Henry Dasson et Cie, manufacturer of art bronzes and cabinetmaker as a result of cessation of production..'

The records from this sale show that Paul Sormani, as well as Joseph Emmanuel Zweiner, Maison Millet and Beurdeley acquired certain drawings and models by Dasson.

Jonathan Meyer illustrates a number of exceptional items exhibited by Dasson in 1889 in his book on the Great Exhibitions.

Makers Bibliography:

Camille Mestdagh, Pierre Lécoules (2010) : L'Ameublement d'art français : 1850-1900, Editions de l'Amateur.

Ledoux-Lebard, Denise (1984), Les Ebénistes du XIXème siècle; pp. 146 - 151.

Meyer, Jonathan (2006), Great Exhibitions - London, New York, Paris, Philadelphia, 1851-1900, Antique Collectors' Club, Woodbridge; p. 269, pls. H7, H8, H10: p. 270, pl, H12, Editions de l'Amateur, (Paris), 2010.