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Fine Art & Antiques



Suse Frères

A Fine Pair of Gilt and Patinated Bronze Seven-Light Candelabra after a design by Clodion

Circa: Circa 1890

Circa 1890

65 cm (25 5/8 inches)

Gilt-Bronze

France

Stamped "Susse Fres"

A Fine Pair of Gilt and Patinated Bronze Seven-Light Candelabra, After A Model By *Clodion*, Cast by *Suse Frères*.

Stamped '*Susse Fres*'.

The candelabra are in the form of patinated bronze vases cast in a classical form after the model by Clodion, with masks depicting chimerical ibex flanked by laurel swags, above a finely carved relief of young Bacchanals at play. The vases are surmounted by acanthus collars with central stems issuing scrolling foliate cast candlearms with eagle head finials and terminating in fluted circular nozzles. Each vase is raised on a fluted circular socle put down on a square section re-entrant red marble base with gilt-bronze foliate mounts and toupie feet.

The patinated vases, cast with a classical iconography which blends architectural elements of antiquity with the sensibility of the 'ancien régime' are after a model by the celebrated sculptor Clodion (1738-1814), made during his time at the French Academy in Rome from 1762 to 1771. One noted terracotta

example, formerly in the collection of the princely Russian Dolgoroukov family, is now in the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (H.CK-2093), exhibited at the Clodion exhibition, musée du Louvre in 1992. A related example in marble, notably in the treatment of the masks, is in the Wallace Collection, London (S32).

Clodion's design for this pair of vases may have been influenced by a chalk drawing for a vase by François Boucher from circa 1761-1762 in which we see Bacchanalian parades and acanthus detail that is similar to Clodion's vase designs. François Boucher (1703 - 1770) was the leading French artist working in the Rococo style and possibly the most celebrated artist of the eighteenth century, most known for his idyllic paintings on classical themes. It is possible that this drawing served as inspiration for Clodion when designing his vases, which were executed in various versions between 1763 and 1785 and continued to be adapted well into the nineteenth century by later artists.

A similar design of vase appears in several of Boucher's paintings, including *Earth: Vertumnus and Pomona* from 1749, now in the Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio (Reference 1980.027). Boucher had a strong impact on Clodion, who perhaps sculpted works after his drawings, supported by the fact that three paintings were included in Clodion's personal inventory upon his death in 1814, "trois tableaux de Boucher représentant jeux d'enfants, peints sur bois, prises ensemble 3 fr".

The son-in-law of sculptor Augustin Pajou, Clodion, (Claude Michel), (1738-1814), trained in Paris in the workshops of his uncle and Jean-Baptiste Pigalle, the most successful sculptor of the time. After winning the Prix de Rome, he moved to Italy, sharing a studio with Jean-Antoine Houdon and studying antique, Renaissance, and Baroque sculpture.

In 1771 Clodion returned to Paris, where he continued to produce mostly in terracotta. He also worked with his brothers in other media, decorating objects such as candelabra, clocks, and vases. Drawing primarily from pagan antiquity, he created light-hearted terracotta sculptures that epitomised the Rococo style. Late in his life, when Neo-classical works were more popular, Clodion adjusted his style and worked on major public monuments in Paris.

French, Circa 1890.

Literature:

"François Boucher's Designs for Vases and Mounts." Priore, Alicia. *Studies in the Decorative Arts*. Volume 3, No. 2 (Chicago, 1996). 2-51.