

# ADRIAN ALAN

*Fine Art & Antiques*



**Manner of Ferdinand Barbedienne**

## **An Unusual Neoclassical Style Gilt-Bronze Gueridon With An Inlaid Black Marble Top, In the Manner of Ferdinand Barbedienne and Louis-Constant Sévin**

Circa: French, Circa 1860

French, Circa 1860

84 x 0 cm (33 1/4 x 0 inches)  
gilt-bronze and marble

An Unusual Neoclassical Style Gilt-Bronze Gueridon With An Inlaid Black Marble Top, In the Manner of Ferdinand Barbedienne and Louis-Constant Sévin.

This unusual gueridon has a circular black marble top finely inlaid with concentric decoration of a Greek key border in malachite, an etched foliate band, and centred by a classical head in profile within a malachite surround; the tripod base is cast as three monopodia supports with chimerical heads, scrolling acanthus and terminating in paw feet.

**Louis-Constant Sévin** (1821-1888) was one of the most important French ornamental sculptors of the second half of the nineteenth century. He began his training at the early age of thirteen, when in 1834 he was apprenticed to the Parisian sculptor Antoine-André Marneuf. In 1839 he left Marneuf in order to join forces with the sculptors Phénix and Joyau, with whom he began designing objects for famous silversmiths including François-Désiré Froment-Meurice, Jean-Valentin Morel and Henri Duponchel.

He fled to London during the 1848 Revolution and there worked at Morel's recently opened studio on New Burlington Street. Under Morel's auspices, Sévin designed many pieces that were presented at The Great Exhibition of 1851. Returning to France in 1851, he began designing porcelain models for the factories of Jouhanneaud and Dubois in Limoges, many of which featured at Paris's 1855 Exposition Universelle.

In 1855, Sévin took the position of 'sculpteur-ornementiste' with Ferdinand Barbedienne (1810-1892), who had established one of the most highly esteemed bronze casting foundries of the nineteenth century. Sévin was to spend the remaining twenty-three years of his life there providing plans and instruction to the company's craftsmen. Executing over two thousand designs in this time and often using novel techniques, his objects were some of the most stylistically diverse and innovative in the Barbedienne foundry and indeed in the wider production of decorative arts in France.

Sévin regularly received commissions from European nobility and royalty, and his pieces were frequently displayed at the Great International Exhibitions of the period. His most prestigious commissions include his work for the chapel and tomb of Prince Albert at Frogmore House in Windsor, his bronze work at the Hôtel de la Païva in Paris, and the candelabras designed for the Kremlin. He was to achieve great recognition in his own time and was awarded many medals for artistic excellence.

French, Circa 1860.

### **Artist description:**

Ferdinand Barbedienne (1810-1892) was the inspiration and driving force behind one of the most important French art foundries. He pioneered the use of mounts and, more commonly, bronze sculpture including figures and animals. Barbedienne produced catalogues of bronze reproductions of Greek and Roman classical sculpture and experimented with *champlève* and *cloisonné* enamels during the third quarter of the century. Barbedienne exhibited several pieces of furniture at the 1855 Paris Exhibition including an *ormolu* mounted oak dressing table and an *ormolu* mounted ebony veneered bookcase. Both pieces were executed in his favoured Renaissance revival style for furniture. Furniture with mounts signed by Barbedienne is extremely rare.

The Barbedienne foundry handled the casting of numerous national monuments and architectural schemes. Ferdinand Barbedienne himself also took an active part in the promotion of contemporary sculpture and became one of the founders for Davis d'Angers' medallions as well as much of Rude's sculpture.

His signature varied from hand written capitals to stamp in capitals, usually F. Barbedienne, Fondeur or BARBEDIENNE PARIS.

In 1839 Barbedienne collaborated with the inventor Achille Collas who had succeeded in enlarging and reducing works of art to arbitrary sizes by a simple mathematical calculation, allowing the accurate reduction of classical and contemporary marbles for the purpose of reproduction in bronze. In 1850 Barbedienne was commissioned to furnish the Paris town hall for which he was awarded with the 'medaille d' honneur' at the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1855.

Barbedienne's awards:

Paris, 1878; 'Grand Prix', 'Grande Médaille d'Or', 'Diplôme d'honneur' , and 28 'Médailles de Coopérateurs'.

Vienna 1873; 2 'Diplômes d'Honneur', 'Médailles de Progrès', and 25 'Médailles de Coopérateurs'.

Paris 1867: 'Jure Rapporteur (Hors Concours)'.

London 1862; 3 Medals for Excellence.

Paris 1855; 'Grande Médaille d'Honneur'.

London 1851; 2 Council Medals.

Makers Bibliography:

Barbedienne, Ferdinand, Catalogue des Bronzes d'art 1886 , Fonderie d'art Français: Val d'Osne, Fonderie de Tusey, Antoine-Louis Barye, Fonderie Rudier, Charles Crozatier, Ferdinand Barbedienne, Livres Groupe, (Paris) 2010

Mestdagh, Camille and Pierre Lecoules, L'Ameublement d'art français: 1850-1900, Editions de l'Amateur (Paris), 2010, pp.23, 120, 155, 161 and 179.

Kjellberg, Pierre, Les Bronzes du XIX Siècle, dictionnaire des sculpteurs, Editions de l'Amateur (Paris) 1987, pps.653-658.

Meyer, Jonathan, *Great Exhibitions: London, New York, Paris, Philadelphia, 1851-1900*, Antique Collector's Club (Woodbridge, UK), 2006.

Ledoux-Lebard, Denise, *Les Ebénistes du XIX Siècle*, Editions de l'Amateur, (Paris) 1984, p.38.

Cooper, Jeremy, *19th Century Romantic Bronzes*, New York Graphic Society, 1975 pps. 25, 41, 149.