

# ADRIAN ALAN

*Fine Art & Antiques*



**Ferdinand Barbedienne**

## **A Neo-Grec Gilt and Patinated Bronze Tazza, Designed by Ferdinand Levillain**

Circa: French, Circa 1870.

French, Circa 1870.

8 x 0 cm (3 1/1 x 0 inches)

Patinated bronze

Signed F. Levillain and stamped "F. Barbedienne"

A Neo-Grec Gilt and Patinated Bronze Tazza, Designed by Ferdinand Levillain and Cast By Ferdinand Barbedienne.

Marked 'F. Levillain' to the decoration and stamped 'F. Barbedienne' to the underside.

This rare tazza is a fine example of the collaboration between the gifted designer Ferdinand Levillain and the highly acclaimed bronzier Ferdinand Barbedienne. It is decorated with a bas-relief in the 'Neo-Grec' or 'Pompeian' style with classical figures herding animals in a procession.

Designs in the 'Neo Grec' style figured prominently in Barbedienne's submissions to the 1855 Paris Exposition Universelle and throughout the firm's production.

French, Circa 1870.

Ferdinand Levillain (1837 - 1905) had his debut at the Paris Salon in 1861 and won recognition through the 1860's and 1870's for his work with the highly respected Barbedienne.

In 1878 he ceased his collaboration with Barbedienne and triumphed alone at the Exposition Universelle, where he won the gold medal for his work referencing Antiquity.

In 1884 he was awarded a first class medal at the Salon and in 1889 a silver medal at the Exposition Universelle. In 1892 he was recognised with the highly prestigious Légion d'Honneur. Examples of his work are displayed in many museums including the Musée de Lyon and the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris.

Levillain also collaborated with the Sèvres manufactory and won several medals, which are still visible today at the Louvre Museum and the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Angers.

### **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, Fondateur 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.

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