

# ADRIAN ALAN

*Fine Art & Antiques*



**Maison Mottheau et Fils**

**A Magnificent Louis XVI Style Gilt-Bronze, Moulded and Cut-Crystal Eighteen-Light Oval Figural Chandelier**

Circa: French, Circa 1900

French, Circa 1900

170 x 140 x 90 cm (66 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 55 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 35 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches)

Gilt-Bronze Cut-Glass Moulded Glass

A Magnificent Louis XVI Style Gilt-Bronze, Moulded and Cut-Crystal Eighteen-Light Oval Figural Chandelier, Firmly Attributed to Maison Mottheau et Fils.

This large and impressive chandelier is of oval form with an acanthus cast corona above an open frame with a garlanded circlet, above a finely cast gilt-bronze basket frame of graduated beads, issuing from its rim a 'torch en flambeau' amongst four ribbon tied foliate candelarms to the front and back, and to the sides superb female cast figural supports with a further four scrolling candelarms terminating in fluted drip tray and sconces, the chandelier hung all over with moulded spires, faceted slab drops, pear drops and rosettes.

Fitted with a further five interior lights to the basket and a flambeau shaded light beneath the upper circlet.

Of exceptional quality with superbly cast gilt-bronze and ambitious design; this important chandelier is firmly attributed to the important Parisian firm of Maison Mottheau et Fils. Known for their distinctive style and elaborate designs, Maison Mottheau exhibited a closely related basket chandelier at the Paris *Exposition Universelle* in 1900. Of comparable oval form and with corresponding female figural supports to the sides, this chandelier was received with considerable acclaim and is illustrated in *The Art Journal, The Paris Exhibition 1900 - An Illustrated Record of its Art, Architecture and Industries*, London, 1900; p. 155.

In relation to their lighting exhibits at the *Paris Exposition*, The Art Journal notes of Maison Mottheau that:

*'The work shown is artistic and interesting, and adds, if possible, to the reputation of this already famous house.'*

*The introduction of electricity as a means of domestic lighting has given a new opportunity to such firms as that under consideration to display their taste and ingenuity, and it must be conceded that Messieurs Mottheau et Fils have availed themselves to the full of the new possibilities presented.*

*The French Section shows many examples of fine work applied under the new conditions, but we doubt if a more complete success is to be recorded to the credit of any exhibitor than can be conceded to Messieurs Mottheau et Fils'*

French, Circa 1900.

#### **Literature:**

The Art Journal, *The Paris Exhibition 1900 - An Illustrated Record of its Art, Architecture and Industries*, London, 1900; p. 155.

#### **Artist description:**

The bronzier Maison Mottheau & Fils is perhaps best known for their 'torchère lumineuse' exhibited at the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle; an ambitious and monumental tour de force executed in gilt-bronze and onyx from a design by Eugène-Frédéric Piat.

Specialising primarily in lighting fixtures, the firm took full advantage of the advent of electricity, incorporating it with their decorative designs, combining function with elaborate decoration.

Commenting on the introduction of electricity, the Art Journal wrote of Mottheau's display at the Paris 1900 Exposition Universelle:

The French Section shows many examples of fine work applied under the new conditions, but we doubt if a more complete success is to be recorded to the credit of any exhibitor than can be conceded to Messieurs Mottheau et fils.

#### **Bibliography:**

The Art Journal. *The Paris Exhibition 1900 - An Illustrated Record of its Art, Architecture and Industrie*, (London), 1900; pp. 86-7.

Meyer, Jonathan. *Great Exhibitions - London, New York, Paris, Philadelphia, 1851-1900*, Antique Collectors' Club, (Woodbridge, UK), 2006; pps. 290, 318 pl. J72.