

# ADRIAN ALAN

*Fine Art & Antiques*



**Mathieu Befort Jeune**

## **A Pair of French Gilt-Bronze Mounted Ebonised Meubles d'Appui**

Circa: French, Circa 1850

French, Circa 1850

115 x 83 x 42 cm (45 1/4 x 32 5/8 x 16 1/4 inches)

Ebonised Wood ormolu

Stamped twice 'BEFORT JEUNE', the mounts marked 'BJ'.

A pair of French gilt-bronze mounted and ebonised meubles d'appui, by Mathieu Béfort dit Béfort Jeune.

Each has a vert maurin marble top above a cupboard door applied with large oval gilt-bronze medallions depicting Hercules and Orpheus, opening to an interior fitted with an adjustable shelf, each twice stamped 'BEFORT JEUNE', and mounts marked 'BJ'

French, Circa 1850.

The two gilt-bronze oval medallions represent Orpheus in Hades and Hercules Chaining Cerberus and are after a design attributed to Augustin Pajou (1730–1809), the pair of are a type recorded to decorate a single cabinet at the Hôtel de Voyer d'Argenson as drawn by Sir William Chambers in 1769.

### **Literature:**

J. Draper, G. Scherf, Pajou sculpteur du Roi 1730-1809, cat. exp., Paris & New York, 1998, p. 164-165, fig. 100.

J. Harris, 'Sir Williams Chambers and his Parisian Album', dans Architectural History. The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, t. 6, 1963, pp. 54-90, p. 60, fig. 7

### **Artist description:**

Mathieu Befort (Befort Jeune) (1813-1880) is recorded as having worked in Paris from 1836 until 1880.

He was descended from a family of renowned ébénistes and was the son of the renowned cabinetmaker Jean-Baptiste Befort, known as Befort Père, who was of Belgian origin and renowned for having supplied furniture for the apartments of the Duc d'Orléans.

Father and son are noted for their interpretations of furniture by André-Charles Boulle and the creation of vernis marin and porcelain mounted furniture, often in the manner of Riesener.

The firm received a medal at the 1844 Exposition de l'Industrie Française, and earned Befort a reputation for the high quality of his work. As a result he became a purveyor to Napoléon III and Empress Eugénie.

Makers Bibliography:

Ledoux-Lebard, Denise Les Ebénistes du XIX Siècle, Editions de l'Amateur, (Paris) 1984, pps. 48-50.