

# BUTCHOFF

EXCELLENCE IN ANTIQUES

Est.1964



## A PAIR OF BRONZE VASES BY F. BARBÉDIENNE

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H: 19 in / 48 cm | Dia: 8.5 in / 21.5 cm

A Pair of Bronze Vases

By F. Barbedienne

Cast in bronze baluster form, rising from a circular base, the whole decorated extensively with bucolic ornament of flora and fauna raised in relief; an Arcadian couple symbolic of bounty flanking the central motif with birds of paradise, plants and a mask of Dionysus. The double-frieze depicting idyllic scenes of human labour and production. After an original design by the sculptor Ferdinand Levillain, and signed to the base "F. BARBEDIENNE" & "F. Levillain."

French, circa 1880

### Literature:

Ferdinand Barbedienne (1810-1892) and Achille Collas (1795-1859), who was the inventor of a machine that

would mechanically reduce statues, started the F. Barbedienne foundry in Paris in 1838. At first they produced bronze reductions of antique sculptures of Greek and Roman origin. Their first contract to produce bronzes modelled by a living artist was made in 1843 when they arranged to produce the works of Francois Rude. They barely survived the revolution and financial collapse of 1848, which caused many artists and foundries to declare bankruptcy. Barbedienne actively pursued contracts with the many sculptors of Paris contracting with David D'Angers, Jean-Baptiste Clesinger, and even producing some casts for Antoine Louis Barye as well as others.

Achille Collas died in 1859 leaving Ferdinand Barbedienne as the sole owner of the foundry which by that time had grown to employ over 300 workers at their workshop located at 63 Rue de Lancry in Paris. Ferdinand Barbedienne was made the President of the Reunion of Bronze Makers in 1865 a post he held until 1885. The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 and the shortage of raw metals caused him to have to stop making sculptures but he did receive a contract from the French government for the production of cannons which kept his foundry open. After the war he resumed his casting of sculptures and put even more effort into signing contracts with various sculptors.

