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XVIII-XIX CENTURY
FURNITURE & DECORATIVE ARTS



**A GEORGE III GILTWOOD PIER MIRROR IN THE
MANNER OF THOMAS JOHNSON**

Dimensions: H: 95 in / 241.5 cm | W: 42.5 cm / 108 cm

8983

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A George III Giltwood Pier Mirror
In the Manner of Thomas Johnson

An exceptionally detailed design; the superb carved decoration housing a shaped rectangular plate and undulating mirrored borders; the inner frame closely tied to the outer frame and leading the eye around the mirror. The grandiose masterful carving incorporating C-scrolls, flowering branchwork, stylized icicles, acanthus leaves, and distinctive architectural follies and figures which firmly place this mirror within the canon of Johnson's greatest designs. The confident execution is a great testament to the technical prowess and artistic creativity of one of the greatest carvers and designers of the eighteenth century.

Circa 1760

We are grateful to Dr Adam Bowett (Chippendale Society), Jeremy Musson (Country Life), Nuala



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Canny (Farmleigh House), Kevin Egan (Guinness), & Julius Bryant (Victoria & Albert Museum) for their kind assistance with the cataloguing of the present mirror.

Literature:

Thomas Johnson (1723-1799)

Thomas Johnson was one of the most skilled carvers and furniture designers in Georgian England. Drawing inspiration from the Fables of Aesop, the rococo, China, and the idealised rustic life, his work is whimsical, exuberant and witty. Chippendale borrowed freely from his work. Johnson was a founder member of the 'Antigallican Society', a group who excoriated the French taste.

In addition to its relation to Johnson's designs, this mirror also reflects the influence of Lock, the great master with whom he worked for a period. Lock published many sketches and pattern books, including *A New Book of Ornaments for Looking Glasses* in 1752, introducing several idiosyncratic features which Johnson would adopt such as the small decorative urns and shaped balusters seen especially in plate 4, and present in the Earl of Iveagh's mirror. Johnson is recorded working in Dublin between 1746-55, where his "virtuosity and exuberant style were no doubt well-suited to the Irish taste for rich rococo furniture."