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FURNITURE & DECORATIVE ARTS



A VERY FINE COMMODE BY HENRY DASSON

Dimensions: H: 43 in / 108 cm | W: 56 in / 141 cm | D: 21.5 in / 54 cm

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A Very Fine Louis XVI Style Gilt-Bronze Mounted Marquetry Commode
By Henry Dasson

After a model by Jean-Henri Riesener, supplied to Marie-Antoinette for Versailles. Constructed in a finely patinated harewood, with Brèche d'Alep marble platform, atop a breakfront frieze, set with a drawer in the apron, over a unified central painted panel within a gilt-bronze frame enclosing a shelved interior, flanked by panels of foliate marquetry. The apron is mounted with finely cast acanthus and the scroll-mounted legs on block feet. The concave sides are set with trellis marquetry. Signed and dated "Henry Dasson, 1879."

French, 1879

Literature:

Regarded at the time as one of Riesener's masterpieces, several copies were made in his workshops, and examples may be seen in Waddesdon Manor, The Getty Museum, and Versailles, inter alia.

Dasson began his career as a bronze sculptor, and his work is renowned for the fine quality of the metalwork, utilising the designs of the ancien régime, and adapting them to conform to the needs of



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the times. He participated at the Expositions Universelle in 1878 receiving the laudatory critique of Louis Gonse, the Parisian arbiter of bon ton and quality,

'nouveau venu dans la carrière industrielle Henry Dasson, s'est rapidement créé par la perfection de ces oeuvres une très haute situation a laquelle nous applaudissons chaleureusement' [newcomer to an industrial career, Henry Dasson has quickly achieved a favorable and highly-regarded position for himself by virtue of the perfection of his pieces, which we warmly applaud]

Lord Dudley and Lady Ashburton were among his renowned clients at the exhibition. He was awarded the 'Grand Prix Artistique' at the 1889 Paris Exposition Universelle, and examples of his work were purchased by the English Royal Family. Made a chevalier of the Légion d'honneur in 1883, he was elevated to an officier in 1889, following his success at the Paris Exposition of the same year. Dasson ceased production in 1894, and the enduring reputation of the finest maker of gilt-bronze mounted furniture was echoed and acknowledged when his contemporaries Paul Sormani, J.E. Zwiener, Maison Millet, and Beurdeley all jumped at the chance to acquire drawings and models by Dasson. Nevertheless, the pieces created by Dasson remain without equal, and stand at the epitome of nineteenth-century French furniture.

Literature:

Denise Ledoux-Lebard. *Le mobilier français du XIXe siècle, 1795-1889 : dictionnaire des ébénistes et des menuisiers*, Paris: Éditions de l'amateur, 2000, pp. 146-51.

Christopher Payne. *Paris Furniture: The Luxury Market of the 19th Century*, Château de Saint-Rémy: Éditions Monelle Hayot, 2018, pp. 307-17.

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