



**AN EXQUISITE EBONISED 'JAPONISME' TABLE IN
THE MANNER OF G. VIARDOT**

Dimensions: H: 29 in / 73 cm | W: 26 in / 66 cm | D: 19.5 in / 49 cm

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An Exquisite Ebonised 'Japonisme' Table
in the Manner G. Viardot

Designed in the exotic style associated with the French 'japonisme' movement and the English Aesthetic movement, the table combines ebonised wood with bois satiné, boxwood and brass. The ebonised top inset with a marquetry panel of oriental symbols and motifs, including parchment scrolls, exotic birds, kanji, and a fan, all inlaid within a basketweave parquetry background. The platform top floating on block buffers and a pierced and scrolled frieze, each side set with a brass central plaque. Supported on square section legs transitioning into inverted cabriole forms, joined by an undertier and terminating in claw feet and castors.

French, circa 1880

A number of related tables and carved pedestal signed Viardot are documented, with the same distinct inverted cabriole legs and pierced foliate carving.

Gabriel Viardot (1830-1904) was a Parisian cabinetmaker renowned for his furniture creations in the "Chinese-Japanese" style, tailored to European tastes in the late 19th century. Beginning his career as a wood sculptor in 1849, Viardot quickly made a name for himself, running a small team by the age of 19. By 1853, he operated a workshop and furniture store on rue Rambuteau with his brother. In 1860, Viardot established his own atelier, "G. Viardot," and began focusing on East Asian-inspired furniture, evident in his display at the 1867 exposition universelle where he was awarded 4 medals.

His signature style continued to develop throughout the 1870s, characterized by lacquered panels from China or Japan, Tonkin mother-of-pearl inlays, and custom bronze accents, earning him further acclaim, including a silver medal at the 1878 Exposition Universelle. His success continued through the 1880s, with awards at major exhibitions, culminating in a knighthood of the Légion d'honneur in 1885 after the Antwerp Exposition Universelle. At his peak, Viardot's workshop employed 90 to 100 artisans, many of whom he personally trained.

In 1889 and 1900, Viardot received gold medals at the Paris Expositions Universelles, cementing his reputation. His works were made available through prestigious stores such as L'Escalier de Cristal, the famed Parisian emporium, which popularized the Japonisme trend he championed.

Literature:

Comparative Literature:

Payne, Christopher. Paris Furniture: The Luxury Market of the 19th Century. Château de Saint-Rémy: Éditions Monelle Hayot, 2018, p.541; for a Viardot table with similar brass plaques to the sides.