

AN EXHIBITION-QUALITY MARQUETRY LIBRARY TABLE ATTRIBUTED TO MORANT OF BOND STREET

Dimensions: H: 30 in / 76 cm | Dia: 60.5 in / 153 cm

9119

Butchoff Antiques, 154 Kensington Church Street, London, W8 4BN
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An Exhibition-Quality Marquetry Library Table
Attributed to Morant of Bond Street

An exquisite octagonal table made to the highest standard using fine Circassian walnut, ebony, tulipwood, and stained specimen woods such as harewood, supported on quadripartite feet of upward scrolling form, fitted with concealed brass castors, sweeping upwards into a tapering, and concave quadrilateral central column, inlaid with marquetry cartouches. The octagonal shaped top with moulded edge and serpentine shaped frieze inlaid with marquetry designs of alternating musical and armorial trophies. The largest central cartouche in the top depicting Aesop's 'Donkey in a lion's skin' fable within a ribbon-tied frame, the perimeter inlaid with a further eight marquetry scenes of Aesop's Fables, including 'The Shepherd Boy,' 'The Wolf and the Crane,' and 'The Wolf and the Lamb,' among others, each interspersed by complex marquetry floral bouquets centred by abundant fruit baskets and lover's knot bows.
English, circa 1840

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While this table is unsigned, it was undoubtedly made by a leading London cabinetmaker in the early Victorian period. The distinctive design of the base is closely related to the furniture designs of Richard Bridgens, published in 1833 and revised in 1838, appearing as no. 16 'Marquetrie [sic] Centre Table.' Another table featuring these upturned feet, previously with Butchoff Antiques, was stamped by Morant of Bond St. Indeed, an octagonal marquetry table stamped Morant, also previously with Butchoff Antiques, features marquetry panels of Aesop's Fables in a nearly identical manner.

Christopher Payne's recent research allows us to identify the marquetry as the work of the Blake family, a multi-generational workshop begun by Robert Blake which supplied top cabinetmakers such a Morant & Edward Holmes Baldock who counted the Duke of Buccleuch, the Marquess of Hertford and the Duke of Northumberland among their clients.

Literature:

Comparative Literature:

Payne, Christopher. British Furniture 1820 to 1920 : The Luxury Market. ACC Art Books, 2023, pp. 78-84, for a discussion of related tables including "a masterpiece of Blake marquetry."