



## PAIR OF WROUGHT IRON CANDELABRA BY GILBERT POILLERAT

Infused with movement and energy, Gilbert Poillerat's design took Art Deco metal-work in new and exciting directions. As a vivid demonstration his Candelabra almost defy their base material, the animated compositions redefining the malleability quotient of wrought iron and what could be possible. In doing so, Poillerat sought to exploit the new technical advances of machine orientation in what was becoming a rapidly industrialised society.

Following his graduation, Poillerat worked with arguably the most influential wrought-iron master of them all, Edgar Brandt. There can be no doubt that this time was hugely important, exposing him to the new ideas that blossomed during the Art Deco movement, when wrought-iron escaped the constraints of tradition that had kept it static for so long. In turn he exposed the older classicist Brandt to the energies of the rising avant-garde.

Though Poillerat is famous for his 'calligraphic' aesthetic, he did find elements of nature to work with, as evidently seen in the Candelabra. Avoiding floral motifs, he would regularly use branches and leaves (and elsewhere coral), involving complex intertwined and twisted compositions. Such embellishments would often be combined with strong stylised evocations of Egyptian or neoclassical motifs, culled from his vast knowledge of historical architecture, as seen with the central Obelisk (and again seen elsewhere with his dramatic use of the Antelope skull).

As Joan Kahr affirms, Poillerat was never known to stamp his work and neither are the candelabra stamped. She explains that "he firmly believed that the work itself was a signature, showing as it did the style and quality of the designer. Since Edgar Brandt's work was always being copied, Brandt had a policy of stamping his objects. Poillerat was not upset when people copied him. He was too eager to move on to the next design."

We are grateful to Joan Kahr M.A. who as the leading academic on the work of Edgar Brandt, was responsible for bringing Gilbert Poillerat to wider renown in her 1992 article in *Metalsmith Magazine*. References: Edgar Brandt, *Master of Art Deco Ironwork* Pub. Harry N. Abrams LTD. 1999 | Edgar Brandt *Art Deco Ironwork* Pub. Schiffer Publishing LTD. 2010

Four leaf entwined arms in the form of branches, topped with gilt candle cups, rising from a circular wooden base with central ball and gilded obelisk on circular stand.

France, circa 1940's  
W35cm x H42cm x Dia. 19cm  
£32,000





## A PARCEL GILT MIRROR IN THE MANNER OF OSVALDO BORSANI

Born in 1911 to a furniture builder at the famed *Atelier di Varedo*, Borsani developed his precocious sense of design during his studies in fine art and architecture in the 1930's. A tendency in his designs for smooth, flowing linear patterns, frequently went hand in hand with the designer's eagerness to create furniture which was both beautiful and practical: built to accommodate and facilitate the needs of its users, and to fit naturally and effortlessly into their lives. A key example of this is Borsani's famous P40 chair. Made up of mobile elements, the P40 chair uses a mechanism enabling the occupant to assume a multitude of different positions of comfort.

This predilection for curvilinear forms is echoed in a purely decorative sense in this particular piece. Of broadly rectangular shape, the frame gently tapers towards the middle, its undulating top edge curving at each corner and rising softly at the centre. The original mirror-glass is bordered by a fine trim of gold leaf at the inner edge of the frame, in a graceful, lace-like pattern. The main body of the frame is given further texture by the striated mouldings moving outwards from the glass, ending in leaf-like, gilt segments delicately furling inwards, their rippling effect echoing the gentle curve of the overall shape of the mirror.

The almost Baroque-like gilded detail to the frame might seem surprising in the context of the largely unadorned 1950's aesthetic. However, this more ornate style of decoration did play a part in mid-century design. The artist Lucio Fontana, with whom Borsani closely collaborated, was particularly fascinated by the spatial explorations made possible with the Baroque style. This fascination can be seen clearly in Fontana's wall decoration, *Arlecchini*, designed in 1954 for a private apartment in Milan entrusted to the Borsani Design Studio.

Oswaldo Borsani's projects were identified by a number that corresponds to his designs, as we are unable to find the precise number, it was not possible to attribute the project - Oswaldo Borsani Archive.

Italy, circa 1950's  
Carved & painted with gilded elements  
W89cm x H123cm x D6cm  
£15,000











Marble example at *Château de Maisons-Laffitte*, near Paris



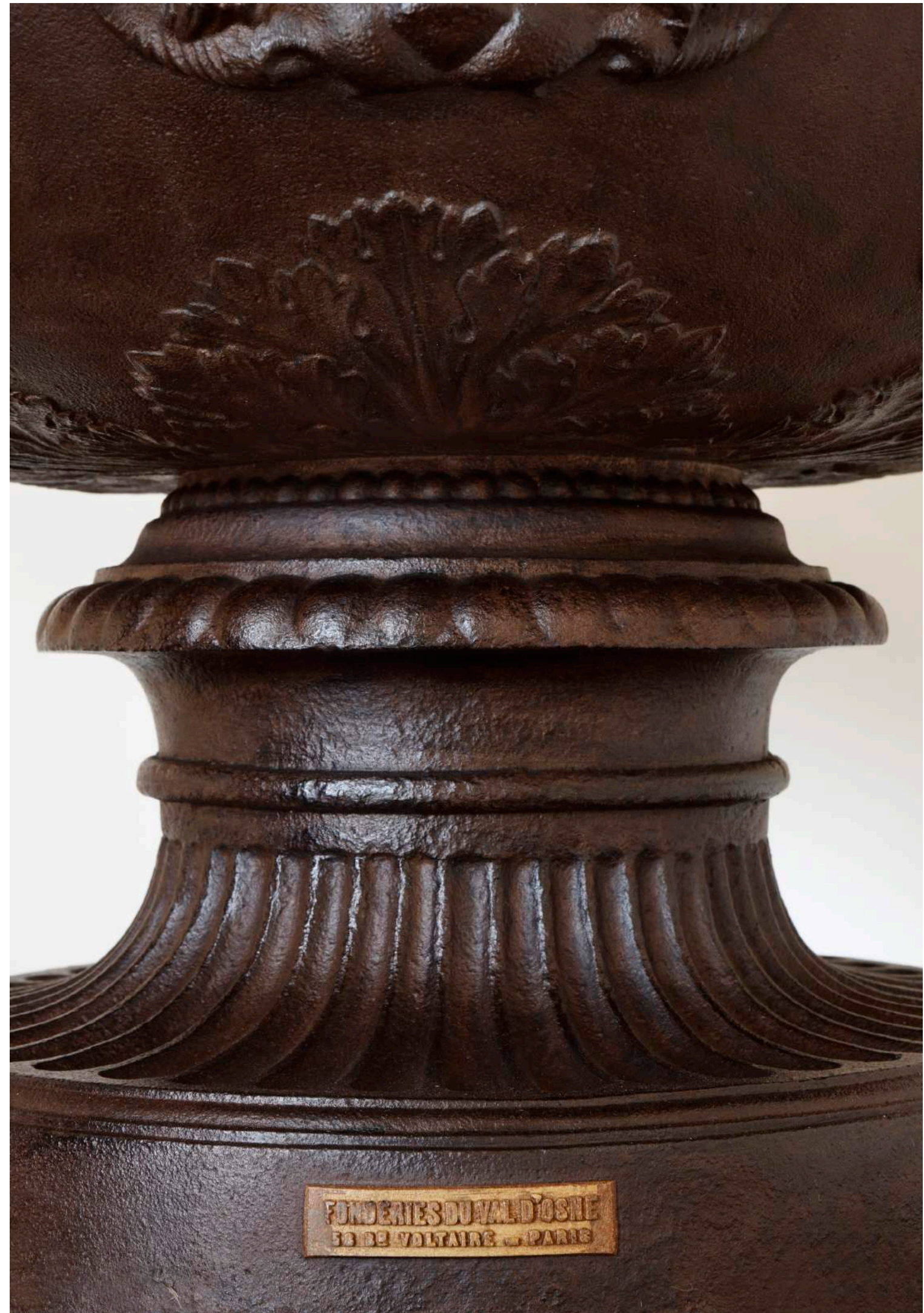
Etching by Piranesi, circa 1770

### THE 'LANTE' VASE BY THE VAL D'OSNE FOUNDRY AFTER PIRANESI

The Lante Vase is said to have been found in fragments in Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli, and is known to have been in the Villa Lante as early as 1639. It was acquired by Giovanni Volpato and sold by him to Colonel John Campbell (later 1st Lord Cawdor) in 1788. Obtaining an export licence proved to be difficult and Thomas Jenkins played an important role in securing it. It was at the sale of Lord Cawdor's collection in 1800 that the Duke of Bedford purchased the vase for £735.79.

A retailer of fine cast-iron ornaments, J. J. Ducel was recorded as supplying cast-iron works through Paris as early as 1810 in the *Pas-de-Calais*. The factory was sold in 1878 to the *Fonderie de la Haute-Marne* and all of the firm's models were subsequently bought by the *Val d'Osne* foundry. However, prior to the firm's sale, critics at the 1867 *Paris Exposition Universelle* proclaimed that "Ducel is the great manufacturer of works in cast-iron, to whom Paris is so largely indebted for the grace and elegance that supply so many of the adornments of its streets". Ducel, *Val d'Osne* and other associated foundries produced both bronze and cast-iron statuary. Cast-iron is corrosive, whereas non-ferrous bronze does not suffer the same detrimental effects of weathering and is therefore a superior and more expensive material.

The foundry of *Val d'Osne* became highly regarded for the varied nature and quality of its castings in the second half of the 19th century. Commonly known after 1870 as simply *Val d'Osne*, the company was originally founded by J.P.V. André in *Val d'Osne* 1835





and developed rapidly, absorbing smaller foundries in the *Haute-Marne* area east of Paris. The foundry contributed to the London International Exhibition of 1851, where a bronze fountain cast with classical figures attracted much attention. André also specialised in fancy castings and architectural fittings. His Paris address was at 14 *Rue Neuve*, Menilmontant.

In 1855 the Barbezat & Cie Foundry was born out of the André workshop. In 1867 Barbezat & Cie changed its name to Houille & Cie. Then, in 1870, it changed its name to *Société Anonyme du Val d'Osne*. With the change of name came the change of casting mark and address: *Fonderies d'Art du Val d'Osne*, 58 *Bd Voltaire*, Paris or simply *Val d'Osne*.

Cast-iron had been in production during the 18th century but its inferior status to the more fashionable and delicate wrought-iron had generally confined its use to architectural work. By the early 19th century, however, rapid developments of the Industrial Revolution combined with the simultaneous burgeoning of a new middle class provided the impetus for a dramatic expansion in its application and in a short space of time a proliferation of iron foundries across Europe and America thrived on the production of everything from inkstands to railway stations.

The use of cast-iron for garden ornament became particularly widespread at this time, as the possibilities for its mass-production at a fraction of the cost of bronze made it the material of choice for indoor/outdoor statuary, figural lighting, fountains and vases.

Nowhere was the popularity and use of cast-iron ornament greater than in France, where by the second half of the 19th century two foundries in particular had come to dominate production both for the home market and for export. The more important of these was the officially named *Société Anonyme des Hauts-Fourneaux et Fonderies du Val-D'Osne*, *Anciennes maisons J.P.V. André et J.J. Ducl et Fils*. Smaller than *Val D'Osne* but nevertheless a major player in the manufacture of cast-iron was the firm of *A. A. Durenne*, established in 1847 at *Sommevoire*. Both *Val D'Osne* and *Durenne* were frequently awarded medals for their work at the many international exhibitions of the latter half of the 19th century. Each also published large catalogues illustrating and listing its entire inventory of models, from which casts of varying size and finish could be ordered.

France, Mid-Nineteenth Century  
W110cm x H70cm  
£52,000





## ART DECO WROUGHT IRON & MARBLE CONSOLE TABLE

A striking mix of realism and abstract form, the design's comparative restraint shows that we have entered a new era of refinement. Gone is the exaggerated, fantastical nature of pre-war *Art Nouveau* and fussy over-ornamentation. Instead, we see an aesthetic based on the measured discipline and quality of the ironwork, with abstraction beginning to come to the fore (as seen with the spirals).

The screen's workmanship is very much in the manner of Edgar Brandt, in particular his series of radiator screens from 1922 called *Les Fruits*, which share the same motifs and technical applications. There are the multitudes of concentric C scrolls (evoking stylised organic forms), the 'potato peeling' coils found near to the central fruit ensemble and the hammered uprights resembling bark; all distinctive hallmarks of Brandt's workshop from this period.

There is a long tradition of iron screens in France, dating from the 12th Century church, where decorative metal-work would protect reliquaries and demarcated space. By the 1920's radiator covers had gained particular importance with improved indoor heating and held a special fascination with the public. The Art Deco proliferation of glamorous Hotels and Ocean Liners would see the radiator screen join the front ranks of avant-garde design.

Blackened wrought iron console/radiator screen base with later Grand Antique marble top, the grill with openwork decoration consisting of central pineapple and associated leaf ensemble on a background of C scrolls and bark-line uprights.

France, circa 1922  
W88.5cm x H95cm x D25.5cm  
£18,800



## A PAIR OF LARGE GLASS LANTERNS BY GINO CENEDESE

Formed as a flaring vase shape with a closed top, enclosing three bulb holders; the base with a hanging white glass pendant. Each retaining its original trumpet-form ceiling rose. Each with the Cenedese label.

Gino Cenedese (1907-1973) was widely experienced having worked alongside various master glassmakers (including Giacomo Cappellin) when, in 1946, he founded what is now known as Gino Cenedese e Figlio together with such talents as Alfredo Barbini, Angelo Tosi, Gino Fort and Pietro Scaramal. In 1949 he became sole owner, and it was under his leadership that the company established its national and international reputation. On the one hand, its products covered the traditional range of Murano blown glass (plates, vases, bowls, wineglasses and lamps), on the other, the company opened up to contemporary art, establishing close links with the artists of the period.

Collaborating with these designers, the company would exhibit at such important international events as the Venice Biennale and the Milan Triennale. In the 1950's the company worked regularly with the sculptor Napoleone Martuinuzzi, and then in the 1960's with Antonio Da Ros, with whom it developed new designs and techniques.

Italy, circa 1950's  
Designed by Gino Cenedese (1907-1973)  
Manufactured by 'Cenedese Vetri, Murano'  
H 125cm x Dia. 35cm  
£26,000





## ART DECO WROUGHT IRON MIRROR

The Japonisme influence on French design is well documented and the crest conveys this sense of imported serenity, as opposed to the over-charged ornamentation of Art Nouveau. Likewise, the frame of the mirror is stripped of realist decoration and relies on the qualities of geometric proportion and material, following the modernist principles of simplicity making good design.

Hammered wrought-iron rectangular frame with concave corners, underlined by geometric elements around the perimeter and openwork pediment decorated with a stylized bird, flowers and foliage. Enclosing the original beveled mirror plate, with hanging mounts and floral pins.

France, circa 1925  
W94cm x H 135cm  
£16,500

## A PAIR OF UPHOLSTERED ARMCHAIRS ATTRIBUTED TO FRANCISQUE CHALEYSSIN

Art Deco drew much of its inspiration from the French Ancien regime and so with the classicist Chaleyssin, who also held a well-published dislike of Art Nouveau and its recent transgressions against 'good taste'. Banded together with the purifying drive of modernism, his chairs look to the refinement of Louis XVI fauteuils and the sweeping forms of the period. Gone is superfluous ornamentation and carving, replaced by graceful proportions in the best materials that money could buy, encapsulated in the exotic rosewood veneer.

Rosewood veneer with brass inlay over curved solid armrests resting on a curved base. Seat and backs covered with studded mustard velvet (4192 Java). Stamped "16129" to the seat frame and pencilled "Le Cardinal, René Tapissier, St Br\*\*\*\*."

France, circa 1920's  
Attributed to Francisque Chaleyssin (1872-1951)  
W72cm x H 88cm x D 88cm  
£25,000





## AN OAK & LEATHER ROTATING BOOKCASE

This curious spinning bookcase brings to mind the work of the notable French designer, Maxime Old. Indeed, a piece of a very similar design can be seen within his *oeuvre*. His use of geometric forms and the absence of ornamentation in his work, as well as his renowned 'transformative' pieces of furniture helped to lead mid-century furniture design, whose focus was largely on practicality and comfort.

Of simple form, the carefully proportioned, box-like body of the bookcase sits atop a circular base, upon which turns. The oak veneer, whose cerused surface gives emphasis to the natural grain of the wood, is broken up by the bold, dark green leather interior of each niche. The two flaps to the top open up to provide a larger surface area, also lined with green leather, giving further function to the piece.

Simple, practical, not elaborate but with a pleasing quirk of mid-century inventiveness, this piece is a quintessential example of the 1950's design aesthetic.

W51cm x H71cm x D51cm  
£12,000

## AN ARTS & CRAFTS TABLE LAMP

A silver-plated table lamp with a conical shade with pierced motifs and an inner silk liner. The slender baluster stem standing on a hammered spreading plinth base. The top finial and silk shade later replacements.

Northern European, circa 1900-1920  
H 61cm x Dia. 27cm  
£6,000









## HANS WEGNER (1914–2007)

Hans Jorgen Wegner (1914–2007) learned woodworking as a boy, the son of a cobbler, in southern Denmark. He studied design at ‘The Artisan College’ in Copenhagen between 1936 and 1938 after which he was hired by Erik Møller and Arne Jacobsen to design furniture for a town hall they were creating. He worked for Møller and Jacobsen through the early 1940’s, then established his own furniture studio. It was in 1942 that this series of designs were conceived for Mikael Laursen – each with a simple repeated carved ivy frond motif – a dining room of furniture. The chairs and a side cabinet were embellished with the carving, whilst the table is left unornamented yet expertly designed and manufactured.

Wegner received a number of prizes and recognitions; he was an honorary member of The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and received an honorary doctorate from the Royal College of Art in London. He was also the first ever recipient of the Lunning Prize and received the 8th International Design Award in Osaka, Japan. His works are exhibited at major international museums including MoMA in New York and Die Neue Sammlung in Munich.

Hans J. Wegner died in Denmark in January 2007 at the age of 92. His contributions to Danish design are as follows: a master carpenter first and a designer second, perfectly finished joints and exquisite forms. He had deep respect for the wood and its character and an everlasting curiosity for good material. He gave modernism an organic, natural softness. Hans Wegner is considered ‘the master chair maker’, designing more than 500 chairs during his lifetime, something he has never been surpassed in.

“The chair is the closest thing to a person. You can give it personal expression. Obviously, it has been just as important for me to make sensible cabinets. Everything in a house must definitely not be too artistic. One thing should accentuate the other. There needs to be a neutral background. In my view, cabinets and the like must be something that works. Chairs, too. But cabinets don’t need personal expression.” Hans J. Wegner

An early set of eight dining chairs, circa 1942  
Executed by master cabinetmaker A. Mikael Laursen,  
Aarhus, Denmark  
Each W 50cm x H 84.5cm x D 50cm | W 19¾in x H 33¼in x D 19¾in  
£24,000





## PIERRE CHAPO DESK

Pierre Chapo, who was born in Paris on July 1927, initially was interested in becoming a professional painter. However after a chance meeting with a shipbuilder who introduced him to wood and woodcrafts, Chapo changed his focus and decided to study architectural studies at the prestigious *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. After graduating Chapo and his wife, the sculptor and painter Nicole Lormier, started to travel extensively through Scandinavia and Central America. Among the many places the couple visited was the home and studio of Frank Lloyd Wright in Taliesin West. A visit that had a lasting influence on Chapo's future work and designs.

After returning home Chapo began to create his own designs at the end of the 1950's and started marketing them with the assistance of his wife. It didn't take long before his designs attracted a devoted clientele. Interestingly one of his first clients was Samuel Beckett for whom he created the "Godot bed" named after Beckett's famous play. Initially Chapo sold his work through the "Galerie Chapo", a high-end shop that he and Nicole found in 1958 on *boulevard de l'Hôpital* in Paris, where along his own creations he displayed the work of other craftsmen and artists like Isamu Noguchi. With Noguchi, Chapo shared his organic approach to arts and crafts and both designers resisted the stark industrial look that was dominant in the post-war period under the influence of socialism. Chapo wanted more than sheer 'utility' and believed that furniture design should be something that was aesthetically pleasing. He championed designs that were individual, timeless and had a universal quality. He was a big advocate of the importance of the golden ratio.

In 1960 Chapo was awarded the gold medal of the city of Paris at an exhibition of arts and crafts. Most of his work at that time was produced at a workshop in Clamart. However, by the late 1960's Chapo wanted a new challenge and he began to depart from his successful designs. Influenced by the work of Charlotte Perriand, whom he admired a lot, he began to rethink his whole approach to furniture. In 1968 Chapo left Paris with his family and moved to Gordes, near Avignon in the Provence. Here Chapo was inspired by the Provencal landscape and his designs became even more anchored in tradition, as well as even more rugged and bold. In Gordes he opened his own furniture business, the "Chapo Gordes SA", which is still in business today and is overseen by his son Fidel.

Constructed from solid elm throughout, the planked top, with deeply faceted edges, sits (unfixed) on two banks of drawers.

France, circa 1980  
Up to W280cm x H73cm x Up to D120cm  
(being modular these can be altered)  
£42,000





## GOLD LEAF & GLASS PENDANT LANTERN BY BAROVIER & TOSO

Mezza filigrana refers to the distinctive striped appearance of the lantern, a glass-making technique refined by Carlo Scarpa in the 1930's. Revisiting the ancient process half-filigree, clusters of thin glass rods, with coloured rods to the center, could be fire-joined in the furnace and shaped into molten cylinders which could then be modelled by glass-blowers.

Urn-shaped glass shade with cut-glass ball finial rising with central bronze shaft to shaped glass canopy, using mezza filigrana glass of white and gold-leaf application.

Italy, late 1930's  
H 120cm x Dia. 32cm  
£9,500

## ART DECO GLASS AND WROUGHT IRON CENTRE TABLE

Very much in the manner of Jean-Charles Moreux, three wrought-iron horses, in abstracted late Art deco form, support a thick glass table top. With exquisitely realised technique and simple, linear formulation, the glass depicts a medieval scene showing St. Hubert pursuing a magnificent stag. As pious legend has it, the animal turns and he sees a crucifix sitting between its antlers.

During Hubert's religious vision, the stag is said to have lectured him into holding animals in higher regard and having compassion for them as God's creatures. With interesting contemporary flavour, Saint Hubertus is sometimes honoured among sport-hunters as the originator of ethical hunting behaviour.

The thick glass top table with sand-blasted hollow decoration depicting the vision of St. Hubert, resting on blackened wrought-iron circular frame on tripod legs representing horses.

Slabs signed 'Maron.'

France, circa 1930-1940  
Attributed to Saint Gobain  
H 72cm x Dia. 125cm  
£36,000





## PAIR OF LATE REGENCY CHINOISERIE GREEK-REVIVAL LIBRARY CHAIRS

Like the Royal Pavilion's extravagant Chinoiserie schemes (fig 1), the Greek Revival Library chairs are decorated in a post-Rococo manifestation of the Chinoiserie fashion and represent the late, more vibrant flowering of the style seen in early 19th Century Britain. This was fertile ground indeed, with Britain experiencing a surge of confidence and prosperity from Napoleon's defeat in 1815. Thus followed a cluster of Chinoiserie interiors in the circle of the Prince Regent (soon to become George IV), who had himself become a leading proponent of the style; Royal patronage inevitably ensured the style became the height of fashion.

The blue ground embellished with landscapes, staffage figures and gilded geometric pattern imitate the high-relief lacquerwork of Japanese takamakie. In contrast the frame, with quintessential late Regency eclecticism, offers a neo-classical profile; the simplicity of the sabre legs and spoonback shape is typical of the archaeological revivalist style of the Regency period. This created a bolder, more eclectic style, as opposed to the more restrained neo-classicism of the Georgian past.

Leaders of Regency taste, such as Thomas Hope, whose designs were widely copied, pushed this vision which blended ancient with modern, an objective perfectly captured in the dynamic profile of the spoonback frame, the composition reminiscent of the stylised profile of the facial openings of the Corinthian Battle Helmet.

By the first decade of the 19th century elements such as the sabre leg, inspired directly by the Ancient Greek Klismos chair, had been completely absorbed into English Regency design and would have appeared dated by the late 1830's. Likewise, both the decadent Chinoiserie style and the Royal Pavilion were not to the incoming Queen Victoria's tastes.

The blue painted frame with raised chinoiserie lacquerwork and gilt decoration frame with pierced spoonback above a horsehair covered seat, on sabre legs, square brass caps and castors.

England, circa 1820  
W54cm x H 86cm (seat height 39cm) x D50cm  
£38,000





## LARGE POLYCHROME GLASS HANGING LANTERN BY SEGUSO

Born in Chioggia in 1900, Flavio Poli's artistic training was in the field of ceramics. It was not until the age of twenty-nine that he found a creative outlet in the design of glass, and in 1929 Poli began his association with Libero Vitali's I.V.A.M. glassworks. Lending his talents to other furnaces in the years that followed, Poli finally settled in 1934 with Barovier, Seguso & Ferro, which later became Seguso Vetri d'Arte, where he was appointed artistic director. There he explored all possible variations of color combinations, from the most subtle hues to the most brilliant gleaming tinctures.

Italy, circa 1940's  
Design attributed to Flavio Poli (1900-1984)  
Manufactured by Seguso, Murano  
H 80cm x Dia. 30cm  
£18,000

## A 'MURRINE' VASE BY ANTONIO DA ROS

Born in Venice in 1936, he studied at the Carmini State Institute of Art as an architect. Da Ros became Artistic Director of Gino Cenedese & C. in 1959. His refined and colorful Murrine and Sommerso series of the 1960's were celebrated at several Biennale exhibitions and he remained an important influential figure for both Cenedese and Murano glass for several decades.

Circa 1960-1980's  
Designed by Antonio da Ros (b. 1936)  
Manufactured by Cenedese, Murano, Italy  
W 30.5cm x H 43.5cm x D 36cm  
£8,000







“Testament of Orpheus” by Jean Cocteau, 1959;  
Janine Janet credited as costume designer



The windows of Balenciaga, Avenue Georges V,  
showing “La Reine & Le Roi” 1959

### A TOTEMIC SCULPTURE ATTRIBUTED TO JANINE JANET (1913 – 2000)

‘For her, there are no boundaries between species or genres; they are bound by a profound affinity.’ (Claude d’Anthenaise, ‘Janine Janet: Métamorphose’, p.9.)

This mysterious totem statue in plaster is attributed to the French sculptor, set designer and installation artist, Janine Janet.

Born in 1913 on the French island of *La Réunion*, Janet spent her childhood surrounded by exotic nature – an upbringing which engrained in her a profound love of the elemental and animal. This love was to serve as the basis for the artist’s free-spirited preoccupation with breaking the boundaries between the genres found in the natural world.

Having spent time at the *École des Beaux Arts* in Toulouse and Paris, Janet remained in the capital to study at the *École des Art Décoratifs*, experimenting with painting, engraving and sculpture. Her style developed within the context of a broad artistic reaction against the rationalism that prevailed during the Art Deco movement. Artists had begun to stretch their imaginations and liberate their minds to explore the irrational, the bizarre and the fantastical.

The artist is perhaps best known for the unique window displays she created for fashion designers, particularly those made in collaboration with the designer Cristobal Balenciaga, who requested that the artist work for him after admiring her talent. Her ambitious creations were thus at the forefront of the Parisian fashion scene, and were often shown on their own – without the designer’s clothes – to embody the brand’s spirit and capture the attention of the audience of the Parisian streets through their





curious narrative and medium. These sculptures frequently incorporated singular or incomplete sections of the body, isolated from the whole. One such example is 'Nymphé', a plaster figure created for Balenciaga in 1957. Janet has covered the plaster in golden straw; the woman's armless torso poised amongst bundles of wheat. The scale of the piece, at 140cm, is similar to that of our plaster totem.

Janet also worked closely with the poet and artist, Jean Cocteau, creating costumes for his 1950's Orphic Trilogy - a project which married both artists' fascination with mythology. The horse costume created for Testament of Opheus, for instance, morphs a human body with a horse's head and tail, creating a surreal therianthrope vision.

Our totem statue is highly evocative of this same predilection for metamorphosis. Emerging from a base with a cleated hoof at each corner, the pillar-like body of the statue rises, its crystallised surface suggesting climbing leaves of ivy, ending in deer's head. A snake entwines itself around the figure. Unlike Janet's creations made of found objects, this statue is of pure plaster: the organic lines of the snake's body and the deer's antlers, together with the delicately interlocking shapes of the leaves, demonstrate a strong sculptural ability.

The mysterious combination of symbols crowning the deer's forehead contributes to the statue's cult-like energy, as well as presenting a window into the significance of the statue. Whilst fire could signify life and prosperity - three flames as past, present and future - the crescent moon and sun together might represent the infinite flow of time. Furthermore, though the snake might first strike a more ominous note with the audience, the serpent is in fact seen in many cultures as a symbol of rebirth. Last but not least, the deer itself - an animal that Janet frequently portrayed in her work - is also often understood as harbouring a regenerative power. Here it is exalted both through the physical uplifting of its head, as well as the symbolic crest adorning it, adding to its natural crown of antlers.

Janet cited nature as helping her come to terms with death: she argued that as the circle of life continues, we are captured in nature, and our bodies and spirits are therefore carried forward infinitely. Her preoccupation with metamorphosis, the transposition of matter from one genre to another, is an embodiment of this belief in the indomitable life force found in the natural world.

H170cm  
£24,000





