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Regency Period Console Attributed To Bernard Honoré Turreau Known As "toro"

40 000 EUR



Signature : Attribuée à Bernard Honoré Turreau

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Gilded wood

Length : 131 cm

Height : 83 cm

Depth : 57 cm

Description

We present here a summary description of this piece. We strongly encourage the reader to consult the complete file with numerous photos and details by clicking here.

"Bernard Toro, who was certainly one of the most skilful ornamentalists and wood sculptors who worked in France, who had a manner full of distinction and elegance, and so original that it could not be confused with any other, is, as for his biography, a real Proteus; it escapes me as soon as I think I have it. » Bruno Pons
(Recognized specialist in the history of interior decorations in the 18th century, he helped advance the knowledge and dating of many remarkable ornamental woodworks)

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"Bernard Toro can be considered the decorative expansion of Puget's genius. [...] An incredible ability to search the wood down to the smallest details, to hollow out the palmettes and scrolls with the most delicate care, without ever falling into manners or smallness, then and above all an incomparable ladle, knowing how to print each object has its own spirit, communicating to all a perfect sweetness and harmony, and spreading such charm over the figures. » André Girodie, Henri Vial, Marcel Adrien. (Wood Decorating Artists - Alphabetical directory of cabinetmakers, carpenters, sculptors, wood gilders, etc., who worked in France in the 17th and 18th centuries)

Our console in carved and gilded wood takes up the structure used by Toro and notably designed by the latter in his "Book of tables of various forms". Turreau in fact designed numerous ornaments, console models, cartouches... all in an imaginary, chimerical and baroque repertoire inspired by Italian art combined with French execution. These drawings constitute inspirations for the Master.

We first notice the choice of Bernard Honoré Turreau's characteristic structure, a console resting on two legs. The focus is on the center of the spacer to which our eye is drawn by the carved creatures. The great respect for symmetry dear to the artist is respected. The intertwined tails of snakes or dragons are characteristic of the Master. The inverted shells and acanthus leaves also. These are present, especially on the spacer.

This console in carved and gilded wood with a scalloped shape presents a decor of the greatest originality.

In the upper part, the eventful belt with openwork decoration of shells, foliage, garlands and floral

motifs.

At the cushioning of the curved feet, a flower is surrounded by original and generous feathers echoing the animal world. We follow the ophidian lines of the two coiled serpents in order to reach the center of the spacer with a grotesque Lion's head, magnificently sculpted and crowned with a large openwork shell.

The two reptiles finally confront each other in front of the large muzzle and the inverted Regency shell.

An impression of power emerges from this entire decor, a feeling reinforced by the thick double-coated violet breccia marble covering the creation.

The scrolls of flowers, foliage and acanthus leaves have a preponderant importance in Turreau's stylistic repertoire. According to Bruno Pons "hollow out the palmettes and scrolls with the most delicate care, without ever falling into manner or smallness, then and above all an incomparable touch, [...] Will communicate a perfect softness and harmony, and spread on the figures such charm and such morbidity that the wood lives and breathes. »

Our console features on its belt these elements dear to Toro: the scrolls of flowers and acanthus leaves, but also the plant motifs springing from the flower buds, a characteristic feature of the Master which we also find in the interior part of the feet of the console.

At the cushioning of the uprights, the motif of feathers, very little used in sculptures on furniture, is however frequently used by Toro in his numerous drawings. Although these representations are often linked to fantastic animals, certain motifs are represented for their

decorative value in their own right.

Along the uprights, the snakes coil before facing each other. These reptiles are particularly appreciated by the artist who often represents them in his published drawings, sometimes alongside dragons.

The impressive large grimacing Lion's face is the central part of this console. The feline with hollow eyes located in the confrontation zone of the two snakes stares at the observer. This figure is at the crossroads of the animal and chimerical world, making us think of certain faun heads with open mouths and bulging eyes in Turreau's drawings. This type of Lion's muzzle is not foreign to the Master since we find it in fact sculpted in the also central place of the door of the Arlatan hotel made by Bernard Honoré Turreau in 1695 or on the drawings of the latter, creatures with open mouths.

We cannot help but notice the recall of certain drawings by the sculptor concerning the inverted Regency shell. In the case of our console, it supports the muzzle and in the case of the drawing below, the inverted shell crowns the face.

The console is topped with an important purple breccia marble with large white double-grooved nodules cut into curves and counter-curves 4 centimeters thick. Violet breccia is an uncommon variety that is only found on very rare occasions. It is interesting to note that the gilded wood console attributed to Turreau and presented by the Steinitz gallery at the 2015 BRAFA also features violet breccia marble (see complete file). Presence of two discreet restorations at the rear ends of the marble.

Bernard Honoré Turreau is one of the greatest

French sculptors of the early 18th century. He was born in Toulon in 1672. It is difficult to know the career of the ornamentalist before his forty-first year, from which time the archives give us the chance to learn more about this singular character and sculptor of great talent. . We know that he stayed in Aix-en-Provence between 1695 and 1700 during which he carved the walnut door of the Arlatan-Lauris hotel. His second stay in Aix-en-Provence took place in 1713. Several works bear witness to this, he also produced numerous ornamental drawings.

The decorations of Aix residences are influenced by this artist, especially the houses displaying the Regency style. Turreau decorated many interiors in Aix and Toulon but also published his collection of ornaments which was used by many contemporary artists of the Master. For Jean Boyer: "It was Toro who introduced the new ornamental repertoire into Aix, the clasps, the medallions and the chimeras, it was he above all who taught the fluid arabesque, imperceptibly unfolding the small golden motifs on a background left white . » Among the Aix interiors decorated by Toro we can cite part of the Hôtel de Boisgelin, the Hôtel Maurel de Pontevès, the Hôtel Sallier, the Hôtel d'Albertas, the Hôtel de Castillon... Concerning the furniture, we know that Bernard Honoré Turreau essentially manufactures many consoles. One of them is present at the Grobet-Labadié Museum in Marseille.

In 1718, he became Master maintained in the Arsenal, he directed the sculpture workshop and also worked for private clients. The Master sculptor is recognized for his great talents and his creations make him known as far away as Paris. According to Charles Ginoux, member of the Var Academy, "no one could equal him". But Toro is a character with a strong character, who refuses certain missions that do not match his talent and does not hesitate to demand certain particularly

high salaries. He is the most appreciated sculptor of the Provençal aristocracy. Turreau died in 1731.

Bibliography:

Dr. Bruno Pons: J. Bernard Toro. Archives of French Art

André Girodie, Henri Vial, Marcel Adrien. : Wood Decorating Artists - Alphabetical directory of cabinetmakers, carpenters, sculptors, wood gilders, etc., who worked in France in the 17th and 18th centuries

Jean-Luc Massot: Architecture & Decoration from the 16th to the 19th century.