

**RARE AND IMPORTANT COMMODOE OF ARCHITECTURAL FORM
IN “EAR OF WHEAT” AMARANTHINE VENEER**



PARIS

END OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV OF FRANCE, CIRCA 1715

DIMENSIONS:

HEIGHT 36 ⁵/₈ IN - WIDTH 64 IN - DEPTH 27 ³/₈ IN

27, Quai Voltaire, 75007 Paris



Displaying a crate entirely adorned with a veneer of beautiful amaranthine leaves “ear of wheat” arranged straight or crooked, the commode we offer is a rare testimony of the exceptional luxury of the great Parisian art of cabinetmaking of the end of the reign of Louis XIV of France, which, through the sobriety and elegance of veneer wood schemes, announces the great royal and princely achievements of the Regency and Louis XV periods. Its rectangular composition, revisiting the form of some monumental cabinets of the previous century, is of a “severe” neoclassicism.

It opens by four large drawers in front disposed on four rows; the curved treatment of the mounts and front feet brings the furniture to life with elegance. The overall is very richly enlivened with a bronze ornamentation finely chiseled and gilded such as: framework of the drawers and lateral side in rod with stylized leaves friezes; mobile handles curvilinear attached to console table ending with pellets acanthus from which slip horns of plenty filled with bunches of flowers and leaves, with a setting of rush with flutes, imaginary animals heads, cartouches underlined with mantling and centered with bearded men masks on checkered backgrounds, keyholes with smiling Bacchus masks, wearing gilded vines, and underlined with double acanthus sticks ending in scrolls on the top of pellets with foliage and seeds; angles under the form of satyrs masks of which the beards twist themselves, wearing bunches of foliage animated of double sticks ending in scrolls centered with roses; and finally, the lower part of the furniture and the “Rocaille” claw-feet are hemstitched or pierced with an egg-shaped pattern and are decorated with palm leaf pattern, shell, sticks, bunches of foliage and stylized pomegranate. The tabletop is in griotte red marble from Italy.



As a perfect completion of the esthetic researches led by the artisan about Parisian furniture of the end of the reign of Louis XIV, this commode distinguishes itself by its unusual proportion, that doesn't spoil the balance of its composition; and also by its bronze setting, that harmoniously unites some rocaille and from the Louis XIV period patterns, and announces what will make the biggest pieces of cabinetmaking from the end of Louis XV's reign.

If its form and some elements of its bronze setting are to be found on some rare other known commode attributed with no doubt or stamped by Nicolas Sageot (1666 – c. 1725), one of the most important Parisian cabinetmaker of the time; or by Auburtin Gaudron, furniture supplier of the Crown, its main originality stands in the use of exotic wood leaves in veneer, in this case amaranthine “ear of wheat”, expression of the precocious adaptation by its maker to the new taste of great connoisseurs of the capital, weary of several decades dominated by floral or metal marquetry.

Among the rare furniture listed made in the same spirit, we can particularly refer to one model, clearly less elaborated and spectacular, that is exhibited at the Carnavalet Museum in Paris (showed in S. de Ricci, *Louis XIV und Régence, Raumkunst und Mobiliar*, Stuttgart, 1929, plate 184). Finally, let's notice that we can see in the collections of the Louvre Museum of Paris a commode with two drawers showing similar keyholes and mounts with similar endings; that used to be linked to the work of André-Charles Boulle (1642-1732), famous cabinetmaker of Louis XIV, it was very certainly made in the same workshop, probably a few years after the one we present (illustrated in D. Alcouffe, A. Dion-Tenenbaum et A. Lefébure, *Le mobilier du Louvre*, Tome 1, Editions Faton, Dijon, 1993, p.107, catalogue n°33)



Le mobilier du Louvre,
Tome 1, Edition Faton, Dijon,
1993, p.107, catalogue n°33