

GEORGES JACOB (1739-1814 ; RECEIVED MASTER IN 1765)

A PAIR OF BERGERES « A LA REINE »



FRANCE

18TH CENTURY, LOUIS XVI PERIOD

STAMPED G. JACOB ON EACH *BERGÈRE*

GREEN VELVET UPHOLSTERY

DIMENSIONS :

H. 40 ½ IN – W. 27 ½ IN – D. 21 ⅝ IN

27, Quai Voltaire, 75007 Paris

The pair of bergères called "à la Reine" in carved and gilt beechwood from the Louis XVI period are stamped by Georges Jacob, decorated with friezes of piastres, pearls and acanthus leaves. They rest on four fluted tapered legs terminating with a molded ring and are connected to armrest consoles with a connection decorated with a rose, which is topped by a high triglyphs base with three grooves. The back shaped of anse de panier is topped by panaches and joins armrests with upholstered arms forming a slightly curved line ending with a leaf motif of acanthus.

The sculpture is very important in the seats making of Georges Jacob. Our pair of bergères is typical of his work: we find the quality and the delicacy of the sculpture, the precision of the composition and also the motif of piastres frieze, a recurrent motif in the seats of Georges Jacob. Our seats are also a perfect example of the Louis XVI style with their back right "à la reine", their sculpture work and their decorative repertoire consisting of grooves, acanthus leaves, piastres friezes and pearls decorating the back and all the bottom of the seat.

Our pair of bergères is a unique piece. We don't know similar models but a few kept in the most famous French Museums could be approaching. The Louvre Museum in Paris keeps in its collections a bed with three backs executed by George Jacob circa 1775 (Inventory number OA 6488) similar to our pair of bergères by its decoration, its quality of sculpture and its simple line. One can finally note a carved and grey painted wood armchair covered with Beauvais tapestry, stamped by Georges Jacob, which presents the same straight and structured line as well as the same armrest supports decorated with acanthus leaves raised by a fluted base as our pair of bergères (Ernest Dumonthier, *Les Sièges de Georges Jacob. Epoque Louis XV, Louis XVI et Révolutionnaire. Documents d'art. Mobilier National de France*, Editions Albert Morancé, 1922, plate 24 illustrated below in Figure 1).



Figure 1.

Georges Jacob

A carved and grey painted wood armchair
covered with Beauvais tapestry

Stamped by Georges Jacob

Louvre Museum, Paris

Another armchair also executed by Georges Jacob and kept in the Elysée Palace in Paris (a former house of Madame de Pompadour), is similar to our pair of bergères by its composition, its straight line and its decorative repertoire ; piastres friezes, acanthus leaves, grooves and roses (Ernest Dumonthier, *Les Sièges de Georges Jacob. Epoques Louis XV, Louis XVI et Révolutionnaire. Documents d'art.* Mobilier National de France, Editions Albert Morancé, 1922, plate 23 illustrated below in Figure 2).



Figure 2. Georges Jacob. A carved and giltwood armchair covered with Beauvais tapestry.
Elysée Palace, Paris (a former house of Madame de Pompadour)

The Nissim de Camondo Museum in Paris owns in its collections a living room furniture executed by Georges Jacob which presents the same structure, the same line, simple and straight, as well as the same decorative repertoire of piastres friezes, grooves and roses and also triglyphs with three flutes topping the connections as our pair of bergères (one of ten armchairs of its living room furniture is illustrated below in Figure 3 and the image is taken from the book by Sylvie Legrand-Rossi, *Le Mobilier du Musée Nissim de Camondo*, Editions Faton, Dijon, Les Arts décoratifs, 2012, p.191).



Figure 3. Georges Jacob. Armchair from a living room furniture, circa 1780-1785.
Living Room of the Nissim de Camondo Museum, Paris

Georges Jacob (1739-1814)

Georges Jacob is one of the most famous cabinet makers of the 18th century. Received master in 1765, he produced many seats since the reign of Louis XV until the Consulat. Trained by Louis Delanois (1731-1792), one of the favourite cabinet makers of the comtesse du Barry, Georges Jacob will learn the taste of the Neoclassical aesthetics which will influence him throughout his career. His art is extremely representative of the Louis XVI style. His seats are characterized by a great quality of execution, an important diversity and an unrivalled creativity in their forms. Thus, he opened his own workshop early and received from 1773 many orders from the Garde-Meuble de la Couronne with which he collaborated until the Revolution. He never was the official supplier but he participated to the decoration of Versailles, Trianon, Fontainebleau, Compiègne and Saint-Cloud. He has the favour/support of Marie-Antoinette, the brothers of the king, comte of Provence, comte of Artois and Prince of Condé. His reputation crosses borders supplying the German princes, the future King Georges IV of England and Gustave III of Sweden.

Georges Jacob executed many seats of Louis XVI style which are mostly preserved in the famous French Museums: Louvre, Carnavalet, Jacquemart-André, Nissim de Camondo, Arts Decoratifs but also in the Former Royal Houses such as Versailles, Chantilly, Compiègne and Fontainebleau castles.

The American, English, German, Dutch and also Portuguese Museums have a very beautiful furniture collection by Georges Jacob: The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), The J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), The Cleveland Museum of Art, The Wallace Collection (London), The Victoria and Albert Museum (London), the Residenzmuseum (Munich), The Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam) and the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum in Lisboa.

Bibliography :

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