HOWGEGO
HISTORIC + MODERN

A rare, early-18th century yew candlestand with a burr top

Sold

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REF: 10446

Height: 76 cm (29.9")

Description

The circular burr top with a moulded edge. Fixed onto an elegant, stem with double-baluster, ball and other turnings; standing on three flat feet. In original condition. Excellent original colour and patina. English, first quarter of the 18th century. 50281067.

Yew trees have a very slow growth rate and it is rare to find pieces made from this close-grained, timber, prized for its rich colour and lustrous patina. The burr-yew top, generally regarded as superior to burr-walnut, is a prominent feature of this piece and glows when illuminated by soft candlelight. The cabinet maker has sympathetically used a stylistically simple base with a variety of turnings to enhance the excellent configuration, colour and patina of the timber.

Moveable stands to support a candlestick or lamp were intended to supplement the fixed lighting arrangements of rooms, and were often placed in alcoves and wall recesses or near chairs. The fashion for decorative candlestands spread rapidly after the Restoration.

The ordinary form was a plain or spiral baluster, circular or octagonal top and tripod base, and walnut and elm were commonly employed. A great variety of candlestands are illustrated in mid-18th century design books, many inspired by French design. Nevertheless these extravagant conceits, somewhat modified, were occassionally executed by craftsmen to whose judgement Chippendale commits the success of the undertaking.

Candlestands of a practical nature were also designed by Chippendale and his contempories. The tripod base rendered candlestands particularly suitable for classical treatment, and many examples were of simple designs with elegant tops. Sheraton observed that candlestands afford, ' additional light to such parts of the room where it would neither be ornamental nor easy to introduce any other kind'.

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