

Near Pair of Candle Stands or Torchères, Late 17th Century, English

Sold



REF: 11292

Height: 96 cm (37.8")

Diameter: 29 cm (11.4")

Description

Due to their utilitarian nature, surviving pairs of 17th century candle stands/torchères are extremely rare and generally only seen today in great houses. The quality of the marquetry decoration and the attention to detail indicate that these candle stands were probably made for a substantial household. The turned stems displays the skill of the turner, and create fluidity, variety of form, emphasizing the quality of the solid walnut grain and the floral inlay as well as holding and balancing the form of the top. The sweeping, scroll feet balance the proportion and fluidity of the candle stands/torchères, giving them presence. They are sturdy and in excellent condition.

Virtually identical turnings and form. Both with octagonal tops, one with a central marquetry floral spray, the other plain. The upper sections with solid walnut baluster and ring turnings leading into lower octagonal sections decorated with marquetry floral sprays repeated 3 times. The stems supported by octagonal blocks with a repeat of the floral spray and scroll tripod bases with two floral sprays on the upper facing sections. Excellent original colour and patina. English.

Height 96cm, Top diameter 29cm

Moveable stands to support a candlestick or lamp were intended to supplement the fixed lighting arrangements of rooms. The evidence of inventories suggests that they did not become common in France until about 1650 when they accompanied fine tables and cabinets. Such stands, being sometimes in the form of gueridons.

The fashion for decorative candlestands spread rapidly after the Restoration, when they were often made en-suite to flank a sidetable with a mirror above. Such sets are mentioned in lists of household goods and by contemporary writers. In 1664, for instance, Mary Verney is anxious to obtain "a table and stands of the same coler". The Academy of Armory, published in 1688, defines a candle-stand as a "little round table, set upon one pillar or poste which in the foote branches itselfe out into three or four feete or toes ... for its fast and stedly standing".

The ordinary form under Charles II was a plain or spiral baluster, circular or octagonal top and tripod base. Walnut and elm were commonly employed and the most extravagant type was entirely covered with silver, such as at Knowle and Windsor Castle. Towards the end of the 17th century a greater variety of patterns were introduced, and ornamental stands of carved and gilt wood inspired by French design became fashionable. The tops became vase-shaped and the tapered standards were enriched with gadrooning and husks, the elaborate scrolling of the feet being a noticeable feature.

The function of candlestands is timeless and they inject character and atmosphere into interiors whether period or contemporary. They can be easily moved around the home to create accent lighting or change the mood and feeling in a room.

Provenance: Private Collection.