Bureau Desk Fall Front Japanning Tortoishell Gilding Chinoiserie, Italian

£22,500

Howgego Historic & Modern
07974 149 912
lucy@howgegohistoricandmodern.com howgegohistoricandmodern.com

REF: 11757

Height: 112 cm (44.1")

Width: 97 cm (38.2")

Depth: 54 cm (21.3")

Description

A rare, late-17th century / early-18th century, fall front bureau with gilded Chinoiserie Japanning & faux tortoishell ground, probably Italian

"Before Japan was made in England, the imitation of tortoise-shell was much in request for cabinets, tables and the like". John Stalker and George Parker, a treatise on Japanning and varnishing (originally published in 1668), Alec Tiranti, 1998, p. 75.

- This bureau is decorated in one of the most fashionable styles of the Baroque period, Chinese lacquer with gilded decoration and tortoiseshell imitation ground and would have been a statement piece within the interior. - The colours, which have become muted from atmospheric conditions over time, are still striking and colourful evoking warm and richness. - It has come from a private collection where it has reputedly been for many generations which explains why it is in such original condition retaining the original hinges, lock and catches. - Pieces of imitation tortoishell with gilded lacquer decoration are rare, the last piece I handled was a chest of drawers about 20 years ago. - Tortoishell furniture was only affordable by royalty and the elite and the height of fashion in the 17th century, as was producing things that were not what they seemed. One of the oldest examples of faux material from the Baroque period is at Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen where, in 1667, the royal bed-chamber was redecorated in gilded Chinese lacquer with a tortoiseshell imitation ground. luxury item, dazzliing display of bright colour red of tortoishell ground and the gilding and scarlet interior and intriguing with the exotic oriental imagery - The exceptional deep relief, fine detailing in both the gilding, the tortoishell ground and red lacquer interior and exotic imagery throughout demonstrate that this bureau was made for the elite market. Ownership of tortoishell furniture was the domain of Kings and the East represented worldliness, refinement and knowledge of travel and exploration.

- The symbolic meaning of this bureau would have influenced its positioning in a significant place in the home representing a distant nation worshipped in the form of material artefacts. While the tactile presence of the object underpinned the separation and geographical distance between the owner and China, it also simultaneously connected them.

- It is interesting that this piece is a bureau, a clear reference to Anglo-Chinese trade, commercial ventures and exploratory forays into foreign lands in

- This bureau is In rare original unrestored condition and can be conserved if the buyer wishes to their preference.

Provenance French collection. Related Rosenborg Castle Copenhagen, Royal Bed Chamber.

Measures: length 97 cm., 38" depth 52 cm., 20 1/2" height 112 cm., 44".

just purchased more information available on request.

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