LANGFORDS
Antique & Contemporary Silver

Silver & tortoiseshell dresser jars

Adie Brothers

Sold

Langfords
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REF: 2464

Height: 45 mm (1.77")

Diameter: 90 mm (3.54")

Description

Three antique crisply cut crystal cosmetic jars with tortoiseshell lids that are bordered in silver and inlaid with silver filigree decorations in the neoclassical revivalist style, featuring bellflowers, swag, bows and trumpets. The rims are delicately decorated with cast and applied bellflowers and the tortoiseshell is bright and in perfect condition. The smaller two dresser jars are 60mm (2½") diameter and 50mm (2") high.

Neoclassical Revivalism became a dominant style between 1900 and the 1940s. It was directly inspired by the Beaux-Arts style and includes the features of classical symmetry and classical ornamentation. Essentially, this is the revival of the earlier Greek neoclassical revival style that dominated the first half of the 19th century.

The technique used on these jars is called piqué, where gold or silver is inlaid into another material, in this case tortoiseshell. Despite being expensive, the use of tortoiseshell in the decorative arts was very popular in 18th and 19th century Europe. Not only did it have a beautiful mottled appearance and was durable, but it was also lightweight and could be easily fashioned into other shapes; jewellery boxes and tea caddies were prime examples.

Tortoiseshell is quite malleable when heated, so when very fine gold, or in this case silver, was fashioned into delicate designs and then pressed into the warmed tortoiseshell, the silver then cooled and the shell contracted to hold the silver in place.

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