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A REGENCY BRASS INLAID SIDE CABINET, Attributed to George Bullock

REF1171

An Exceptional Regency Brass Inlaid Side Cabinet

Attributed to George Bullock

English, circa 1815

This cabinet is of breakfront form, the original Mona marble in three parts rests over a frieze of three brass inlaid drawers retaining their original handles.The centre section has a fixed shelf and the mirrored back is flanked by brass inlaid pilasters.The two cupboards either side are enclosed by doors and centred by a brass laid panel of ebony flanked by gilt bronze mounts.

H: 36 in (91.5cm) W: 72 in (183cm) D: 18 in (46cm)

This cabinet is attributed to George Bullock, one of the most important furniture-makers involved in the great reflowering of Greek and Roman taste in regency Britain. While resident in the north-west, he 'discovered' and bought the Mona marble quarry on the Welsh island of Anglesey, which due to its geographical isolation was exhausted quickly and ceased in the early 1900s; making Mona marble exceptionally rare.

Although inspired by classical floral motifs and contemporary French Empire-style furniture, this cabinet is distinctly British in its design and its decoration. The brass inlay and applied gilt bronze mounts are identical to a cabinet formally in the collection of Queen Mary, Marlborough House, London.

£ 58000

DESCRIPTION

George Bullock was one of the most innovative English cabinet makers of the Regency period. Born in Birmingham, he began his career as a sculptor and wax modeller before establishing a furniture business in Liverpool in the early nineteenth century. His talents as a designer, craftsman, and entrepreneur soon earned him a reputation for producing furniture of exceptional quality and originality. Bullock’s work was strongly influenced by classical Greek and Roman art, as well as the fashionable French Empire style. However, unlike many of his contemporaries, he often used native British materials such as oak, yew, holly, larch, and laburnum rather than imported exotic woods. His furniture was distinguished by elegant forms, fine marquetry, brass inlays, and decorative motifs based on British plants and flowers.

In 1812, Bullock moved to London, where he attracted wealthy and influential clients. He displayed his wares for a while in a Grecian gallery of his own design in the Egyptian Hall on Piccadilly in the heart of London, a venue for art and entertainment set up and run by his brother, William. Among his notable commissions were furnishings for Sir Walter Scott and furniture intended for Napoleon Bonaparte’s residence on the island of St Helena. His cabinets, tables, and bookcases combined practicality with artistic beauty and are now regarded as masterpieces of British Regency furniture. Although Bullock died suddenly in his thirties in 1818, his contribution to furniture design was significant. An anonymous obituarist in a magazine of the time, praised him as one 'who carried taste, in design of furniture, to a higher pitch than it was ever carried before in this country'.Today, historians and collectors admire his creativity, craftsmanship and distinctive use of British materials. His work remains an important part of the history of English decorative arts and cabinet making.