



Herter Brothers – Aesthetic Movement Ebonised Side Chair

Ref: PV005068

Price on Application

MAKER	Herter Brothers
DESIGNER	Herter Brothers
PERIOD	Aesthetic Movement
YEAR	1884
STYLE	Anglo-Japanese
ORIGIN	United States
DIMENSIONS	H: 32.52 in (82.6 cm) W: 16.14 in (41 cm) D: 18.5 in (47 cm)
CONDITION	Excellent

About this piece

Herter Brothers. The original design for this Gilded Age side chair was for the James Goodwin residence “Woodlands” in Hartford, Connecticut, **c.1884**, then the largest private residence in Connecticut.

An Aesthetic Movement ebonized side chair with turned finials and turned and incised floral decoration heightened with gilding throughout, the angular canted form at the top of the back legs, where it meets the back rest, giving strength and a distinctive character to the design. The front of the seat rolls over for the comfort of the sitter below the knees. The legs are united by stretchers on all sides, and the side stretchers continue through the back legs with an exposed pegged joint. We have professionally reupholstered it in quality tan leather with staggered brass studs.

These chairs were made in different woods and finishes, with subtle differences to the incised decoration. Even so, only a few examples of this chair design are known to exist.

Herter's first known commission involving the new Anglo-Japanese Aesthetic was this commission for Major James Goodwin. In the run up to his 70th birthday, he built the largest and most ambitious house ever built in Connecticut at that time. When completed in 1874, Woodlands was a vast, castle-like Gothic Aesthetic structure built of Rhode Island grey granite, with a large servant wing, a coach house and stables, twelve acres of sweeping lawns and further pastures, with a pond, flower gardens, and a cottage in a grove of trees.

It is interesting that E. W. Godwin, an acknowledged leader of Britain's cultural elite, and arguably the leader of design and taste of the Aesthetic Movement in Great Britain in the late 1860s and 1870s, had a large influence on furniture makers in the US such as H. H. Richardson and the Herter Brothers. Godwin's advanced furniture designs of the time led to a commission from James Goodwin for Woodlands, where Godwin designed a mantelpiece in December 1873 and an octagonal centre table in January 1874, both made by Collinson and Lock. It is also interesting that surviving period photographs of the James Goodwin house interior show bamboo-patterned wallpaper that was also designed by E. W. Godwin. Woodlands is probably the only house for which E. W. Godwin and the Herter Brothers designed furniture for the same house and client.

Additional Measurements:

Seat height, **40.7cm**, 16.02 inches

Seat depth, **40cm**, 15.75 inches