

# MACKINNON

## FINE FURNITURE

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**James Moore: A George I Giltwood Secrétaire Cabinet**

**England, *circa* 1720**

Made for export to the Portuguese Royal Court, this magnificent gilt-gesso secretaire cabinet is arguably one of the finest and most important surviving pieces of English furniture made in the eighteenth century. The cabinet is attributed to the Royal cabinetmaker James Moore, who is most notably remembered for his giltwood furniture, partially because a series of signed works exist in the royal household from his most renowned commissions. The incredible craftsmanship of this brilliantly worked cabinet reflects the work of the finest artisans for what was almost certainly a noble or royal patron.

The cabinet was originally made as a pair and was almost certainly destined for the Portuguese Court during the reign of King Dom João V (r.1709-1750), perhaps for the king himself or one of his closest courtiers.

A full essay and history is available upon request on this outstanding piece of furniture.

## SOLD

An exceptional and highly important George I giltwood secretaire cabinet attributed to the Royal cabinetmaker, James Moore the Elder (c.1670-d.1726). The gilt surface carved and decorated throughout with strap-work and foliage patterns, the sides and two doors of the upper part with beveled mirror plates, the interiors of the doors in walnut opening to reveal a magnificent fitted interior with pigeonholes below a central arched door surrounded by small drawers all beautifully veneered in yew-wood below two adjustable bookshelves, the lower part comprising a fall front bureau, the top opening and supported on lopers to reveal a further fitted interior with pigeonholes and drawers also veneered with yew-wood and decorative inlaid stringing, with an inset silk velvet writing area and an exceptional engraved brass lock-plate, below which are two short and two graduated long drawers with ring-pull handles and engraved decorative escutcheons, the sides with magnificent engraved carrying handles, all raised on boldly carved paw feet. The whole piece decorated with the most magnificent gilt gesso decoration.

### Literature:

L. Synge, *Great English Furniture*, London, 1991, p. 52.

### COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

‘Noticia verdadeira do ornato, que se vio nas cazas de Madre Soror Paula Maria’. Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, manuscript - BNL, F.4640 - published in Guimarães, J. Ribeiro, *Summario de Varia Historia*, 1872, pp. 67-70.

C. M. Dias, *Cartas de Lisboa*. Primeira Serie, 1905, p. 109.

J. A. Proença, *Mobiliário da Casa-Museu Dr. Anastácio Gonçalves*, 2002, p.183.

R. W. Symonds, 'A Royal Scrutoire', *Connoisseur*, June 1940, pp. 233-236.

R. W. Symonds, 'English Gesso Furniture', *The Antique Collector*, vol. XXVII, August 1956, p. 140.

'A Golden Cabinet', *Mallett Spring Catalogue*, London, 2003, pp. 6-13.

T. Murdoch, 'The king's cabinet-maker: the giltwood furniture of James Moore the Elder', *Burlington Magazine*, vol. CXLV, 2003, ill. 8, p. 410.

Height: 93.70 in (238 cm)  
Width: 47.24 in (120 cm)  
Depth: 23.62 in (60 cm)

**Stock Number**

L10.52

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