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CRC 18-19

Chest-of-drawers (comò a tre cassetti)

Turin, Italy 1775-1785

Made by Francesco Bolgiè (active c. 1769-c. 1825)

Painted and parcel gilded wood with gilded bronze mounts and a white marble top

Size: 38" high, 54 ¼" wide, 23 ½" deep (approximately 97 x 138 x 60 cm).

Comparative Literature: G. Ferraris, *Giuseppe Maria Bonzanigo e la scultura decorativa in legno a Torino nel periodo neoclassico* (1770-1830), Cavallermaggiore, 1991, pp. 112-114.

Alzar Gonzalez Palacios, *Il Mobile Nei Secoli*, vol. 2, Fratelli Fabbri Editori, 1969, pp. 74-75

Price: \$185,000.00

Surviving in an amazing state of preservation, this neoclassical commode is a rare example of Piedmontese furniture of the highest quality. It retains its original shaped white marble top, which rests on a rectangular frame punctuated at the four corners by fluted columnar forms which terminate in spirally fluted baluster shaped feet. The sides of the commode are decorated with lyre forms carved in relief and surrounded by moldings. The front is punctuated by three long drawers, the upper and lower of which are decorated in high relief with carved foliate swags, which are tied with ribbons above the original gilded bronze keyhole escutcheons and drawer pulls, each oval in form and centered by a classical urn. The larger center drawer is compartmentalized by moldings to form two shaped side panels, each decorated with paired foliate branches, flanking a central round panel with a beribboned foliate spray. Mounts identical to those on the other two drawers finish this drawer. The entire piece also retains its original painted decoration; a palette of light aqua blue and cream, highlighted with white on the carved details and gold on the moldings and fluted decorations.

After Giuseppe Maria Bonzanigo, Bolgiè was the most talented and acclaimed carver working for the court of the Royal House of Savoy in Turin and the Piedmont. In fact, several important pieces of furniture, formerly attributed to Bonzanigo, have now been given to Bolgiè. The inventive mixture of neoclassical ornament, all crisply carved, on this chest-of-drawers is characteristic of Bolgiè's work, including two other commodes made for the Palazzo Reale in Turin. The distinctive light blue, cream and white decor of this commode with its carved beribboned swags relates directly to Bolgiè's most famous piece of furniture, a bookcase cabinet made for the Savoia's hunting lodge at Stupinigi, the Palazzina di Caccia. Another example of Bolgiè's commodes is at the Villa Accorsi, in the Scorcio Salone on the first floor (see photograph).

