

# PATRICK JEFFERSON



## GILTWOOD MIRROR CARVED WITH A MONKEY

England *circa* 1860.

Height 32" (81.5cm)

Width 21" (53.5cm)

Depth 8  $\frac{5}{8}$ " (22cm)

*Of asymmetrical oval form, the gilt mahogany acanthus frame carved with a cartouche, a monkey, and a satyr mask; cracks and minor losses, the mercury plate and much of the water gilding original.*

The whimsical rococo revival decoration of the frame is carved to an exceptional standard from solid mahogany with red bole and water gilding. The inspiration draws on designs published in Matthias Lock's *Six Sconces*, 1744, while the grinning satyr mask relates to a stand supplied by William Vile to John Chute for The Vyne, Hampshire, as well as a table designed by John Vardy for Lord Orford (*Some Designs of Mr Inigo Jones and Mr William Kent*, 1744, pl. 41).

*Singerie* (monkey) subjects first appeared in England in the late 1730s, and can be found on murals at Syon House and Wentworth Castle, the latter executed by the Frenchman Andien de Clermont who followed prints by Jacques Callot and Jean-Antoine Watteau. Most examples of monkeys are highly anthropomorphic, often engaged in human activities, such as the title page of Jean Pillement's *A New Book of Chinese Ornaments*, 1757, in which the monkey is drinking tea (fig. 2). The present monkey is unusually naturalistic, climbing up the acanthus and looking down mischievously at the viewer.

The dense use of acanthus leaf ornament combined with the large, vacant cartouche, tight decoration, and bold carving epitomise the rococo revival which started in France and Italy in around 1820 and quickly spread throughout Europe, reaching its zenith in the middle of the nineteenth century. The mirror was probably executed by an *émigrée* Italian carver.

£9,500



Fig. 1



Fig. 2