

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Pair of neoclassical style tortoiseshell & silver candlesticks

William Comyns

£3,400



REF: 8050

Height: 155 mm (6.1")

Width: 105 mm (4.13")

Depth: 82 mm (3.23")

Description

Pair of elegantly proportioned, neoclassical style tortoiseshell and silver candlesticks of oval form, with tapering stems that are inlaid with intricate silver decorations. The tortoiseshell has a lovely lustre.

The technique used on these this silver jewel box is called piqué, where gold or silver is inlaid into another material, in this case silver on tortoiseshell. Despite being expensive, the use of tortoiseshell in the decorative arts was very popular in 18th and 19th century Europe. Not only did it have a beautiful mottled appearance and was durable, but it was also lightweight and could be easily fashioned into other shapes; jewellery boxes and tea caddies were prime examples.

Tortoiseshell is quite malleable when heated, so when very fine gold, or in this case silver, was fashioned into delicate designs and then pressed into the warmed tortoiseshell, the silver then cooled and the shell contracted to hold the silver in place.