

PUSHKIN ANTIQUES

– EXCEPTIONAL SILVERSMITHS –



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Shop 111, Grays Antiques Market, 58 Davies Street, London W1K 5AB
www.pushkinantiques.com



INTRODUCTION

Precious, valuable, antiseptic, ductile: these are just a few of the qualities that make silver a symbol of dignity and opulence.

Silver has always been associated with wealth and elegance and has unfailingly been present on the tables of nobles and aristocrats.

Over the centuries the most important royal dynasties all over the world have been avid collectors of silver artworks and flatware, commissioning the skilled artists and craftsmen to create the finest and most incredible pieces. Unfortunately, those artists have too often been neglected, simply remembered by the simple maker's marks.

However it is important to remember that behind every exceptional object there are always experienced hands and a creative mind, because, as John Ruskin said, "Quality is never an accident. It is the result of intelligent effort". That is why we believe in the importance of shedding some lights on the craftsmanship behind the objects, which is the main purpose of this catalogue.

Over the years, Pushkin Antiques has become synonym with high quality English, Continental, Russian and Oriental silver and rare objects of art. We always look for the most exquisite pieces to expand our collection. We are now proud to celebrate our success with you, presenting in these pages some of the most important artworks we had the pleasure to work on.



PAUL STORR

Paul Storr is the most celebrated English silversmith of the Regency period and one of England's most famed of all times.

Ranging from tableware to the most magnificent sculptural artworks, he made use of the most innovative technology to create extravagant and very sophisticated masterpieces.

After his apprenticeship with the Swedish-born silversmith Andrew Fogelberg, he later associated with the royal silversmiths Rundell & Bridge. Catherine the Great of Russia and Kings George III and George IV were unquestionably the most illustrious clients of the firm.

The latter commissioned some of the most exquisite pieces for Carlton House and Windsor Castle, still part of the Royal Collection.

In 1819 he broke with the company and in 1822 joined a partnership with John Mortimer, until he retired in 1838.

Paul Storr designed some of the most exceptional silver pieces ever made, combining Neoclassical style and Rococo ornamental motifs.

His most flamboyant and monumental creations are nowadays displayed in the most important international museums, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Metropolitan Museum in New York or the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston.

However many of his artworks are still on the market, and they continue to increase in value.



A 19th Century Georgian Silver Centrepiece by Paul Storr, c.1813

BENJAMIN SMITH

Benjamin Smith started his career working for Matthew Boulton, whose company produced plate, buckles and buttons.

Described as button maker in 1794, he moved to London a few years later, in 1802, joining a partnership with his friend and silversmith Digby Scott. At that time he was already manufacturing for Rundell & Bridge, the most well-know luxury retailer of the first half of 19th Century.

From 1807, Smith worked alongside Paul Storr and their designs, after the antique and in the neoclassical style, were often very closely related and difficult to distinguish.

Probably due to his tempered nature, Smith changed partnerships and hallmarks several times, without being able to establish his own independent workshop. In 1807 he parted from Digby Scott and two years later joined a partnership with his brother James Smith.

Nevertheless, even this partnership was dissolved by 1812 and in 1814 he parted from Rundell. Soon after he was in partnership for a short period with his son Benjamin Jr. but he was already independent in 1818.

Benjamin received a number of major commissions and excelled in the production of silver tea sets, sugar bowls, trays and salvers, as demonstrated by one of his most important achievements: the Jamaica Service of 1803, still part of the Royal Collection.



A Pair of 19th Century Georgian Silver Wine Coolers by Benjamin Smith, c.1825

EDWARD FARRELL

Edward Farrell's apprenticeship and early life is almost completely unrecorded. Although described in Holden's Triennial Directory of 1805-7 as a silversmith, we don't have any information about his work until 1813, when he registered his first mark. The most productive phase of his career began when he associated with Kensington Lewis, a silversmith and retailer who counted the Duke of York among his prestigious clients.

Their collaboration lasted from about 1816, until the mid 1830's and during this period Farrell was commissioned large and remarkable sculptural pieces. His flourishing imagination was influenced by 17th Century Flemish and German paintings.

His tea services are often embossed with tavern and popular scenes inspired by Teniers the Younger's genre paintings. Farrell also experimented unusual designs after the Renaissance and Baroque, as well as in the most popular Rococo revival.

After the death of the Duke of York, in 1827, he continued working in a smaller scale.

The remarkable silver gilt candelabrum displayed at the Victoria and Albert Museum and featuring Neptune riding a seahorse is a significant example of Farrell's creativity and skills. It was part of a large scale garniture ordered by the Duke of York probably around 1819.



A 19th Century Victorian Silver Tea Kettle by Edward Farrell, c.1840

MAISON ODIOT

La Maison Odiot, or House of Odiot was founded in 1690 by Jean-Baptiste Gaspard Odiot, fine silversmith during the reign of Louis XV.

However it was with his grandson, Jean Baptiste Claude Odiot (born in 1763) that the firm reached its peak of notoriety, receiving exceptional commissions from Napoleon's court and the most important Royal families of the world.

In 1802 the firm participated at the International Exposition de l'Industrie in Paris winning the gold medal. Soon after, Odiot was appointed as Napoleon's official silversmith and was commissioned both the sceptre and the sword for his coronation in 1804, two massive dinner services for Napoleon's mother and sister and one for the Emperor's campaigns.

Jean Baptiste Claude is certainly the most iconic silversmith of the Empire style, influenced by the return of the classical Greek and Egyptian patterns.

Jean Baptiste Claude retired in 1823, and his son Charles Nicolas took over the business. By 1825 he was already purveyor of silverware by appointment to His Majesty the King Louis-Philippe and to the Royal Family of Orleans and he started experimenting with electroplating, a technique he imported from England. Charles Nicolas excelled in the Rococo style, featuring shells and scroll motifs, flowers and richly ornate elements.

Charles Nicolas was succeeded by his son Gustave who worked for the firm from 1856 through 1906. He accepted the most majestic commission ever received by the company: 3000 pieces of solid gold flatware for the Viceroy of Egypt, Said Pasha.

The House of Odiot is still active nowadays, counting on an extraordinary long story and heritage and its pieces are displayed in the most important museums of the world such as the Musée du Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum in New York.



A 19th Century Silver Figural Ewer by Jean-Baptiste Gustave Odiot, c.1875

MAISON AUCOC

Although the firm Maison Aucoc was founded in 1877, its tradition comes from farther back, with Jean-Baptiste Casimir Aucoc, who started working in Paris in 1821 as a silversmith specialising in dressing and travelling cases. Aucoc participated to the French national exhibitions in 1827, 1839 and 1844. In 1851 he won a prize Medal at the Great World Exhibition in London.

In 1854 Casimir was succeeded by his son Louis who expanded the business obtaining royal appointments to King Louis Philippe I and Napoleon III.

Louis' son, Louis Jr, assumed the leadership of the business after his father's retirement in the mid 1870s. In 1877 he purchased the jewellery firm Lobjois, changing its name to Maison Aucoc. The firm focused on Art Nouveau jewellery until 1900, when André (1856 - 1911), Louis' younger brother, took over the company focusing again on silverware.

André died in Paris in 1911, and the company survived within the family until 1932, when even his brother Louis died.



A pair of 19th Century Silver Seven Light Candelabra by André Aucoc, c.1890

JEAN-CHARLES CAHIER

Well known as silversmith to the kings Louis XVIII and Charles X, Jean-Charles Cahier was apprenticed to Martin-Guillaume Biennais, silversmith appointed by Napoleon. In 1801 he became master silversmith and in 1821, after Biennais retirement, he took over his company.

Cahier also took ecclesiastical commissions: the French register of historic church silver counts 86 pieces with his mark, especially reliquaries, fonts and processional crosses. Among these pieces it's worth to mention the reliquary of the Crown of thorns in Notre Dame de Paris, commissioned by Napoleon in 1806 and designed by Viollet-le-Duc, and the reliquary of Reims cathedral.

Among his secular masterpieces, one of the most impressive is undoubtedly a large and lavish gilt-silver dinner service commissioned by the Grand Duke Michael Pavlovich of Russia (1798 - 1849) sold in Christie's in 2004. He is also made part of the coronation set of Charles X in 1825.

Although he was well placed with the restored Bourbon regime, Cahier's business eventually went bankrupt in 1828.



A 19th Century Silver Soup Tureen by Jean-Charles Cahier, c.1820

CARDEILHAC

The company was founded in 1804 by Antoine-Vital Cardeilhac, who specialised in silver tableware and cutlery in a fine Rococo style.

Soon, the firm gained notoriety participating to the International Fairs and winning a bronze medal in 1823 and the silver one in 1827 and 1834.

Antoine-Vital's son, Armand-Eduard took over the company in 1851 and carried on the style and tradition of the firm, renowned for its finely chased pieces and casts ornated with naturalistic elements, scrolls and leaves. Under his leadership the company won a silver prize at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1867, a gold medal in 1878 and Armand-Eduard was appointed Maitre Orfevre by Napoleon III.

Armand-Eduard retired in 1885, succeeded by his grandson Ernest, who broke with the family traditional style introducing new Art Nouveau designs into the business production often employing drawings by the designer Lucien Bonvallet. Again the firm was prized in 1889 at the Exposition Universelle.

In 1951 Christofle buys the company after over a century of prosperity.

Cardeilhac fine artworks can be seen in some of the most important French museums, such as Musée d'Orsay and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris.



A 19th Century French Silver-Gilt Tea Service by Cardeilhac, c.1870

KARL BENDER

Previously believed to be Karl Bank, the mark “KB” appears on some of the finest objets d’art produced in Vienna in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Objects of the highest quality - such as tazzas, cups, nefs, clocks, cornucopias - were made in Vienna, emulating the style of Italian Renaissance and Baroque, using beautifully carved rock crystal or hand-painted enamel, and mounted in elaborate silver-gilt mounts and set with precious stones.

The striking quality of such pieces, and the unique use of finely painted enamel, is typical of a handful of Viennese makers, such as Hermann Böhm and Hermann Ratzersdorfer.

Competing with the above firms, some of the finest objects of this kind are marked “KB” on the silver mounts. These initials have been long attributed to Karl Bank, jeweller active in Vienna between 1895 and 1924. Further research recently demonstrated that these superb pieces are in fact the work of Karl Bender.

His workshop was located in Vienna from 1875 until 1880 at Wienstrasse 63 and then at Grüngasse 25 from 1881 until 1892 (see Waltraud Neuwirth, *Wiener Gold and Silberschmiede und ihre Punzen, 1867-1922*, Vienna, 1976, p. 102).

Bender trained under the goldsmith Hermann Leichter, specialising in revivalist precious-metal objects mounted in enamel and hardstone.



A 19th Century Austrian Silver Gilt, Rock Crystal & Enamel Hunting Horn by Karl Bender, c.1890

HOUSE OF FABERGÉ

The history of Fabergé (in Russian: Фаберже) begins in France back in 1685 when, due to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes the family had to leave the country to escape the prosecution against Huguenots and moved to Pernau, in the Baltic province of Livonia (now Estonia). Over the years the family name changed from Favri, to Fabrier and finally became Fabergé.

Gustav Faberge, born in 1814, moved to St. Petersburg where he was apprenticed to Andreas Spiegel, a goldsmith specialised in gold boxes. In the late 1820s we find him working for Keibel, goldsmith to the Imperial family. In 1842 Gustav opens his own shop in Bolshaya Morskaya, an elegant street of St. Petersburg.

His son Peter Carl was born in 1846. After his first studies, he left St. Petersburg to travel to Europe where he met the greatest goldsmiths and visited the most important museums and collections, learning techniques and styles. In 1870 he was back in St. Petersburg and took over the company after his father's retirement. In 1882 his younger brother Agathon joined the firm. The following year Peter Carl received a royal warrant from Alexander III.

In 1886 Michael Perkhin was appointed head workmaster: under his direction the most popular Fabergé themes were introduced: eggs, animals, flowers, objects of vertu in hard stones and precious metals. It's the beginning of the richest and most creative period in the firm's oeuvre.

In 1885 the Czar Alexander III commissioned Fabergé an Easter Egg for his wife and gave birth to a legendary tradition that lasted until 1917. The Imperial eggs made by Fabergé are 50 in total.

The extension of Fabergé's reputation corresponded to the extension of the business and the opening of new branches in Moscow (1887), Odessa (1890) and Kiev (1905).

In 1900 Peter Carl Fabergé participated to the Exposition Universelle in Paris where he was acclaimed 'Master' and appointed Knight of the Legion of Honour.

Agathon died in 1895 and Perkhin in 1903, succeeded by Henrik Wigstrom as head workmaster.

In 1906 the firm opened a retail shop in London Mayfair, at 48 Dover Street.

The outbreak of Russian Revolution in 1917 forced Fabergé to escape from Russia with his family, where his company was taken over by the revolutionary committee and nationalised. Peter Carl died in Switzerland in 1920.

Two of his four sons, Alexander and Eugène, settled in Paris and in 1924 they founded Fabergé & Cie. The company retailed artworks in the Fabergé style with mark 'Fabergé, Paris' to distinguish them from the ones created in Russia before the Revolution.

Fabergé has always been synonym of opulence and finest quality. The combination of precious materials and supreme craftsmanship applies both to non-utilitarian objects such as eggs, miniature animals and flowers and practical utility items. Nowadays some of the famous Easter Eggs and decorative objects made between 1885 and 1917 are displayed in the most important international museums, treasured by collectors and sought after at auctions.



A 20th Century Fabergé Silver Gilt & Enamel Photo Frame by 3rd Artel, c. 1910

IGNATY SAZIKOV

Ignaty Sazikov (in Russian: Игнатий Сазиков) is undoubtedly one of the most important Russian silversmiths and jewellers of all times.

Born in Moscow province in 1793, he moved with his family to Moscow where he was apprenticed to his father. At his father's death in 1830, he inherited his workshop and opened a factory in St. Petersburg and a professional school for eighty goldsmiths and silversmiths. In 1846 the firm received the Imperial Warrant by Tsar Nicholas I, becoming official supplier of the Tsar.

The firm exhibited in several World Fairs: at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851 Ignaty gained the gold medal and in 1867 he was awarded with the legion d'Honneur at the Exposition Universelle in Paris.

At his death, his two sons Pavel and Sergei took over the business and until 1887, when the company was sold to Khlebnikov.

The firm produced mainly tablewares and objects of vertu in Neo-Russian style as well as sculptural and figurative pieces representing historical themes or genre scenes.



A 19th Century Silver Royal Cigar Garniture by Ignaty Sazikov, c.1870

KEIBEL

Otto Samuel Keibel was born in 1768 in Prussia. He moved to St. Petersburg very young, becoming a guild jeweller in 1797. In 1808 he was named member of the city council. At his death in 1809 his nephew Johann Wilhelm took over the business, which rapidly grew and started receiving commissions by the Imperial Court.

In 1825, Wilhelm was commissioned all the silver ornaments for the chapel of the Mikhailovsky Palace. In 1826 the firm created the crown for the coronation of Alexandra Feodorovna, wife of the Tsar Nicholas I and in 1836 received the Imperial Warrant.

Starting in 1841 until the end of the 19th century the company was the exclusive official purveyor of state awards for the Capitulum.

Towards the end of the 19th Century the company suffered an increasing competition due to the rise of the House of Fabergé, which received the title of official supplier by Capitulum and Keibel ceased trade in 1910.



A 19th Century Imperial Russian Gold & Enamel Order Of The White Eagle by Keibel, c.1880

WANG HING

Probably the greatest and finest Chinese Export retailer, Wang Hing started trading in Canton soon after 1842 when, with the end of the First Opium War and the treaty of Nanking, China opened its ports to foreign merchants and Hong Kong became a British colony.

Wang Hing was the trading name chosen by the Lo family who established the business and passed it down for generations until 1941. Although we don't have any information about the founder of the company, we know that the Lo family was a wealthy merchant family living in one of the richest and buzzing areas of Canton, the district of Xiguan.

Thanks to the fine quality of the pieces and to the entrepreneurial abilities of the family members, the reputation of the firm grew and in 1920's Lo Hung Tong, grandson of the founder, opened a shop at 10 Queen's Road, Hong Kong and in Shanghai. Wang Hing artworks became very popular among Western clients, who often commissioned trophies and presentation pieces decorated with the traditional Chinese motifs such as dragons, bamboo leaves and v blossoms.

In 1941 with the Japanese invasion, the Lo family was forced to flee to mainland China and the business ceased trading.



A 19th Century Silver Wine Ewer by Wang Hing, c.1890

TU MAO XING

Tu Mao Xing mark is a quite a recent discovery: until 1980's in fact he was wrongly identified as Kan Mao Xing and therefore not much is known about him. Tu Mao Xing is one of the first silversmiths operating in Kiukang between 1880 and 1930 and he is certainly one of the finest 19th Century Chinese silversmiths.

The very fine and consistent quality of Tu Mao Xing items is the result of a strict control over the craftsmen of the workshop.

The items created by the firm show a very rich decoration that mixes typical Victorian forms and traditional Chinese motifs in a very theatrical and exuberant style, defined by Adrien Von Ferscht as 'Chinese Victorian' (A. Von Ferscht, Chinese Export Silver 1785-1940, 4th edition 2015).

According to the scholar, Tu Mao Xing is the best 19th Century creator of silver Chinese dragons. Dragon is perhaps the most powerful among traditional Chinese motifs: it represents the Imperial power and it is considered a symbol of strength and dignity.



A 19th Century Silver Dragon Tea Set by Tu Mao Xing, c.1890

CUTSHING

Cutshing is the trading name of a company based in Canton famous for retailing luxury items in silver, ivory, jade as well as high quality filigree and enamel items.

Although we don't know the name or the names of the craftsmen working for the firm, according to Chinese Export Silver expert Adrien Von Ferscht it seems likely to be the result of a partnership between the American trader John Perkins, Cutshing and Houqua, the most powerful merchant from Hong Kong.

The company produced a large number of high quality items, which indicates that there were several highly skilled artisans producing silver for it.

As the other early Chinese Export Silver retailers, Cutshing used to mark its items with pseudo-hallmarks, imitating the English hallmark system: the marks 'CU' and 'CUT' are nowadays unanimously considered to represent Cutshing.

Cutshing is responsible for some of the finest Georgian style silverware, comparable in design and proportions to the pieces produced in England by Paul Storr, but generally heavier.

The firm specialised also in filigree and enamel artworks and fans that were sought after by European royal families, the Russian Imperial court and Maharajahs.



A 18th Century Rare Silver & Enamel Lidded Basket by Cutshing, c.1790

OOMERSI MAWJI & SONS

Oomersi Mawji is undoubtedly the most celebrated Indian silversmith of all times. The inventiveness and the spotless quality of his works had no rivals in Kutch and his pieces are still sought after worldwide.

Oomersi Mawji was born in Gujarat. Son of a cobbler, he started his career specialising in leather engravings. Soon after 1858 he became a silversmith and his fame rose very quickly: in 1860s he was already court silversmith to the Maharaos of Kutch and the Maharajas of Baroda, two of the most important Indian royal courts.

“Working the silver with ingenious skill and patience, Oomersi Mawji and his sons raised the quality of decoration on Cutch silver to an art form” (Wynyard R. T. Wilkinson, *Indian Silver 1858 - 1947: Silver from the Indian Sub-continent and Burma Made by Local Craftsmen in Western Forms*, London, 1999, p. 69).

The firm’s very high quality silver pieces, often featuring witty and amusing details, became soon very much appreciated overseas, selling through the two branches of Calcutta and Bombay.

In 1878 Oomersi Mawji and his sons participated to the Exposition Universelle in Paris. Their fame grew worldwide and their artworks became very expensive. In London, the brand was retailed by Liberty & Co. and Proctor & Co.

When the father died, around 1890 ca., his sons took over the business, which definitely ceased activity around 1930.

Artworks manufactured by Oomersi Mawji are nowadays part of the collections of international museums such as the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.



A 20th Century Royal Indian Silver Quails Tea Set by Oomersi Mawji Jr, c.1920

PETER ORR & SONS

Peter Orr and his brother Alexander, originally from Scotland arrived in Madras, India in 1843. Soon after their arrival they started working for the silversmith firm Gordon & Co as watchmakers. After Gordon's retirement in 1849 the two brothers took over the business and turned it into the largest and best appointed silversmith company in India.

In 1876 Peter and Alexander got appointed Jewellers and Silversmith to the Prince of Wales.

In 1879 Peter Orr commissioned a very ambitious building to the architect Robert Chisholm for their shop. The premises were inaugurated by Prince George, Duke of York, who later became King George V, and Princess Mary, who later became Queen Mary.

The company produced silverware and jewellery in the so-called Swami style. Thanks to the firm, Swami silver became extremely popular not just in India but also in Europe, where the brand's artworks were sought after by royalties and aristocracy.

By 1903 according to the records their workshop counted over 600 artisans.

The firm suffered the consequences of the Second World War and was forced to stop the production of silverware and jewellery, going back to watchmaking.

Nowadays, some of the company's finest artworks are exhibited in the most popular international museums such as the Victoria and Albert museum.



A 19th Century Royal Presentation Silver Tray by P. Orr & Sons c.1880

GORDON & CO

This family business originally started by Hugh Gordon, son of James Gordon, silversmith in Aberdeen. Hugh Gordon moved to Madras in 1792 and the following year opened his own business giving birth to one of the most important dynasties of colonial silversmiths active in Madras in the 19th Century.

In 1821 his grandson George Gordon founded the company George Gordon & Co. in partnership with his brother Robert Gordon III, John Law and Andrew Barron.

The company produced silverware in the Regency or Georgian style, sometimes featuring traditional Indian decorations and gods and retailed both to wealthy British citizens and Indian aristocrats.

Although George Gordon retired to UK in 1830s, the firm continued operating as Gordon & Co. in Madras until 1848, using the maker's mark 'GG&Co' for its items.



A 19th Century Indian Colonial Silver Trophy Cup & Cover by Gordon & Co, c.1832

ARTHUR & BOND

The English company was based in Yokohama, Japan during the Meiji period. Their high quality silverware and statement pieces were particularly sought after especially by foreign travellers and English gentlemen living in Japan.

The firm catered mainly to English expatriates and foreign travellers. They retailed and manufactured not just silverware but also gold lacquer, chased, hammered and inlaid metal works, ivory carvings, embroideries, cloisonné, porcelain, furniture and domestic items as stated in their business cards.

The firm opened a second branch in Kobe, Japan and a shop in London, 52 St. Mary Axe and its products were retailed in America by G. W. Sheldon & Co.

Their most famous commission is undoubtedly the Liscum Bowl, treasured by the 9th United States Infantry and realised as a memorial of Col. Liscum killed in China in 1900 during the Boxer Rebellion. The bowl, made from bullion rescued by the U.S. Army and featuring Imperial dragons, shows an excellent manufacture and is considered one of the finest artworks of that period.

In 1923 the firm suffered a consistent loss due to the Kanto earthquake and no later record survived.



A 20th Century Silver Tea & Coffee Service On Tray by Arthur & Bond, c.1900



