

An Italian carved and gilded wood console table, with a rectangular *Verde Alpi* marble top above a rich moulding border, the frieze centred by a rectangular boss applied with a lion mask, flanked by panels cast with scrolling foliage and flowers. The four obelisk-shaped legs are richly carved with typically neoclassical motifs and applied lions heads, acanthus leaves, on leaf-carved capitals feet.

Genoa, 1785 Circa

Height: 37,8 in. (96 cm)

Width: 52,8 in. (134 cm)

Depth: 27,6 in. (70 cm)



Conditions: Just cleaned, minor restorations.

Literature:

- A. González Palacios, *Il mobile in Liguria*, Genoa, 1996, p. 295–314.

- E. Colle, *Il mobile Neoclassico in Italia*, Milano, 2005, pp.386–391.

The rich decoration of the present piece is in line with the lavish taste characterising Genoese decorative arts from the 1770s onwards, a taste promoted by architects such as Simone Cantoni (1739–1818) and Andrea Tagliafichi (1729–1811). Tagliafichi in particular, who was fully aware of the most innovative trends in contemporary Europe, can be credited with the most original *invenzioni* adopted by Genoese designers and cabinetmakers of the period. He collaborated with Charles de Wailly (1730–98), one of the most renowned figures of French Neoclassicism, on the occasion of the latter's stay in Genoa from 1771 for the decorations of the great hall of Palazzo Spinola. It is there that Tagliafichi first integrated the more restrained elements of Luis XVI style into the late-Baroque opulence typical of Genoese interiors.

The present table is a glorious example of such example of Neoclassical elements that was to become a typical trait of furniture produced in and around Genoa in the late Eighteenth century.

The formal features of our console table are in line with furnishings attributed to artisans active in Genoa at the end of the Eighteenth century, who were engaged in the refurbishment in the 'Greek taste' of the rooms of the greatest aristocratic palaces of the city. The present console table shares many elements in particular with furnishings studied and illustrated by Alvar González-Palacios (*Il mobile in Liguria*, Genova 1996, p.315 fig.371). Those are pieces made for Palazzo Spinola in Genoa, and include a console table (fig.1) and a series of chairs (fig.2) and armchairs (fig.3), similarly carved and gilded (Palazzo Spinola, Salotto dei Franceschini, Genova). The 'Spinola suite' is characterised by the same elements as the present console, such as

the lion heads, the canthus leaves, and the extremely rich treatment of the gilding (E. Colle, *Il mobile Neoclassico in Italia*, Milano 2005, p. 390).

We should mention, in the end, some important similarities with a console table made for the Marquises Spinola previously in the collection of Giuseppe Rossi at Acqui Terme (Sotheby's, London, Giuseppe Rossi Collection., Vol.I, lot 198).



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3