

Georgian Paste Stomacher.

The Georgian period marked a dramatic expansion in the market for fine jewelry, which was matched by the incredible speed of development in metalworking and jewelry techniques. Michaan's Auctions is proud to offer a **Georgian Paste Stomacher** (\$5/700) for sale in our July Gallery Auction, held on Friday, July 19th.

This stomacher brooch takes the form of a twisted boutique bow and is constructed of parallel silver wires that form the mounting. This mounting is filled with numerous cushion and round-cut paste, a type of cut glass. There are two means of attachment at the rear of the brooch, a pair of parallel anchors, as well as a small loop that allows for the fastening of a chain. The entire brooch measures approximately



sixty-two by ninety-seven millimeters and has an approximate gross weight of 21.7 dwt.

Within jewelry, a stomacher, sometimes referred to as a *devant de corsage* (lit. in front of a corsage), is a piece meant to cover the central panel of a dress's bodice. These pieces of jewelry rose to popularity in the 18th and 19th centuries and were common accessories to ball gowns and evening dresses at the time. Made of fine metals, and

decorated with pearls or fine stones, their size meant they often required a dress to be corseted to withstand its weight. They quickly became a sign of significant social status and were usually paired with other pieces of fine jewelry such as a tiara or similar items.

However, since the decline in popularity of the stomacher, these pieces are today usually worn in the place of a traditional brooch, on the shoulder or neckline.



Georgian jewelry refers to pieces made during the Georgian period of English history or in the style of pieces from that period. The Georgian era of

English culture corresponds to the rule of the three King Georges from the Hannover family, as well as the final ruler, William. Lasting from 1714 to 1837, this was a time of significant change in British life, both politically and culturally. In contrast to the political strife of the preceding Stuart monarchy, the Georgian era established a new period of stability that allowed for the advancement of arts and sciences. This stability was possibly only through the loosening of social hierarchies that had dominated the country for hundreds of years and been so fiercely fought over in the preceding years. As part of this loosening, wearing fine jewelry and clothes became more widespread, and rapid advancements were made in its design.

Sumptuary laws, i.e. laws that restricted clothing or jewelry to certain ranks and incomes, began to be

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loosened during the early Georgian period. Now available to the middle classes, jewels became much more widespread, a phenomenon that spawned the first popular fashion trends in the country, the most well known of which is the Macaroni men, who wore bright, tight-fitting clothing, with high heels and plenty of jewelry. It also became common to wear particular types of jewelry during certain hours of the day, further increasing the demand for fine jewelry pieces such as this beautiful piece offered at Michaan's Auctions.

A Georgian Paste Stomacher (\$5/700) will be offered in Michaan's Auctions July Gallery Auction on Friday, July 19th. This sale features interesting

and important pieces from the Furniture & Decorations Department, works from important artists brought to you by the Fine Art Department, and a collection of well-regarded pieces from the Jewelry Department. The auction is led by a pair of candelabras in the Rococo style by French sculptor Claude Michel, a portfolio of woodcuts by the preeminent Surrealist Salvador Dali, and an impressive Rolex watch in black and gold.

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