Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Napoleon III Gilt-Gesso Pier Mirror, Circa 1850

£595

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REF: 6154

Height: 100 cm (39.4")

Width: 71 cm (28")

Diameter: 6 cm (2.4")

Description

A magnificent French Napoleon III gilt-gesso pier mirror, dating to circa 1850. Richly ornamented and impressively scaled, it is a fine expression of the lavish, eclectic style that defined the Second Empire, combining classical motifs with the theatrical opulence for which French mid-19th-century interiors are so admired.

The tall rectangular plate is enclosed within a deeply moulded giltwood and gesso frame, lavishly worked with scrolling acanthus, trailing foliage, and sculptural ornament. The elaborate cresting provides a dramatic focal point, while the gilded finish brings warmth and luminosity to the whole composition. Its vertical proportions were designed for placement between windows, above a console, or within a formal entrance, where it would amplify light and create an immediate sense of grandeur.

During the Napoleon III period, mirrors such as this formed an important part of the fashionable Parisian interior. They were valued not only for their practical purpose, but also for their ability to enrich a room architecturally-reflecting candlelight, chandeliers, paintings, and textiles while extending the visual scale of the space.

With its richly decorative frame and commanding presence, this mirror would make an exceptional statement above a chimney piece, console table, or dressing table. It is equally at home in a period interior, a grand contemporary setting, or a scheme that calls for one beautifully theatrical antique focal point.

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