

The Richest And Handsomest At Hirschl & Adler Galleries

By Laura Beach





(Previous Page) Surmounted by recumbent deer, the pair of circa 1815–1818 carved and gilded girandole mirrors are probably by Isaac Platt of New York. Below them, a pair of circa 1827–30 English Argand lamps labeled by New York retailer Baldwin & Gardiner illuminate a pair of circa 1825 paint decorated Baltimore card tables attributed to John Finlay and Hugh Finlay. The marble-topped Boston center table dates to about 1825–1830 and reflects the influence of English designers Rudolph Ackermann and Thomas King. Right, the 1830s Boston mahogany secrétaire à abattant is possibly by George Archbald. On it sits a circa 1800 carved mahogany bust of George Washington. The circa 1816 armchair is attributed to Judkins and Senter, with paint decoration possibly by Henry Beck, Portsmouth, N.H. Above, three-light Argand chandelier, circa 1820.

(Left) Above the small Boston settee attributed to Thomas Seymour, circa 1810, hangs a carved and gilded New York pier mirror made around 1800 and unidentified oil on panel portraits of a US Army officer and his wife by George Linen, circa 1845. Signed and inscribed, the painted tin Argand wall lamps of about 1825 are by William Carleton, active in Boston from about 1820 to 1860.

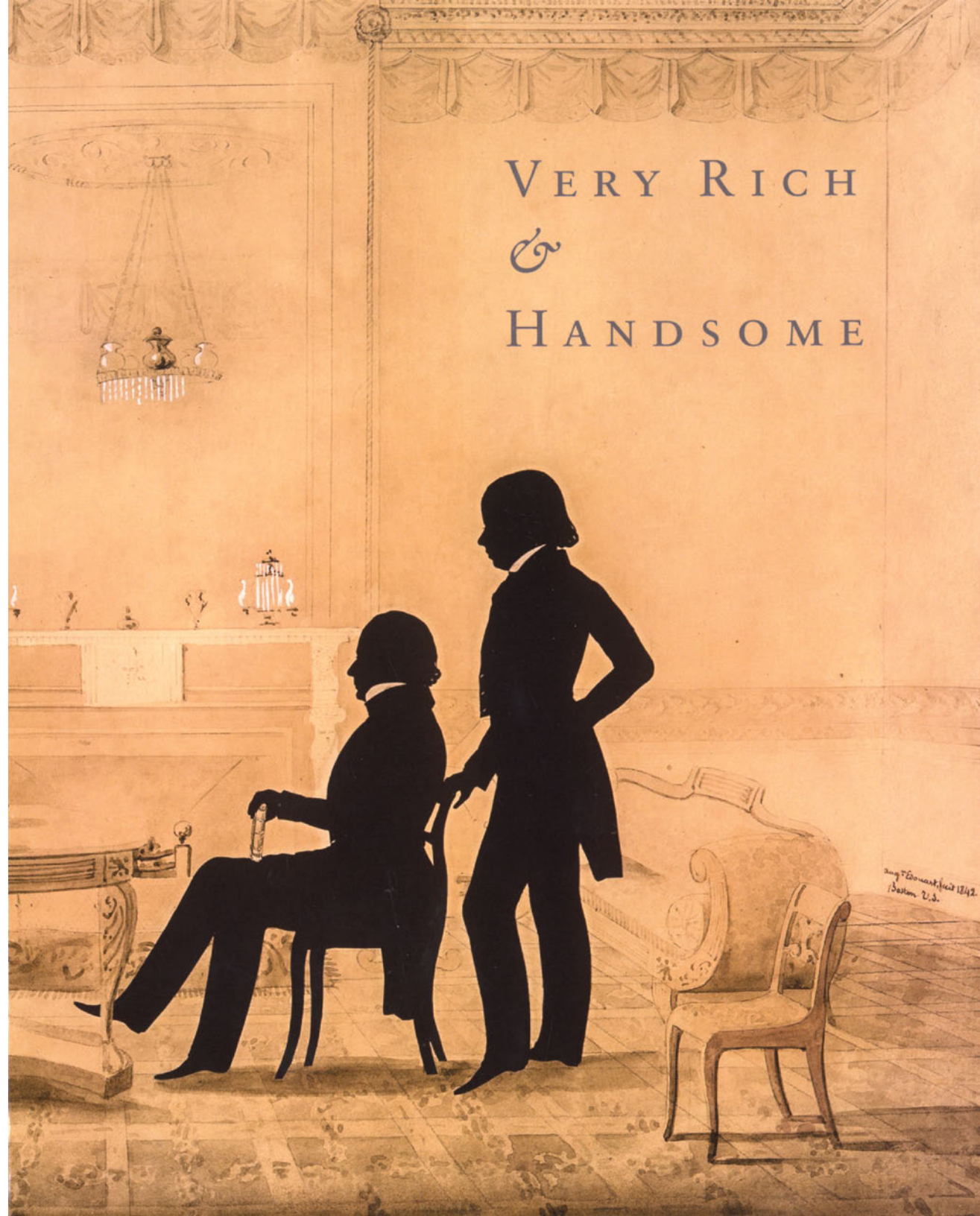
NEW YORK CITY — In *Very Rich & Handsome: American Neo-Classical Decorative Arts*, the catalog to the exhibition of the same name at Hirschl & Adler Galleries through February 13, Elizabeth Feld and Stuart P. Feld chronicle the exploration of this period by scholars since 1964, adding their own latest discoveries.

“This is Hirschl & Adler’s sixth Neoclassical exhibition,” Liz Feld told us on a recent tour of the sprawling show. While previous exhibitions have focused on Boston and New York design, this more broadly conceived display emphasizes new finds and documented examples from the major style centers of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, plus occasional outliers like Portsmouth, N.H.

A The phrase “very rich and handsome,” written in 1820 by Abby Breese Salisbury to describe a group of furniture that she commissioned from the Boston cabinetmaking firm Isaac Vose & Son, alludes to the era’s restrained opulence.

Rather than organize the works chronologically or by medium, Hirschl & Adler offers domestically scaled vignettes incorporating furniture, mirrors, clocks, lighting, silver, ceramics, glass and fine arts produced between 1810 and the 1840s.

Augustin Edouart’s 1842 pencil and cut-paper silhouette of the Daniel P. Parker family at home at 40 Beacon Street in Boston illustrates the refined elegance of the best American Neoclassical interiors. A detail from the work illustrates the cover of the 144-page color catalog *Very Rich & Handsome: American Neo-Classical Decorative Art*.





A circa 1815 rosewood wine cooler with dolphin toe caps and lion's head handles is attributed to Thomas Seymour. The Boston cabinetmaker is also thought to have

supervised the creation of a sumptuous linen press, likely made about 1825 by Emmons & Archbald or Isaac Vose & Son.

From New York comes a diminutive lady's secretary that descended in the Livingston family. It for many years was on loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and is considered the work of

Duncan Phyfe.

Fashioned from contrasting rosewood and satinwood with ebonized detail, and inlaid with the finest die-stamped brass, a circa 1820 Philadelphia *secrétaire à abattant* is



Elizabeth Feld and her father, Stuart P. Feld, organized the exhibition "Very Rich & Handsome: American Neo-Classical Decorative Arts." The eagle-carved mahogany sofa is attributed to Isaac Vose & Son with carving probably by Thomas Wightman, Boston, circa 1819–1820. Above, "A Memorial to General George Washington before an Allegory of Battle," Chinese for the American market, circa 1807–1825, oil on canvas, and eight Chinese watercolors by Sunqua, circa 1825–50. Boston lyre back mahogany side chairs, circa 1825, and a pair of Argand wall lamps, circa 1820–1825.

is probably the work of Joseph B. Barry. Notable mirrors include a pair of New York carved and gilded girandole examples probably made by Isaac Platt between 1815 and 1818. (Continued)

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