

Justin Evershed-Martin

Fine Art and Design



A Very Rare Pair of Cast Iron Chairs attr to James Yates

Cast and polished iron with their original ebonised wood seats.

England circa 1870

H 95cm x W 38cm x D 35cm

(H 37 ¼ x W 15 x D 13¾ in)

Provenance: Mallett, London

Private Collection, London

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A very rare, pair of cast and polished iron side chairs, the cartouche shaped back embellished with scrolling acanthus leaves, with an ebonized oak seat above X-form legs joined by a stretcher. Attributed to James Yates.

Possibly unique, these chairs may have been a prototype that was never put into production, a specific and one off commission for a house, or alternatively simply an exhibition model to showcase the skill of the maker. The design is a richly conceived interpretation of Renaissance and Baroque styles. The quality of the current chairs can be seen in their X-form legs, whose design dates back to antiquity, and which are finely, and unnecessarily, cast in the round.

James Yates was a notable northern English industrialist who worked initially on his own from 1838 to 1846 and then in partnership with George Haywood and John Drabble. They received great acclaim in the Great Exhibition of 1851 held in Hyde Park, London producing exceptionally high quality 'art furniture' for important private commissions as well as municipal works such as railings that, essentially, subsidised the domestic pieces which were aimed at a very different market.

