

PATRICK JEFFERSON



Item	REGENCY GILT-BRONZE FIGURE HOLDING A BLACK PORPHYRY DISC
Date	England, circa 1805, attributed to William Bullock after a design by Luigi Valadier.
Provenance	Ferry & Clegg, Nettlebed, Oxfordshire; acquired from a private English collection.
Dimensions	Height 14" (36cm) Width 7" (18cm)

Description *The gilt-bronze figure of a classical maiden on a tripod plinth with applied medusa head masks and chimera feet holding an associated black porphyry disc.*

A related figure of a vestal holding a clock, previously at Southill and later sold at auction,¹ was cautiously given to Luigi Valadier (d. 1839), as 'a similar figure was sketched in Valadier's workshops in 1795 by the architect Charles Heathcote Tatham, when he was seeking appropriate furnishings for Henry Holland's decoration of Carlton House for George, Prince of Wales, later George IV'². In 1805, the Liverpool sculptor William Bullock of the 'Museum and Bronze figure Manufactory' took out a patent for a related tripod plinth pattern supporting an urn, while the identical chimera foot was used on a pair of lamp bases supplied in 1803 to the 1st Marquess of Exeter, modelled by Francis Hardenberg R.A. (fl. 1783-d. 1852) of Mount Street.³ The enigmatic disc of black porphyry, *porfido serpentino nero*, a rare hardstone discovered in AD18 by Caius Cominius Leugas at the Bradford Quarry, Mons Porphyrites, and exactly the type of ancient object that would have been revered in the Regency period, is reminiscent of Chinese archaic discs, *bi*, from the Neolithic period (circa 6,000 B.C.) to the *Han* (770BC-AD220).

1. C. Musgrave, *Regency Furniture*, 1961, pl. 6; exhibited *The Regency Exhibition*, The Royal Pavillion, Brighton, 1951, no. 301.
2. Christie's London, *The Humphrey Whitbread Collection*, 5 April 2001, lot 355.
3. T. Clifford, William Bullock- a fine fellow', *CIM*, July 1991, pp. 14-15.

Price £4,900

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Fig. 1



Fig.2



Fig.3