

# PATRICK JEFFERSON



- Item** BLACK FOSSIL MARBLE & ORMOLU-MOUNTED MAHOGANY SEMAINIER
- Date** *Directoire* or *Consulat*, France, circa 1795-1804.
- In the manner of** Bernard Molitor, (1755-1833) *maître* 1787.
- Dimensions** Height 58 1/4" (148) Width 39" (99cm) Depth 17 1/2" (44.5)
- Description** *Oak veneered in mahogany; the granité Belge top above a moulded frieze, over six graduated drawers each with a key-shaped escutcheon, flanked by a pair of ring-bearing lion's mask handles, on a moulded plinth, supported on ebonised lion's paw feet; small damages, losses and marks commensurate with age.*
- Born in Luxembourg, Molitor moved to Paris in 1778 and by 1784 was working in London, which clearly influenced his design and unusually precise constructional techniques. In 1787 he became a *maître ébéniste* and the following year married the daughter of Marin Fessard, the chief Royal carpenter at the Palace of Fontainebleau. One of Molitor's earliest commissions was a mahogany floor for Queen Marie-Antoinette's *boudoir*, followed by further commissions from the Royal family and aristocracy. Molitor was the only Parisian cabinetmaker with a workshop that had supplied furniture to all the rulers of France from Louis XVI, through the Revolution, *Directoire*, *Consulat*, *Empire*, and into the Bourbon monarchy. This unique feat was achieved by replacing the Japanese lacquer and gilt bronze *luxe* of the *ancien régime* with austere designs using finely figured mahogany, sparingly ornamented with crisp mounts that epitomise this beautifully understated *semainier*. Although Ulrich Leben comments (*Molitor*, p. 51) "It is extremely difficult to attribute a precise date or provenance to many of Molitor's pieces.", a number are published which share the distinctive design, as well as the choice of timber, mounts and hardware.
- Price** £7,500

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BLACK FOSSIL MARBLE & ORMOLU-MOUNTED MAHOGANY *SEMMAINIER*



Fig. 1



Fig.2



Fig.3