

GALERIE LAMY
CHABOLLE



Two Gilt Bronze Dogs known as those of the Marquise de Pompadour

Gilt bronze

Late 18th century

France

10 x 11 cm (3.9 x 4.3 in.)



Many bronze dogs of this style have been identified — without much justification — as the pets of Marie-Antoinette or the Marquise de Pompadour. It is true that, in this case, the two dogs bear a certain resemblance to Inès and Mimi, the Marquise's favorite dogs. They were immortalised in portraits by Christophe Huet, known today through several engravings by Étienne Fessard held at the *Cabinet des Estampes*. Inès and Mimi were also engraved based on drawings by Boucher in the *Suite d'estampes gravées par madame la marquise de Pompadour d'après les pierres gravées de Guay*. In these, the resemblance is no less striking, though ultimately inconclusive. All that can be said with certainty is that several similar or closely related models existed during the last two-thirds of the 18th century ; it can be assumed that the domestic animals used as models belonged to the great collectors of that era. Furthermore, the 1770 inventory of Philippe Cafféri mentions “a firedog with a dog and a cat”, and a similar object was noted in the 1755 posthumous inventory of his father, Jacques Cafféri. This is why, by tradition, gilt bronze statuettes representing dogs or cats — especially when they show such advanced modeling and chasing as seen here — have been attributed to the Cafféri family.

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