

Basic Detail Report

Title Side Chair

Date 1775-1800

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Birch, leather, brass hardware

Description Birch side chair in the Chippendale, or rococo, style, with an arched crest rail, a pierced, vase-shaped splat, straight front legs, and a leather upholstered slip seat. The back of the chair is formed by a crest rail atop two stiles. The crest rail has an arch in the center and an ear at each end. Centered below the crest rail is a pierced, vase-shaped splat with three elongated openings; a small, closed circle of wood is inserted into the middle of two of the openings. The splat is joined at the bottom to a rectangular stay rail. Above the seat, each stile is slanted back. Below the seat, each stile forms a back leg that slants backward, over a backward-slanted foot. The seat is trapezoidal; it is upholstered with a single sheet of tan leather that is tacked down with a line of brass nails at the top of the seat rails. The front seat rail extends past the front legs at each side, and is ornamented with a small, downward-pointing ear. Each front leg is straight, and extends from below the front seat rail down to a plain foot. All four sides of the chair have a plain, rectangular stretcher. Condition: The splat has split above the left opening; this has been repaired with two nails, one through the bottom of the split, and one through the side of the splat. The interior back corners of the seat have new triangular corner blocks nailed in place. The chair is reupholstered; the leather is bowed in the center, and the top

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surface is cracking. The finish is old, but well worn, especially on the lower front legs, the front stretcher, the left stile where the stay rail meets the stile, and on the top edges of the crest rail. Design and Construction Details: Design. The bottom front edge of the stay rail has cyma curve, or S-curve, molding. The front exterior corner of each front leg has molding consisting of an ovolo flanked by a fillet. Construction: The crest rail is supported on a tenon at the top of each stile. The back edges of each stile, above the seat, are chamfered; the chamfering extends up onto the back of the crest rail. The splat is tenoned into the crest rail above and into the stay rail below. The stay rail is tenoned into the stiles. The front seat rail is supported on tenons at the top of the front legs. The side seat rails are tenoned into the front seat rail and into the stiles. The back seat rail is tenoned into the stiles. The leather upholstery (replaced) is held in place over the top of the seat rails with a single line of brass tacks. The interior back seat corners have triangular corner blocks (later addition) nailed to the rails. There is no rabbet at the interior top edge of each seat rail. Each front and side stretcher is tenoned and pinned into the lower portion of the legs. The back stretcher is tenoned into the lower legs.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 39 15/16 x 20 3/4 x 18 5/8in. (101.4 x 52.7 x 47.3cm)