

Basic Detail Report

Title Armchair

Date 1771-1790

Primary Maker Eliphalet Chapin

Medium Cherry, pine, red moreen wool, brass nails

Description Cherry armchair in the Chippendale, or rococo, style, with a scalloped crest rail, a pierced, vase-shaped splat, cabriole front legs over claw-and-ball feet, and a removable slip seat. The back of the chair is formed by a crest rail atop two stiles. The crest rail has a ribbed shell in the center, flanked by a cyma curve, or S-curve, and a ribbed ear. Centered below the crest rail is a pierced, vase-shaped splat, with Gothic-style scrolls and a quatrefoil superimposed on an "X". The splat is joined at the bottom to a tapered splat shoe, just above the back seat rail. Above the seat, each stile is slanted backwards. Below the seat, each stile forms a cylindrical back leg that is slanted toward the center back of the chair. Each arm undulates and ends in an outward-scrrolled handhold that extends past the side seat rails. Each arm is supported by a curved arm support that extends down to the side of the front leg. The seat is trapezoidal, with a removable slip seat upholstered with red moreen wool. The slip seat sits just inside the four seat rails at the top of the legs. Each cabriole front leg extends from the height of the seat down to a claw-and-ball foot. Two knee brackets are located at the top of each front leg, where the leg joins the front or side seat rail; the diagonal edge of each knee bracket is shaped with a cyma curve. Condition: The top of the right arm support is repaired or replaced.

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The center back of the splat shoe has begun to split and has been repaired. The top back of the crest rail is scratched. The lower side sections on the back of the crest rail have been repaired or replaced. The frame is refinished, and the slip seat is reupholstered. Design and Construction Details: The crest rail is supported on a tenon at the top of each stile. Above the seat, the back of each stile is rounded. The splat is tenoned into the crest rail; the lower center section of the back of the crest rail is glued in place, and shaped to conform to the pierced openings at the top of the splat. The splat is tenoned into the splat shoe, which sits above the back seat rail. Each arm is screwed into the stile; the screw is concealed with filler. The front of each arm is supported at the top of the arm supports by a tenon; the arm supports are screwed to the side of the seat frame just above the knee, and the screw is concealed with filler. The lower edge of the front and side seat rails each have an elongated horizontal section in the center, flanked by a semi-circular downward curve and a horizontal section where the rail meets the leg. The back seat rail is tenoned and double pinned into the stiles. Each side seat rail is tenoned through the stile; this joint is secured with two small wedges of wood inserted into the back of the tenon. The front seat rail and each side seat rail are tenoned into the top of the front legs. The knee brackets are nailed to the underside of the front or side rail and to the side of the knees. The exterior top edge of the front and side seat rails, as well as the top of each front leg, is shaped with molding consisting of an ovolo and a fillet. The interior top edge of the front and side seat rails, and the top of each front leg, have a rabbet to support the upholstered slip seat. The back interior corners of

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the seat frame have triangular corner blocks nailed in place; the lower edge of each of these corner blocks is shaped to accommodate the shape of the seat rails. The front interior corners of the seat frame each have a vertical glue block and a triangular corner block nailed in place. Upholstered Slip Seat (reupholstered). The armchair is accompanied by a removable, upholstered slip seat. The slip seat consists of a red moreen wool, over a linen undercover, stuffing, sackcloth, webbing, and a trapezoidal wooden frame. The wool is tacked to the underside of the frame with small nails. Please see attached essay by the Chapin authority, Dr. Thomas P. Kugelman for more information about this piece.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 39 7/8 x 27 1/8 x 23in. (101.3 x 68.9 x 58.4cm)