

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Bureau plat à huit pieds (Kneehole Desk)

André-Charles Boulle (French, 1642–1732)

Date ca. 1692–95, with later alterations ca. 1770 (before 1777)

Medium Oak, fir, and walnut veneered with brass, tortoiseshell marquetry, and ebony; gilt bronze, leather

Dimensions 30 3/4 × 57 7/8 × 29 1/8 in. (78.1 × 147 × 74 cm)

Credit Line Henry Clay Frick Bequest

Accession Number 1918.5.101

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 19, South Hall

Commentary Originally, this desk was twenty inches longer and five inches deeper, and its eight legs were linked with stretchers (four together on each side). André-Charles Boulle invented the model in the early 1690s, producing only a few pieces with turtle shell and brass marquetry. The decorative pattern here—in turtle shell with brass back-ground—is known as contre-partie marquetry. Boulle's furniture continued to be appreciated throughout the eighteenth century. In the early 1770s, the cabinetmaker Etienne Levasseur modified the desk for its new owner, probably the famous art dealer Claude Julliot, who owned the altered version by 1777. The alteration included cutting the marquetry panels, therefore removing an important part of Boulle's work. However, Levasseur retained Boulle's large gilt-bronze mounts in the shape of Indian heads. Source: Vignon, Charlotte. *The Frick Collection Decorative Arts Handbook*. New York: The Frick Collection/Scala, 2015.

Collection History Probably C.-F. Julliot sale, Paris, November 20, 1777, Lot 713. Duveen. Frick, 1918. Source: *Furniture in The Frick Collection: Italian and French Renaissance, French 18th and 19th Centuries (Pt. I). Volume V*. New York: The Frick Collection, 1992.