Black enamelled Vase **TOURBILLONS**

By Rene Lalique

First executed in 1926

A rare black enamelled clear glass vase, with a rounded cylindrical shaped body, moulded extremely deeply with depictions of a stylised whirlwind. The top edge of the design is enamelled in black, while the wall and ground texture is matt. Although the vase is not very high, it is extremely heavy and very imposing. The light plays wonderful games with the deep recesses, the almost iridescent walls, and the black enamelled surface.

Height : 20 cms

Signatures : Engraved 'R Lalique' on base

Reference : (i) Felix Marcilhac, Rene Lalique – Catalogue Raisonne Des Oeuvres de Verre, Paris, 1989, p. 433, no. 973.
(ii) Patricia Bayer & Mark Waller, The Art of Rene Lalique, 1988, p. 30, frame 30.

‘**TOURBILLONS**’ is one of Lalique’s best Art Deco designs, and the most successful of his designs as a purely sculptural piece of glass.

The design was made in clear glass, turquoise, yellow amber, and clear with black enamel on the shiny surface. All models are however relatively scarce, and command large sums of money.

The black enamelled version is rare, simply because the enamelling process was lengthy and complex. Pieces to be enamelled were painted with the enamel, and then slowly reheated to almost glass melting point, so that the enamel could cure and fuse with the surface. Very slow cooling followed. Needless to say, there were many mishaps, and as a result few were made, and were sold at a premium.

A black enamelled **TOURBILLONS** prototype was exhibited on the 1925 Paris Exposition.

As the black enamelled **TOURBILLONS** are rare and extremely sought after, clear versions are appearing with later ‘enamelling’. These, to the experienced dealer or collector, are totally recognisable, and fetch a fraction of the price of the originally enamelled versions.

This model has particularly clear and sparkly clear glass, which offsets the black enamel beautifully. It is without doubt the most outstanding version of this iconic vase we have ever had in stock.

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