Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Asprey & Co. Combination Opera Glasses and Folding Fan

£325

Emmett & White Ltd
Cross House, Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5UD
01323 870 595 • info@emmettandwhite.com • emmettandwhite.com

REF: 7788

Description

A rare and ingenious late Victorian combination of folding fan and opera glasses by Asprey & Co., London, dating to circa 1880. Created for the opera, theatre, and formal evening entertainments, this exceptional accessory unites two essential elements of fashionable Victorian dress in a single, beautifully made object.

The folding fan is decorated with shimmering spangles that catch the light as it moves, while its elegant tortoiseshell and gilt-metal frame incorporates a pair of opera glasses. This inventive dual-purpose design allowed its owner to observe the performance at close range while retaining the theatrical elegance of a decorative fan. It is a wonderfully evocative object from an era in which personal accessories were chosen not simply for utility, but as expressions of refinement, fashion, and social standing.

Pieces of this kind would have been used in private boxes, concert halls, and society gatherings, where the rituals of the evening were as important as the performance itself. The clever integration of magnification and fan reflects the Victorian appetite for novelty, technical ingenuity, and luxurious detail.

Asprey & Co. was among the most esteemed London makers and retailers of luxury goods, celebrated for the quality of its craftsmanship and the sophistication of its designs. This unusual combination piece is a particularly charming example of the firm's ability to combine practical function with decorative appeal.

A captivating addition to a collection of antique fans, opera memorabilia, optical instruments, or fine Victorian accessories. Its remarkable construction, sparkling decoration, and strong association with the elegance of late 19th-century theatre-going make it both a conversation piece and a highly desirable collector's object.

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