



**Victorian Furniture**  
**1830-1901**  
**19<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Duncan Phyfe**  
**(1768-1854)**

# Duncan Phyfe (1768 – 1854)

- Born in Scotland, Phyfe came to New York City in about 1784 and settled in Albany.
- He later moved to New York 1791 and established himself as cabinetmaker journey man.
- Phyfe's shop was located at 35 Partition (now Fulton) Street.
- Phyfe bought a number of buildings on Fulton St. near City Hall. His firm continued under the name Duncan Phyfe & Sons until 1847, when Phyfe retired, having accumulated a sizable fortune.
- Charles-Hanore Lannuier (1779-1819) another immigrant from France had a workshop nearby, and both he and Phyfe often influenced each other with architectural furnishing from Greek and Roman design.

# Duncan Phyfe Style

- Phyfe was one of the first American cabinetmakers to successfully incorporate the factory method into the cabinet workshop.
- He employed master craftsmen, & apprentices, as well as carvers, turners, and upholsterers
- He introduced the Empire style to New York City.
- The greatest contribution Phyfe had on the industry was introducing the city to a unique blend of the English Neoclassical and Regency styles, found in design books such as Thomas Sheraton's *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* (1793) and Thomas Hope's *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* (1807).
- Unlike Lannuier Phyfe did not attach a trade label to his furniture, and few objects in the "Phyfe style" can be conclusively linked to the cabinetmaker through documents or family histories.

# Timbers Used

- In the 1790s, Phyfe was then operating out of three joinery shops and also had a warehouse in New York City.
- He Produced beautiful regency-style furniture for most of the elegant homes over the entire Atlantic coast.
- His timber of choice was mahogany from Cuba and Santo Domingo he late started using rosewood.



Phyfe Style Rocker



Phyfe Lyre Chair

# Duncan Phyfe



Empire Style



Phyfe Style bench



Phyfe style Federal Style Carved Harps

# Duncan Phyfe



[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/phla/hd\\_phla.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/phla/hd_phla.htm)