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Belle epoque diamond pear cluster and laurel fringe necklace by Chaumet, Paris c.1900,

the front designed as a looped scroll ribbon suspending a fringe of seven graduated cluster drops, set with old cut diamonds of cushion, rounded brilliant, pear and rose cut, the drops each centred by a principal oblong, cushion or rounded cut diamond, with smaller diamond above and each in single row border, upon knife-bar stems with pear cut diamond duos and delicate rose cut diamond laurel leaf surmount, the stem punctuating a loop of the ribbon, the back formed of rose cut diamond line baton links, mounted in silver and gold, signed 'CHAUMET PARIS', French gold and silver control marks, accompanied by certificate of authenticity from Chaumet.

Chaumet conceived the design of this jewel in 1896 when the firm was commissioned to make a tiara for the Archduchess Maria Dorothea of Austria (1867-1932) for her wedding to Philippe, Duke of Orleans. This first version, worn by the Archduchess in the two black and white photographs, is noted as having 'inverted arches interspersed with laurel-leaf elements supporting large diamonds in tapered openwork mounts' and was convertible to a necklace. Such was the design's popularity that several slightly different versions were made. This lot is one such version and a rare survivor.

For another version, the KeroUartz tiara, set with baroque pearl drops, that would have also had interchangeable diamond drops, see exhibition catalogue "Chaumet In Majesty, Jewels of Sovereigns since 1780", Monaco, 2019, pp 164-5. For more jewels by Chaumet incorporating similar "floating laurel leaves", made in 1900 and exhibited at the Paris Exposition, see Vever, Henri (trans. Purcell, Katherine), "French Jewellery of the 19th Century", London, 2001, pp. 1094-1096. The jury noted M. Chaumet's technical mastery and how his elegant jewels were carefully designed to enhance important gemstones

Inside length approximately 38.5cm / 15"

Height at front to top of stem 6.5cm / 2"

Drop at front along full stem and cluster 6.4cm / 2"

Weight: 58.5g