"chevalier De Bethune" Escapement Pendulum, Signed Poirot In Paris



28 000 EUR

Signature : POIROT

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Mahogany

Length : 31

Height : 47

Depth : 17,5

Description

Very beautiful terminal clock in wood and gilded bronze testifying to the refinement and Belgian artisanal know-how of the end of the 18th century.
It rests on a rectangular mahogany cage base, magnificently decorated with gilded bronze friezes alternating medallions of moving foliage and beaded foliage.

The central part has four windows framed with gilded bronze rods revealing the pendulum with the mask of radiant Apollo.

The falls in a large animated medallion beaded in the center, surmount the fluted and beaded uprights in three rows in the lower part, highlighting an elegant marriage between the

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richly polished mahogany and the gilded bronze ornaments.

It ends with rounded gilded bronze feet, resting on a rectangular base with ogee angles in mahogany, decorated with foliage garlands and beaded ribbons, in a gilded bronze frieze and finished with tulip feet.

The enameled dial, of rare finesse, is a jewel of precision and readability. It displays the hours in Roman numerals and the minutes as well as the seconds in Arabic numerals. An additional technical complication, rare for the time, allows the day and date to be read, providing insight into the mechanical advances and innovation of 18th-century watchmaking.

This dial is surrounded by a snake biting its tail, a timeless symbol of eternity and perpetual renewal (the infinite cycle of time). On either side, laurel wreaths and ribbons highlight the nobility of this clock and the decorative dimension.

These details give the whole a sumptuous aesthetic, where the exceptional quality of the bronzes is harmoniously reflected on the wooded surface of the mahogany. This contrast between the mahogany with deep reflections and the gilded and chiseled bronze of exceptional quality testifies to unparalleled goldsmith work, enhancing the visual harmony of this unique piece.

However, an additional quality makes this clock an exceptional work of this period.

It indeed has a very rare movement, equipped with the so-called "chevalier de Béthune" escapement.

A rare escapement which was only used on certain clocks between 1730 and 1800, this mechanism was prized for its precision and

technical refinement, highlighting the watchmaking prowess of the object.

With a double lever escapement, like that of the "Mayet Brothers", it is more precise than the escapement by a foliot balance which was the driving force of clocks until the end of the 17th century.

The latter, due to its imprecise back and forth movement, could be up to an hour late per day.

The double lever escapement allows for more stable movement by adjusting the spacing of the pallets, thus allowing the movement to run smoothly.
We can find this escapement in the watchmaking treatise by Antoine Thiout, explaining that he was the first to put it in place in 1727.

Plate taken from Antoine Thiout's 1741 watchmaking treatise

Signed by Poirot in Paris, this movement attests to the prestige and know-how of the artisans of the time. (Jean-Christophe Poirot, received master in 1759)

A similar model, also signed by Poirot, was sold at Christie's in 2022, in the Hubert de Givenchy, collector's sale for 35,280 euros.

Although all the motifs are comparable, the latter, all in bronze, does not have a radiant Apolon base or balance and, above all, is equipped with a dial with simple hours and minutes and a classic movement for the time.

Our model, combining the prestige of bronze with the quality of mahogany, is a true collector's item, combining artistic sumptuousness and technical innovation through its "chevalier de Bethune" movement and its second, day and month dial.

Through its decorative richness and mechanical ingenuity, it embodies the perfect alliance between art and technique, reflecting the taste and excellence of the end of the 18th century.

Dimensions: H 47 cm x W 31 cm x D 17.5 cm