PROANTIC
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Museum, Stack Of 16 Marcs Bronze Bucket Weights, Iwz Nuremberg Early 18th Cty



4 900 EUR

Signature : IWZ pourJohann Wolfgang ZIEGENGEIST / (ou Hans Wolg ZIECKENGEIST)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Diameter : 17 et 14 cm

Height : 17 cm

Description

SCIENTIFIC OBJECTS Metrology, measuring instruments MUSEUM, Exceptional bronze with gilt patina stack of nested weights in cups(Royal standard weight) of 16 Marks (a unit of weight created by Charlemagne), bearing the very beautiful and detailed hallmark of the Master-Balancer Johann Wolfgang ZIEGENGEIST / or Hans Wolg ZICKENGEIST, 1704-1746, from Nuremberg: Crossed sword and arrow topped with the initials IWZ. "A stack of cup weights (also called the old term 'pot weights'), also referred to as Charlemagne's or Nuremberg's stack, is a scientific instrument used both to measure the weight of powders or other materials and to heat them.This object is in the form of stackable bronze cups in a conical container, closed with a flap topped by a

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handle.These stacked weights were used especially from the 17th to the 19th century *by apothecaries (pharmacists), chemists to weigh medicinal powders and prepare remedies, *or by merchants and jewelers to weigh spices and precious metals down to the gram, notably gold and silver coins... From 1840 onwards, the official switch to the metric system led to their abandonment (one must imagine that the units of measurement were tied to local customs and traditions and could vary depending on the region or era. The 19th century standardized this issue in particular to create common references conducive to trade and exchange). The oldest ones are, as here, marked withthe master's stamp and sometimes the city stamp ensuring the control of the production of such objects.The weight stack has an inverted conical shape, and its decoration is highly refined. The body consists of five registers with embossed and chiseled decoration, including friezes of garlands and stylized floral motifs, and in the center, a register with a superb hunting scene running all around the stack: running dogs, hunters, trees, birds, deer and wild boar, hares. The hinged lid is richly adorned with added elements, including: *two handles in the form of back-to-back bifid mermaid busts, forming the supports of the handle, shaped like confronting dolphins and articulated to create a movable grip *two tritons, fantastic marine creatures *and two sea horses forming the closing system of the object, in a latch: the first lying along the edge of the lid, the second as a latch closing the stack, this lock being designed to facilitate the transport of weights, essential in commercial transactions. The lid is engraved, on either side of the latch, with the number "16" (for 16 marc, indicating its size) and the maker's handmark of the precious measuring instrument. This marking was prescribed by the guilds and was widely followed, a guarantee of quality and precision. Inside, the 8 stacked cups each also bear a number corresponding to their weight and value (in the order 8,4,2,1 then 16,8,4,2, and 1).

The cup stacks were used by jewelers and apothecaries to weigh precious materials. The container is also the 9th weight, the largest, while the last, smallest weight is, as is often the case, missing. The idea of nesting weights dates back to Roman times.Each cup weighs exactly double the weight of the cup inside it.Only the two smallest cups (one of which is missing here) have the same weight. Consequently, each object weighs as much as the cups it contains combined.The weight system was precise and flexible. The weights were delivered to be refined or recreated by their recipient through abrasion of their bases. Dimensions :17 cm height, 14 and 17 cm diameter (with the clasp in high relief). Total weight 7.8 kgBibliography :Historical Museum of the Apothecary in Germany, BAD EMS https://historische-apotheke.de/gewichte/meisterzeichen-galerieREFERENCES (other comparable ones): *Henri BARRE Museum in Thouars https://www.alienor.org/collections/oeuvre/130668-poids *Copy dated 1786 from the Museum of Fine Arts of Lyon (Inventory No. L356) https://collections.mba-lyon.fr/fr/notice/l-356-pile-de-poids-dite-pile-de-nuremberg-590c9a40-eada-4b0b-892e-b87c38319372 *Copy from the Bourdelle Museum in Paris (Inventory No. MBCO468) https://www.navigart.fr/bourdelle/artwork/anonyme-pile-de-poids-dite-pile-de-charlemagne-190000000102135?page=1&filters=query%3Apile%20de%20poids *Copy from the Tajan auction on 09/25/2017 (by master balance maker Andreas ZIEGENGEIST 1680-1706, possibly the father of our maker Johann Wolfgang ZIEGENGEIST ???) http://www.tajan.auction.fr/_fr/lot/pile-de-poids-fin-du-xviie-siecle-de-16-livres-en-bronze-a-patine-verte-la-11000461#.WcdpHNFpyM8 *Copy from the auction on 05/25/2013 SVV in Louviers, Pruniers Study, lot no. 160, stack of weights bearing the same hallmark of our master balance maker Johann Wolfgang ZIEGENGEIST https://www.prunierauction.com/lot-160-5/ *Example of cup weights (1568?), by Albertus

Weinmann, GRUUTHUSE Museum in Bruges https://chroniques-de-pepite.com/blog/histoire-1/69-musee-gruuthuse-une-histoire-de-brugesOrigin / Source"In the 17th century, Nuremberg was a free imperial city with a strong economy supported by a significant middle class. Within this middle class, craftsmanship was flourishing. These foundry craftsmen were considered the best in Europe." At the time, Nuremberg lock weight manufacturers held the monopoly on making this type of weight. From 1840 onwards, the official change to the metric system would lead to their abandonment.""Since the 15th century, they have been mainly made by master blacksmiths known as those from Nuremberg, and the export of brass products made the city famous throughout Europe. The quality of the craftsmanship remained unmatched until the late 18th century, even with the modern machines of our time, the production of such metal objects took a lot of time and proved very difficult: all the pieces were cast in brass and turned piece by piece on the lathe (usually water-powered) neatly and to the hundredth of a millimeter, the precision of the work is truly astonishing. In addition to Nuremberg, weights in standard sets were produced in larger quantities in France, Austria, and England, with some in Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and other countries. The unit of weight to which these weights in working order were calibrated is not always an indication of the country of manufacture, as sets of weights from most European countries were made in Nuremberg. Input weights were needed wherever goods were traded, weighed, and cleared through customs. The master's stamps are known from the archives of the city of Nuremberg and often allow a fairly precise determination of the age and manufacturer today, while calibration stamps can provide information on the use of the weights."