



Paris, 1769, Chocolatier, Guillaume Pigeron, Solid Silver



875 EUR

Signature : Guillaume Pigeron

Period : 18th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Sterling silver

Diameter : 6 cm

Height : 13,5 cm

Description

A charming and rare small "selfish" chocolate pot made of solid silver, crafted in Paris in 1769, during the reign of Louis XV, by master silversmith Guillaume Pigeron. Due to its small size, it was intended for the preparation and serving of hot chocolate for a single person. These small, individual hot chocolate pots, much less common than the larger serving models, offer a particularly appealing glimpse into the refinement of the table and the taste for hot chocolate in 18th-century French society. Shaped like a slightly pear-shaped baluster, the chocolate pot rests on three curved legs. Its plain silver body is accented by subtle moldings and features a spout. The elegant side handle, made of turned black ebony, allowed the vessel to be held without burning oneself. The domed lid retains its

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Affligem 1790

small hinged flap designed to accommodate the whisk, an essential feature of the chocolate pot: once inserted into the vessel, it allowed the hot chocolate to be whipped to achieve the frothy consistency that was particularly prized in the 18th century. This small flap was repaired at some point in the past and was riveted in place to secure it--a repair likely carried out very long ago and possibly as early as the 18th century. The body is adorned with a beautiful combined coat of arms, uniting two shields beneath a noble crown and flanked by supporters. It bears the motto "DEO SOLI," which can be translated as "To God Alone." Despite our research, the two families united by this coat of arms could not be identified with certainty. The chocolate pot bears the regulatory hallmarks of Parisian goldsmiths: Paris charge and discharge hallmarks for 1768-1774, as well as the crowned letter "F" guild mark for the year 1769-1770. Several of these hallmarks, stamped on the base of the chocolate pot, are now heavily worn and almost entirely erased, likely as a result of successive cleanings and polishings over the course of its more than two and a half centuries of existence. On the lid, they are perfectly legible. The master's hallmark, also worn but identifiable, corresponds to that of Guillaume Pigeron: the initials G and P separated by a dove, beneath a crowned fleur-de-lis. Pigeron was admitted as a master goldsmith in Paris in 1762. Historical sources list him as a goldsmith at the Gobelins and indicate that he died before 1776. His known career thus spanned primarily the 1760s and the first half of the 1770s. Several pieces of silverwork by him are now cataloged, including other chocolate pots; in particular, a tripod model by Pigeron bearing the date letter "1769" is documented. The piece is in good condition considering its age, with a few traces of very old repairs and wear that have been deliberately preserved and are part of its history. With its almost miniature proportions, its ebony handle, its coat of arms, its stirring mechanism, and its particularly precise date, this

small chocolate pot is a delightful evocation of
the Parisian art of living and the aristocratic ritual
of chocolate at the end of the reign of Louis XV.