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Important Display Clock Presented By The Ministry Of War To General De Pettinengo, 1855



5 500 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Width : 30 cm

Height : 27.5 cm

Depth : 17 cm

Description

ProvenanceAn important gilded bronze display clock and writing desk, made in Paris around the mid-19th century and presented to Ignazio De Genova di Pettinengo (1813-1896), a Piedmontese general and prominent Italian military and political figure.The historical provenance of the object is directly documented by two inscriptions preserved on its base. The first bears the dedication "AL MAGG.RE GENERALE COMM.RE I. DE PETTINENGO," identifying its recipient as General Ignazio De Genova di Pettinengo. A second inscription reads: "GLI IMPIEGATI DEL MINISTERO DELLA GUERRA (DIREZ.NE GEN.LE) 1855," indicating that the piece was presented in 1855 by the employees of the Ministry of War, General Directorate.At that time, Pettinengo held high

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office within the military administration of the Kingdom of Sardinia and headed the General Directorate of the Ministry of War. He later became Minister of War of the Kingdom of Italy. This dedication lends the clock the character of a true official ceremonial object, created to commemorate a specific individual and a particular administrative and military context.DescriptionThe design features a particularly unusual form, combining a desk clock with a concealed writing set. The clock's rectangular case is flanked by two winged, dynamic putti and crowned by a female bust in the classical style. The base is embellished with scrollwork, foliage, rocaille motifs, and sculpted ornaments, complemented by several attributes of the arts, notably a lyre and a palette.The lower section conceals a writing desk. A hinged section provides access to the writing set, which includes a compartment for the inkwell, while an additional sliding drawer features several storage compartments. This design transforms the object into a true executive desk accessory.The white enamel dial features Roman numerals and two winding openings. The mechanical movement bears the French inscriptions "Avance" and "Retard" as well as the number 3397.Technique and MaterialsThe piece is primarily crafted from gilded bronze, with elements that are finely cast, chiseled, and assembled. The quality of the modeling is particularly evident in the figures of the putti, the bust, the wings, the drapery, and the numerous plant motifs. The mechanism is housed in a rectangular, glass-covered case. The interior components of the writing desk are made of dark wood.DateFrance, Paris, mid-19th century, circa 1855. The date is confirmed by the dated dedicatory inscription, while the design, the richness of the gilded bronze mount, and the decorative vocabulary are characteristic of Parisian production from this period.ConditionIn good overall condition, with signs of use, slight wear, and patina consistent with the object's age. The historical inscriptions are preserved and

legible. The mechanism, the writing desk components, the hinged section, and the drawer are all present.Use and PurposeDesigned as an official display piece and desk accessory, this clock combines horology, decorative bronzework, and the function of a writing desk. Its documented provenance, identified recipient, and multifunctional design make it a particularly representative example of 19th-century official gifts.Dimensionsheight - 27.5 cmwidth - 30 cmdepth - 17 cm