

La Pendulerie



Godon

Rare Hard-Paste Paris Porcelain and Chased and Gilt Bronze Antique Clock, Louis XVI period

François-Louis Godon (circa 1740-1800)

Paris, late Louis XVI period, circa 1785

Height 47 cm; width 27 cm; depth 17.5 cm

The enamel dial, indicating the hours, minutes and the date, bears the signature Godon à Paris. It is set in a footed vase of hard-paste Paris porcelain, with angular handles. Painted with delicate polychrome garlands, leaves and flowers, it rests on a stepped oval base and is surmounted by a finely chased gilt bronze flower bouquet. Its shaped gilt bronze base, mounted with an ormolu frieze, rests on four bun feet. Seated on either side of the vase on truncated columns painted to simulate fluting, two lightly draped putti brandish laurel wreaths and hunting horns.

HISTORICAL

The present clock is of a rare type seldom seen in the late 18th century. The only example of its kind known to exist today, it was probably made to order for a connoisseur who wanted to possess a unique and one-of-a kind piece. The only other known clock comparable to the present one is modelled as a vase in Paris porcelain, surmounted by a gilt bronze floral bouquet and supported by a base with handles adorned with laurel-crowned female masks and terminating in pieds de biche. One such

example is in the Cognacq-Jay museum in Paris; a second is in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (illustrated in Tardy, *La pendule française*, 2e partie: Du Louis XVI à nos jours, Paris, 1975, p. 279); a third, illustrated in P. Kjellberg's *Encyclopédie de la pendule française*, Paris, 1997, p. 216, has a dial signed Godon, like the present clock; he was no doubt the seller of both pieces.

Artist description:

François-Louis Godon

Was received as a maître in Paris in February 1787, having begun working in horology several years previously. A partner of Furet as early as 1785, Godon is known to have had close ties to kings Charles III and Charles IV of Spain. In March 1786, named "Relojero de Camara", he became the regular Parisian supplier of porcelains, clocks and bronze-mounted furniture to the Spanish court. Today, many of his clocks are in the Madrid Museum of Decorative Arts; several are also in the Spanish Royal Collections.