

# La Pendulerie



**Ravrio - Dubuisson**

## **Important Gilt Bronze Antique Mantel Clock “Diana’s Chariot”, Empire period**

Circa: 1805-1810

Case Attributed to Antoine-André Ravrio

Dial Attributed to Parisian Enameller Etienne Gobin, known as Dubuisson

Paris, Empire period, circa 1805-1810

Height 47.5 cm; width 56 cm; depth 13 cm

The round enamel dial, decorated in the manner of Coteau, indicates the Roman numeral hours and the minutes graduations along its outer edge by means of two pierced gilt bronze hands. It forms the wheel of an antique chariot drawn by two stags that is driven by Diana, the goddess of the hunt. The goddess is taking an arrow from her quiver and holding the reins in her other hand. She has placed her prey in the back of the chariot. The architectural base is raised upon six lion feet and is decorated with applied motifs representing ribbon-tied trophies and diamonds centred by flowerets and flanked by palmettes and griffons, with a central scene that depicts a wild boar hunt.

### **HISTORICAL**

The chariot motif was rarely used in Parisian clocks prior to the Empire period. This was no doubt due to the difficulty for 18th century clockmakers of incorporating their movements and dials in the model.

This difficulty was overcome by clockmakers of the early 19th century, who placed their dials in the chariot wheels.

The present clock’s unusual and remarkable design may be attributed to Antoine-André Ravrio, one of the most important Parisian bronze casters of the Empire period. Among the rare identical clocks known today, one example was commissioned to furnish the Het Loo Palace in Apeldoorn; it is today in the Royal Dutch collections in the Hague (illustrated in *Royal Clocks in Paleis Het Loo, A Catalogue*, 2003, p. 38). Another example, whose movement is signed “Armingault à Paris”, features a chariot drawn by a single stag (shown in P. Kjellberg, *Encyclopédie de la pendule française du Moyen Age au XXe siècle*, Paris, 1997, p. 419, fig. G). One further example, with a movement signed “Mesnil à Paris”, is in the Musée des Arts décoratifs of Karlsruhe (illustrated in M. Gay and A. Lemaire, “Les pendules au

char”, in Bulletin de l’Association nationale des Collectionneurs et Amateurs d’Horlogerie ancienne, Spring 1993, n° 66, p. 37, fig. 51).

**Artist description:**

André-Antoine Ravrio (1759-1814)

Made master bronzier in 1777, he is one of the most important Parisian bronze workers of the late 18th century and the early Empire period. Supplier of bronzes to the Imperial Garde-meuble, Ravrio helped furnish Napoleon’s residences, along with Thomire and Galle; he also worked for some of the most influential figures of the time, including Marshals of the Empire. Today certain of his works are in the collections of the Mobilier national in Paris.