

La Pendulerie



Deshays

An Important Neoclassical Mahogany and Bird's Eye Mahogany-Veneered Antique Regulator with Equation of Time, July Monarchy

Circa: circa 1830-1840

Deshays

Paris, July Monarchy, reign of Louis-Philippe, circa 1830-1840

Height 235 cm; width 64 cm; depth 36.5 cm

The magnificent silvered metal dial with decorative brass rings is signed "Deshays à Paris"; it is composed of an outer chapter ring indicating the Roman numeral hours with outermost minutes graduations. It has three blued steel hands, including two Breguet hands and a seconds hand. In the center of the chapter ring there are two half circles; the upper one indicates the equation of time, with the words "Soleil avance" (Sun in advance) and "Soleil retarde" (Sun behind), thus showing the difference between Mean Time and True Time. The lower half circle shows the "Descente du Poids" (weight descent) with engraved indications of the weeks, showing the position of the driving weight and thus the amount of time until it had to be raised again. Under the main dial there is an engraved silvered steel wheel that indicates the annual calendar with the months and the days of the months. There is a magnificent bimetallic compensation pendulum, whose heavy bob contains a pyrometer with information on the dilatation of various metals. The very fine neoclassical case with glazed front and sides is made of mahogany and bird's eye mahogany veneer; its front and sides are glazed. The sloped, protruding cornice with corbels is adorned with a dentilled frieze. The high, solid base stands on a rectangular plinth. The tall, curved and molded quadrangular base with cavetto stands on a rectangular

blackened wood plinth.

HISTORICAL

The design of the present important regulator was directly influenced by models that were created in Paris during the last quarter of the 18th century. These regulators featured cases that were simply decorated with mahogany veneering, creating a balanced composition that highlighted the beauty and complexity of the dials and pendulums. Only a few comparable regulators are known today. One example, whose dial is signed "H. Laresche à Paris", is illustrated in P. Heuer and K. Maurice, *European Pendulum Clocks, Decorative Instruments of Measuring Time*, Munich, 1988, p. 125, fig. 229. A second clock, with a dial signed by the clockmaker Godon, is in the Royal Spanish Collection (see J. Ramon Colon de Carvajal, *Catalogo de relojes del Patrimonio nacional*, Madrid, 1987, p. 109, catalogue 89). A third, which Lepaute delivered to Napoleon's Grand Cabinet in the Grand Trianon, is illustrated in D. Ledoux-Lebard, *Inventaire général du Musée national de Versailles et des Trianons*, Tome 1, *Le Grand Trianon, Meubles et objets d'art*, RMN, Paris, 1975, p. 117. One further such regulator was shown by the clockmaker Perrelet at the 1823 Exposition des Produits de l'Industrie; it now belongs to the Direction des Musées de France in Paris (see the exhibition catalogue *Un âge d'or des arts décoratifs 1814-1848*, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1991, p. 143).

Artist description:

Deshays

A little-known clockmaker who signed "Deshays à Paris", Deshays was nevertheless a brilliant artisan and inventor whom Tardy mentions as having taken part in the 1827 Exposition des Produits de l'Industrie française, where he presented a chronometer with "échappement à manivelle" (Tardy, *Dictionnaire des horlogers français*, Paris, 1971, p. 181).