

# *La Pendulerie*



**Deverberie**

**Rare Gilt and Patinated Bronze Antique Mantel Clock “The African Huntress”, Directory-Consulate period**

Circa: circa 1800

Attributed to Jean-Simon Deverberie (1764-1824)

Paris, Directory-Consulate period, circa 1800

Height 45.5 cm; width 35.5 cm; depth 14 cm

The round white enamel dial indicates the Arabic numeral hours and the Arabic numeral fifteen-minute intervals by means of two engraved or pierced bronze hands. It is housed in a chased and gilt and patinated bronze case. The bezel is adorned with delicate stylized and bead friezes. The clock is surmounted by a magnificent female figure - a seated black huntress who is wearing a feather loincloth, with a quiver containing feathered arrows slung across her chest. Her curly hair is held in place by a silvered headband and her glass eyes are naturalistic. She is wearing necklaces, rings, earrings, and ankle bracelets; in her right hand she holds an arrow and in her left, a bow. Her left foot rests upon a turtle with a finely chased shell. On the opposite side, a seated lioness turns toward the huntress. The high, sloping and molded architectural base is decorated with ribbon-tied flower and leaf garlands, a bead frieze and an applied scene depicting young cherubs who are hunting and fishing. The clock is raised upon six finely chased feet.

**HISTORICAL**

Black figures were rarely used as a decorative theme in French and European horology before the late 18th century. It was not until the end of the Ancien Régime, and precisely the last decade of the 18th century and the early years of the following century, that the first “au nègre” or “au sauvage” clocks appeared. They echoed a philosophical current that was developed in several important literary and historical works, including *Paul et Virginie* by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (published in 1787, it depicts the innocence of Man), *Atala* by Chateaubriand (which restores the Christian ideal), and particularly Daniel Defoe’s 1719 masterpiece, *Robinson Crusoe*. The original drawing of the present clock, entitled “L’Afrique”, was registered by Parisian chaser-caster Jean-Simon Deverberie in the year VII (illustrated in Dominique and Pascal Flechon, “La pendule au nègre”, in *Bulletin de l’association nationale des collectionneurs et amateurs d’horlogerie ancienne*, Spring 1992, n° 63, p. 32, photo n° 2).

Among the known identical clocks one model, whose dial is signed “Gaulin à Paris”, is pictured in H. Ottomeyer and P. Pröschel, *Vergoldete Bronzen, Die Bronzearbeiten des Spätbarock und Klassizismus*, Band I, Munich, 1986, p. 381, fig. 5.15.25. A second model, featuring variations including the fact that the figure stands on an arch, is illustrated in P. Kjellberg, *Encyclopédie de la pendule française du Moyen Age à nos jours*, Paris, 1997, p. 350. One further example, whose dial is signed “Ridel”, is in the Musée François Duesberg in Mons (illustrated in the exhibition catalogue “De noir et d’or, Pendules « au bon sauvage”, *Musées Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire*, Brussels, 1993).

#### **Artist description:**

Jean-Simon Deverberie (1764-1824)

Was one of the most important Parisian bronziers of the late 18th century and the first two decades of the following century. Deverberie, who had married Marie-Louise Veron, appears to have made a nearly exclusive speciality of clocks, candlesticks and candelabra, adorned with exotic figures, and particularly Africans. He registered many “au nègre” clock models, especially the models known as “l’Afrique”, “l’Amérique” and “Indien et Indienne enlacés” (the drawings are preserved in the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris). His workshop was located in the rue Barbette in 1800, in the rue du Temple in 1804, and in the rue des Fossés du Temple from 1812 to 1820.