

# ADRIAN ALAN

*Fine Art & Antiques*



**After Jacques Caffieri**

## **A Fine Louis XV Style Gilt-Bronze Cartel Clock and Barometer Set**

Circa: French, Circa 1890.

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105 x 57 x 18 cm (41 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 22 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches)

Gilt-Bronze

A Fine Louis XV Style Gilt-Bronze Cartel Clock and Barometer Set, After a Model by Jacques Caffieri.

Of rocaille form this impressive clock and barometer set is after the celebrated model by Jacques Caffieri dating from circa 1745, now conserved in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and illustrated in Tardy, "La Pendule Française des origines au Louis XV", Vol. I, p. 190, fig. 1.

The gilt-bronze cases are of waisted cartouche form surmounted by a sunburst, above a clock with a cloudborne figure of cupid driving his dove-drawn chariot above an undulating pierced foliate panelled case with a figure of Psyche and a barometer cast with a reclining figure of Jupiter, with his attribute the Eagle perched on a cloud by his shoulder.

The clock has a white enamel dial, inscribed Etienne Lenoir, Paris, with hours in Roman numerals and seconds in Arabic numerals, with pierced gilt-bronze scrolling hands. The twin train movement striking on a bell. The corresponding barometer fitted with an aneroid mechanism.

In the 1745 and 1755 workshop inventories of Jacques Caffieri, a clock of the same subject is noted and an example of this cartel d'applique signed by Caffiéri is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. For an illustrated example of the Caffiéri model, executed circa 1745, see H. Ottomeyer et al. Vergoldete Bronzen, Munich, 1986, p.117

The inscription to the dial is for the celebrated eighteenth-century horologist Étienne Le Noir (1735-40), the patriarch of a dynasty of French clockmakers who specialized in movements for clocks with lavishly decorated cases for royal and aristocratic patrons and whose work was much admired in the nineteenth century.

French, Circa 1890.

#### **Literature:**

H. Ottomeyer, P. Proschel et al., "*Vergoldete Bronzen*", Munich, 1986. vol. I, p. 117.

Tardy, "*La Pendule Française des origines au Louis XV*", Vol. ; p. 190, fig. 1.

#### **Artist description:**

Jacques Caffieri (1678-1755) a sculptor famous for his works in bronze, was the son of Philippe Caffieri (1634-1716), who emigrated from Naples to Paris at the request of Cardinal Mazarin to decorate the interiors at Versailles. He was elected to the Académie de Saint-Luc as a sculptor, and thus created many of the original designs that were proprietary models of his foundry.

Jacques was received as a maître fondeur-ciseleur by 1715, the date of his first known work, a design for a pall for the Corporation des Fondeurs-Ciseleurs, one of the two Parisian guilds that oversaw works cast in metal.

Caffieri was appointed fondeur-ciseleur des Bâtiments du Roi in 1736. Following this a large proportion of his best work as a designer and chaser in bronze was executed for commissions to the crown at Versailles, Fontainebleau, Marly, Compiègne, Choisy and the Château de La Muette. In fact he executed so much work for the crown that they were forever in his debt, still owing him money at his death.

In addition to these royal commissions from his workshop in rue des Canettes came an amazing amount of work, chiefly in the shape of gilt-bronze furniture mounts used by the best ébénistes of Paris, with whom he worked closely. Little of his production was ordinary and an astonishingly large proportion of it is now famous. Caffieri was also known for his production of gilt-bronze cases for clocks.

In 1740, Caffieri's wife purchased a royal privilege, which allowed the Caffieri workshop to gild bronze as well as cast it within the same workshop; ordinarily the processes were divided between two Parisian corporations, jealous of their jurisdictions, the fondeurs-ciseleurs and the ciseleurs-doreurs. This privilege further set Caffieri apart from his rivals.

#### **Bibliography:**

Ottomeyer, Hans & Proschel, Peter. *Vergoldete Bronzen*, Vol I, Klinkhardt & Biermann, (Munich), 1986; p 137, pl. 2.10.3.

Verlet, Pierre. *Les Bronzes Dorés Français du XVIIIe siècle*, (France), 1987; p. 288, pl. 324.