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BOUBON

Palais Royal

EMPIRE-PERIOD ORMOLU MANTEL CLOCK

LOVE CONQUERS TIME



Paris, circa 1810

H. 21" (53cm), W. 20" (51cm), D. 5" (13cm)

Signed *BOUBON/Palais Royal* on the dial

BIBLIOGRAPHY : TARDY, *dictionnaire des horlogers français*, Paris 1972 ; Bernard CHEVALLIER, « La mesure du temps dans les collections du musée de Malmaison », cat. exp. 29 May 1991- 15 September 1991 ; P.KJELLBERG *Encyclopédie de la pendule française du Moyen-Age au XXe siècle*, Paris 1997 ; Marie-France DUPUY-BAYLET *Pendules du mobilier national 1800-1870*, éditions Faton, June 2006.





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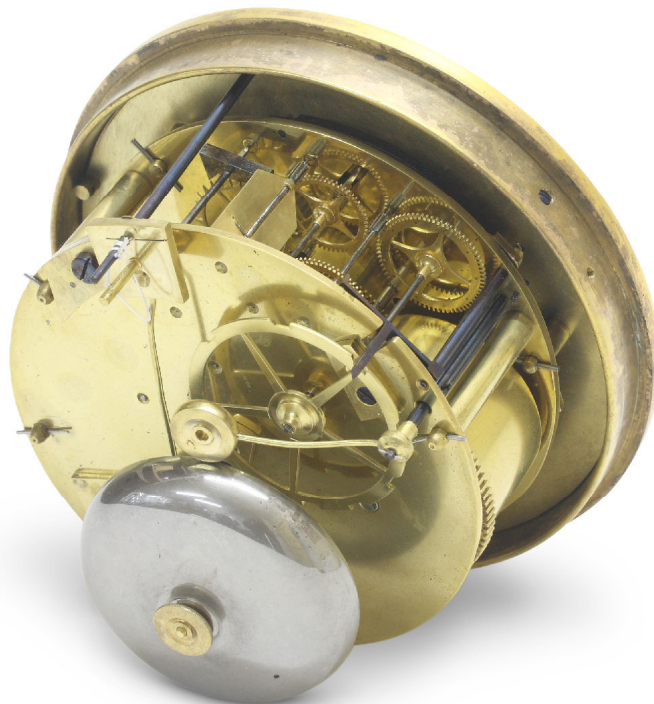
LOVE CONQUERS TIME

Twin-barrel circular movement with 4 pillars, the right winder for the time, with recoil anchor escapement and silk-suspended pendulum; the left winder for the countwheel strike every half hour, on a silvered bell.

Enamel dial with signature and Roman numerals for the hours, the minute and hour hands in blued steel, *Bréguet* style.

Autonomy 2 weeks.

Height 21" (53cm), Width 20" (51cm), Depth 5" (13cm)



Ormolu clock with the enamel dial signed *Bouhon/Palais Royal*, depicting a ship with two zephyrs, both blowing through a seashell; the ship boarded by a seating Chronos holding his scythe and hourglass, and a young winged boy, Love, rowing the boat with a large oar.

It rests on an angle-cut base with falling water symbolising the Sea, decorated with Trident, Oar and reeds tied together with a knot, two seashells on the sides, resting on four lion paw feet.

It is to be noted that our model is different from other known models as it is the only one with two zephyrs, fore and aft. Others have either two swan heads or a swan head fore and a zephyr aft¹.

The crocodile –(hog?) heads on either side of the boat's hull are particularly remarkable by their quality of execution, and so are the little seawater waves spreading across the base.



¹ For a comparison with other models, see pages 8 and 9 in the annex.

BOUBON was recorded at the Palais du Tribunat in 1806, then at the Palais Royal in the Galerie de Pierre between 1810 and 1820. Then at the Galerie Colbert in 1830. The Palais Royal was one of the best addresses for high quality Clockmaking purchasing and manufacture in Paris between 1780 and 1850. Boubon was established there between 1806 and 1830.

In the decorative world of clockmaking, the theme of Love, triumphant over Time, was reasonably common. One of the best examples on that theme was manufactured during the *Regence* years by Charles Cressent (1685-1768). This *rococo* masterpiece can be seen at the Louvre museum (fig 1)



**Fig. 1. Charles Cressent, *Love triumphant over Time*, cartel, circa 1745 ;
clock movement by Nicolas Gourdain
H. 132 cm ; L. 47 cm ; P. 38 cm**

Paris, musée du Louvre.

This subject was developed and interpreted with great success during the Empire period. It can be found in Ormolu and patinated bronze, as well as porcelain or biscuit produced by the best artisans of the time. For example, in the inventory of the shop of the clockmaker Jacques-Hilaire Bassereau, dated 1806, we can read: "*Item l'amour faisant le tems*" (Love makes Time, literally), and in the inventories of Claude Galle and Ravrio, clocks described thus can also be found: "*l'amour et le temps sans verre ni cage 245*" (Love and Time, without glass nor cage, literally).

However it is unclear who was the real author, as a sculptor, of this group that was inspired by a song that was popular at the time and was called "*The Voyage of Love and Time*". It had been composed by the Viscount Joseph-Alexandre de Ségur (1757-1805). This song became so famous that a lot of decorative objects were inspired by it:

*A voyager passant sa vie,
Certain vieillard, nommé le Temps,
Près d'un fleuve arrive et s'écrie :
Ayez pitié de mes vieux ans.
Eh quoi ! sur ces bords on m'oublie,
Moi qui compte tous les instants !
Mes bons amis, je vous supplie
Venez, venez passer le Temps.
De l'autre côté, sur la plage,
Plus d'une fille regardait,
Et voulait aider son passage,
Sur un bateau qu'Amour guidait ;
Mais une d'elles, bien plus sage,
Leur répétait ces mots prudents :
« Ah ! souvent on a fait naufrage
En cherchant à passer le Temps. »
L'Amour gaiement pousse au rivage ;
Il aborde tout près du Temps.
Il lui propose le voyage,
L'embarque et s'abandonne aux vents
Agitant ses rames légères,
Il dit et redit, dans ses chants :
« Vous voyez bien, jeunes bergères,
Que l'Amour fait passer le Temps. »
Mais, tout à coup, l'Amour se lasse,
Ce fut là toujours son défaut ;
Le Temps prend la rame à sa place
Et lui dit « Quoi ! céder si tôt !
Pauvre enfant, quelle est ta faiblesse !
Tu dors, et je chante, à mon tour,
Ce vieux refrain de la sagesse :
Ah ! le Temps fait passer l'amour !*

ANNEX



Fig. 2 *Love and Time*, dial signed LE PAUTE & FILS / Hr du Roi ; with signature by NAST for the porcelain.

H.25 cm. ; W. 40 cm ; D. 14 cm (Malmaison castle)



Fig. 4 Empire-period ormolu clock depicting an *Allegory of Time*, the dial signed Le Roy hr de Madame/ A Paris H. 47 cm ; W. 57 cm ; D. 13 cm.

(Anonymous sale, Sotheby's Paris, 9 November 2010).

The sold again at the Robert de Balkany Sale, Sotheby's Paris, 28-29 September 2016.



**Fig. 5 *Travels of Time and Love*, Empire-period ormolu and patinated bronze clock.
H. 45 cm ; W. 55 cm
(Anonymous Sale, Paris, Me Chayette, Calmels). Mentioned in the P. Kjellberg book.**



**Fig. 6 « Love Makes the Time pass » after a model by Claude Galle, and made by Louis Simon Boizot, the
dial signed Gaston Jolly à Paris.
H. 53.5 cm ; W. 54 cm ; D. 20 cm.
(Anonymous sale, Sotheby's New York, 18 November 2011).**