



## Jean Fol

### Lyre Clock with complications, commissioned by Jean-Baptiste d'Arboulin de Richebourg, Equerry and Secretary of the chamber and cabinet of the King, General Administrator of the French Postal Service.

Signed on the back of the movement: *"Invented in 1783, finished in 1787, presented to the Academy in August of the same year, by Fol Hger valet de Chambre to the King"*. Dated on the calendar and lunar phase dial, "1788". This clock belonged to Jean Baptiste d'Arboulin de Richebourg, Equerry and Secretary of the chamber and cabinet of the King, General Administrator of the French Postal Service.

Cased by Etienne Martincourt, in gilt bronze and turquoise-grey blue marble.

Movement with multiple complications. Above, the phases of the moon and full perpetual calendar; in the centre, annual calendar and equation of time; below, the hours, minutes and seconds.

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*Height 75.8 cm*

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#### Lyre Clock

Very important clock in the shape of an antique lyre in chased and gilt bronze, with five dials and astronomic indications.

The two branches of the lyre have ram head finials linked by a swag of roses and daisies. A thyrsus fixed to the entablature and terminating in a blossoming fleur de lis supports the dial. Above, three smaller dials arranged in a pyramid are framed by laurel branches. Below, there is a fourth dial that appears to be attached by means of tasseled ribbons. The main dial is set within the rounded lower portion of the lyre, whose vine-covered branches link it to the gadrooned oval base, which is chased with leaves and rests on a turquoise-grey marble pedestal with chased gilt bronze mounts representing the Nemean lion's skin.

The main dial indicates the hours, minutes and seconds. The four smaller dials indicate, from top to bottom and from left to right, respectively: The date, the lunar calendar and phases of the moon: the leap year and perpetual calendar; the days of the week for a period of four weeks; the equation of time and indication of the solar day.

This clock was created by the joint efforts of renowned horologist Jean II Fol, bronze maker Etienne Martincourt, and knowledgeable patron Jean Baptiste d'Arboulin de Richebourg, without whose support the clock could not have been constructed.

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### Jean Fol

*Jean II Fol was born in Paris circa 1735 and died there on February 2, 1788. He was the son of Jean Fol, who originally came from Geneva and settled in Paris, where he married Marie-Madeleine Cagnard.*

*He established a watchmaking business in Paris, where he worked independently in the Enclos des Quinze-Vingt, where his father had worked as well. At this time he signed "Fol Fils". Around 1785, he moved to the passage de Valois in the Palais Royal quarter, in a building called the Lycée, where he is said to have possessed a remarkable set of tools.*

*On April 8, 1775, he purchased a reversion from Antoine Pelletier (i.e. the right to succeed him after this death or resignation) for one of the four commissions of "Valet de Chambre-Horloger Ordinaire du Roi", that of the third trimester of the year. He received his letter of appointment in May 1775, the day he was sworn in. In 1783, he sold the reversion of his commission, in turn, to Gustave Adamson.*

*He specialised in watches, often luxury ones; clocks of his making are rare. Among his clientele were the Duke of Choiseul and the well-known receiver-general and collector Bergeret. One of his most remarkable creations was the gold repeating watch he made for banker Jean-Frédéric Perregaux, adorned with 53 diamonds, including the push piece, which was estimated to be worth the sum of 5,200 francs in 1808.*