
Koopman Rare Art

This week we are exhibiting at the LAPADA Fair, Berkeley Square
(28 October - 2nd November). We will be showcasing a selection of exceptional Jewellery
and Gold Boxes. We have focused on two boxes we are exhibiting by the wonderful
goldsmith, Charles Le Bastier.

We look forward to welcoming you at **Stand A20**.

Please let us know if you would like a ticket.

[For more information see here.](#)



A Louis XV Gold Box, Paris, 1767

By Charles Le Bastier

Available at Koopman Rare Art

This latest Director's Choice focuses on one of the greatest 18th century goldsmiths of Paris, Charles Le Bastier (fl. 1754-1783). He was certainly one of the most important goldsmiths during the reign of Louis XV and Louis XVI and active at the most creative period for gold boxes. A prolific maker, Le Bastier left an extensive body of work which makes it possible to recognise his personal style, which is described by Clare le Corbeiller in *European and American Snuff Boxes 1730-1830*, London, 1966, p. 29 as 'characterised by classical restraint, a spare use of ornament, and the frequent use of subtle - sometimes contrasting - enamel colours'.

The magnificent gold and enamel box illustrated above is a perfect example of the virtuosity of Le Bastier. Oval in form, the cover, sides and base of the box have panels of translucent green enamel on an engine-turned ground with blue and white enamel *taille d'épargne* gold foliage framing on the sides. The underside with musical trophies on translucent dark blue enamel, the cover set with an enamel plaque of Melpomene crowning Mademoiselle Clairon after an engraving by Noël Le Mire. The Louvre Museum holds an example dated 1767 - 1768 with similar enamelled decoration and contrasting pale green and royal blue enamel, see S. Grandjean, *Les tabatières du musée du Louvre*, Paris, 1981, p. 122, no. 139 gifted by Baronne Salomon de Rothschild, Adèle de Rothschild.



The British Museum ©

Landscape with Melpomene holding sceptres and crown, and crowning French actress Mademoiselle Clairon, seated, leaning on books; in the distance, rotunda and reared-up Pegasus on a hill; in ornate border. 1765

Etching and engraving

Print made by: Noël Le Mire After: Gravelot, Published by: Noël Le Mire

Charles Le Bastier, son of a Paris mercer of the same name, was apprenticed on 3 October 1738 at the age of 14, to Gabriel Vouigny, marchand-orfèvre-joaillier. With the sponsorship of Jean Moynat, himself a noted gold box maker, Le Bastier became master goldsmith on 20 December 1754. He worked from the same premises in the rue Thévenot, near the rue St-Denis, until last recorded in 1783. Le Bastier was a successful and prolific maker of gold boxes who also supplied other retailers such as Jean-François Garand and Grancher of Du Petit Dunkerque, whose name or shop name appear engraved on the rims of several of Le Bastier's boxes. In the special tax list of 1774, he was listed 9th in order of the importance of his business. Since a number of Le Bastier's boxes survive in various collections (most notably in the Louvre and the Thurn und Taxis Museum, Regensburg), it is possible to trace the progression of his work from the earliest silver boxes with coloured gold ornament through a series of richly chased but comparatively plain gold boxes to the

almost immediately recognisable gold and enamel boxes of his maturity.



*French vari-colour oval gold box
Paris, 1778-9 Maker's mark of Charles Le Bastier
Available at Koopman Rare Art*

Our second highlight of this glorious goldsmith is of oval form, adorned throughout with vari-colour gold applied decoration. The cover featuring a central cartouche depicting musical attributes set within a landscape against a chased background and surrounded by a foliate border, the sides also with small oval cartouches of musical instruments surmounted by tied ribbons. The contrast in gold colours used and various texturing and marking techniques add depth to the medallions of musical attributes that form the decorative scheme of this gold box. The allegories on this box were designed and made to demonstrate its owner's knowledge and love of music and the arts.



*A Louis XVI oval gold & enamel box
Paris, 1777 by Charles Le Bastier.
Formerly in the Koopman Rare Art Collection*

The oval scene to the cover depicting a mother and babe in idyllic garden setting, the babe probably representing cupid toying with an arrow, a faithful dog to one side and a hen roosting her eggs, a water fountain featuring two putti bearing a jug emanating water behind, the frame and rims with green and red enamelled leaf and berry bands, the ground, sides and base painted with panels of brown on white leafy trees and shrubs to give the effect of dendritic agate, blue coloured birds incorporated, white enamel, jewelled edges.

For more information on the availability and price of any treasures we mention, please visit our website, email or call us.

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


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All works shown, unless otherwise indicated, are available to view and purchase in our
gallery located in 12 Dover Street, London, W1S 4LL

For all enquiries please do not hesitate to call or email on:

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