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FABERGE'

Scatola rotonda con orologio a tre quadranti sul coperchio in oro giallo, rosa, verde e argento, cesellato. I quadranti rifiniti da piccoli diamanti a rosetta e divisi da gigli poggiano su sfondo guilloché, rose e gigli profilano rispettivamente il coperchio e la base dove si staglia una rosa smaltata, il lato finemente scanalato nasconde la giunzione tra base e coperchio, marchi russi: Fabergé in cirillico per esteso, MP per il workmaster Mikhail Perkhin in cirillico, kokoschka con titolo 72 zolotnik e assaggiatore Yakov Lyapunov, St Petersburg, 1899-1903; (un vetro mancante) il movimento a due barilotti è firmato H.Moser & Cie, n° 67829, con la rotella girano le lancette dei minuti di tutti e tre i quadranti, lordi g 500, diam. cm 8,80 h cm 3,3.

Accompagnato da perizia originale del professor Haydn Williams, London, 26 Luglio 2019

FABERGE'

A jewelled and enamelled three-colour gold box-form desk timepiece, on the cover three dials accented with rose cut diamonds divided by silver lilies stand on a starburst guilloché pattern, the same pattern underneath is centered by an enamelled rose, roses and lilies outline respectively the cover and the base, the finely ribbed side perfectly hide the cover junction; russian hallmarks: Fabergé in full, in cyrillic, MP for workmaster Mikhail Perkhin in cyrillic, kokoschka with 72 zolotnik title, and assaymaster Yakov Lyapunov, St Petersburg 1899-1903 (a dial glass is missing); the jewelled two-barrel movement signed H.Moser numbered 67829, the crown moves all the three dial hands, gross g.500, diam cm 9 h cm 3,4 circa.

Appended original expertise by professor Haydn Williams, London 26 July 2019.

€ 90.000/140.000





Fronte

A jewelled and enamelled three-colour gold box-form desk timepiece

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, assaymaster Yakov Lyapunov, 72 zolotnik (18ct gold), St Petersburg, 1899-1903, the jewelled two-barrel movement H. Moser & Cie, numbered 67829

The highly unusual triple dial arrangement, together with the use of 18ct gold and the choice of a decorative scheme of roses and madonna lilies - emblematic of purity and love - combine to suggest this work was a special commission, possibly a love or marriage token. The absence of an inventory number, usually to be found on works sold in Fabergé's shops, further endorses this argument. As such this timepiece can be placed among the most prestigious bespoke works produced by the House of Fabergé, along with the series of Imperial Easter Eggs commissioned by the Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II between 1885 and 1917, the seven Easter Eggs made for Babara Bazanova Kelch, and the Clock Eggs made for Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough and Prince Felix Yusupov.

The mark of the St Petersburg assaymaster Yakov Lyapunov on this piece indicates that it was made between January 1899, the date the mark was registered, and 1903, the year of Mikhail Perkhin's untimely death at the age of forty-three. Perkhin had been appointed head workmaster in 1888 and among other things he was responsible for most of the Imperial Easter Egg commissions. The Egg Perkhin made for presentation to the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna at Easter 1899 was in the form of a Louis XVI clock surmounted by a bunch of lilies carved in chalcedony, bound by a ring of chased gold roses - the same flowers that decorate the present timepiece (see fig. 1). The lily, a classical symbol of purity, particularly associated with the Virgin Mary, is combined with the rose, likewise linked to the Virgin Mary - 'rose without thorns', in other words sinless - but also the flower sacred to Venus the goddess of love, on account of its beauty and fragrance. On this timepiece the two flowers are given a different emphasis on the lid and base above, three stems of blooming lily chased in coloured golds provide the central motif while a narrow band of roses defines the border; below, a single rose sprig enamelled *en plain* against a sunburst engraved ground is the focal point, while the border is chased with lily flowers in three stages of development. The enamelled flower decoration is an example of how Fabergé and his workmasters looked to the past for inspiration: such work was fashionable in Paris in the 1750s, as may be seen on the side of a snuff box made by Jean Ducrollay in the collection the Metropolitan Museum, New York (inv. no. 17.190.1224, see fig. 2).

The use of 18 carat gold is noteworthy. Fabergé was generally parsimonious with this precious material: while mounts and decorative details were made of gold, of either 14 or 18ct, the main body was often silver - of varying degrees of purity - that was then gilded. Lower grade 14ct gold (56 zolotnik) was used by Perkhin for the Pelican Egg, given to the Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna at Easter 1898; however, 18ct gold was used for the Peter the Great Egg, given to the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna in 1903. That for the present work not only the exterior but also the movement casing and its support - concealed inside under the lid - are made of gold is remarkable, suggesting that the specifications of the patron overruled the standard practice of the Fabergé workshops. Such exacting instructions underscore the significance of the commission.

The influence of the patron may also account for the highly unusual three dial arrangement - apparently unique in Fabergé's oeuvre - that conceivably had some hidden meaning for the recipient. Appropriately, the jewelled two-barrel movement is of very fine quality, made by H. Moser & Cie, a company founded in St Petersburg in 1828 that was supplied by its own factory in Schaffhausen. A Moser clock movement was used for the Colonnade Egg, given to the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna in 1912. Aside these special commissions more standard movements by Moser were used for the enamelled clocks that were among the diverse array of objects of vertu displayed in Fabergé's shops.

The final distinguishing feature of this timepiece is that it is mounted on the lid of a box, the junction of the two parts all but hidden by the finely ribbed decoration on the side. Within the oeuvre of Fabergé, and indeed his contemporaries, it is exceptional; looking to the past, an approximate comparison can be made with certain snuff boxes mounted with watches and calendars created in Switzerland in the later 18th century (fig. 3).

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Fig. 1



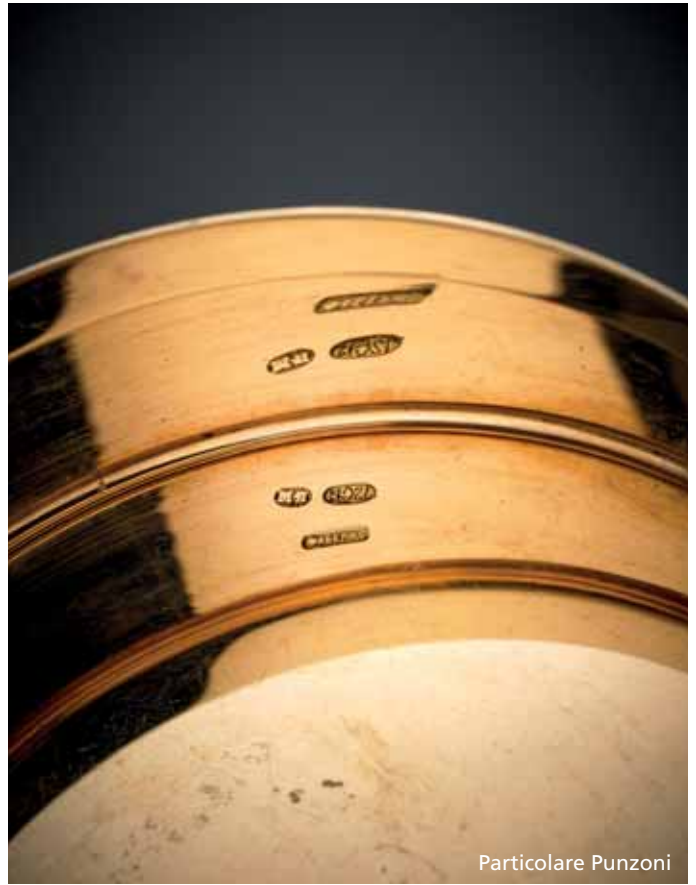
Fig. 2



Fig. 3



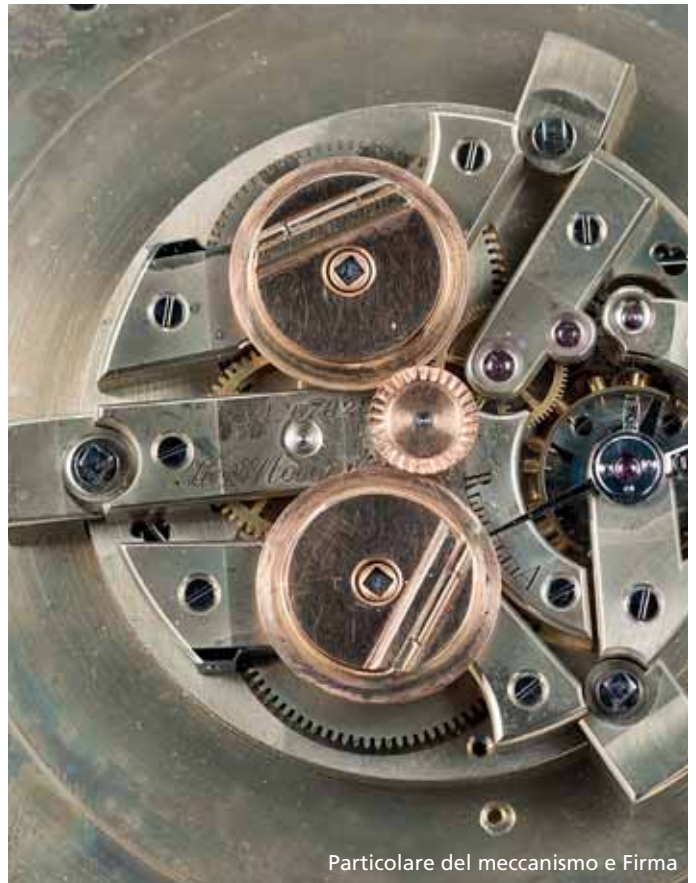
Retro



Particolare Punzoni



Interno del Coperchio



Particolare del meccanismo e Firma