



Magnificent Hanau snuffbox with royal blue translucent enamel on a guilloché gold background

Circa: 1785

1.02 x 0.55 cm

0' 0³/₁₆" x 0' 0¹/₁₆"

18th Century

1785

Gold and Enamel

1.02 x 0.55 x 0.26 cm (0 ³/₈ x 0 ¹/₄ x 0 ¹/₈ inches)

167g

Imitation of the Paris hallmark for the general leaseholder for Julien Alaterre, December 1768 to September 1775 Cursive crowned K: Imitation of the Paris year/guarantee mark of the Paris maison-commune for 1773-74 Bird's head facing left: Hanau guarantee mark for 19-carat gold (probably imitation of the Paris discharge stamp of Julien Berthe 1750-56) This combination is frequently found on the snuffboxes of the Toussaint brothers until the 1790s.

Crowned L F T mark = Les Frères Toussaint Flower rosette: Imitation of the Paris hallmark for the general leaseholder Julien Alaterre, December 1768 to September 1775 Cursive crowned K: Imitation of the Paris year/guarantee mark of the Paris "maison-commune" for 1773-74 Bird's head facing left: Hanau guarantee mark for 19-carat gold (probably imitation of the Paris discharge stamp of Julien Berthe 1750-56) This combination is frequently found on the snuffboxes of the Toussaint brothers until the 1790s.

The particularly strong, royal blue translucent enamel of this elegant and heavy snuff box is underlaid with a guilloché wave ornament enriched with symmetrically arranged ball dots and is of outstanding quality. When the snuff box is moved in the light, this creates three-dimensional reflections of exceptionally high brilliance and depth, which are only found on very few enamel boxes of this category. The edges are framed with several rows of a total of 630 enamel beads of varying sizes, the larger ones separated by green double-leaf ornaments. In the centre of the lid is an oval enamel medallion with an allegorical representation of Venus and Cupid before the altar of love. Venus holds a symbolic oval emblem with two burning hearts, which Cupid has ignited with his torch.

Literature:

Lorenz Seelig, "Eighteenth century Hanau gold boxes", Silver Society of Canada Journal 2015

"Going for Gold – Craftsmanship and Collecting of Gold Boxes"; edited by Tessa Murdoch and Heike Zech; Sussex Academic Press 2014; pp. 74–91 Lorenz Seelig: "Gold Box Production in Hanau"

Seelig, Lorenz; "Gold boxes from the 18th century from the collection of the Princes of Thurn and Taxis"

