

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



The Dance of Time: Three Nymphs Supporting a Clock

Clodion (Claude Michel) (French, 1738–1814)

Date 1788

Medium Terracotta, brass, gilt brass, silvered brass, steel and glass

Dimensions H. (overall): 40 3/4 in. (103.5 cm) Sculpture: 21 3/8 × 12 3/4 × 8 1/4 in. (54.3 × 32.4 × 21 cm) Globe: diam.: 10 13/16 in. (27.5 cm)

Credit Line Purchased by The Frick Collection through the Winthrop Kellogg Edey bequest, 2006

Accession Number 2006.2.02

Currently On View

Second Floor, Room 27, Boucher Anteroom

Commentary Jean-Baptiste Lepaute, clockmaker to Louis XVI, worked in close collaboration with Claude Michel Clodion, one of the most inventive and technically gifted sculptors of his time, to create this unique clock. Clodion was trained in Rome, where he studied classical art. Here, he sculpted three semi-draped nymphs dancing around a column, perhaps the three Horae (hours), who personify the passage of time in Greek mythology. They support Lepaute's complex pendulum clock with a rotating annual dial meant to be admired through a transparent glass globe. Lepaute and Clodion created this extraordinary piece for its first owner, the architect Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart. Source: Vignon, Charlotte. The Frick Collection Decorative Arts Handbook. New York: The Frick Collection/Scala, 2015.