

I66 Nicolas Gribelin à Paris, 78 mm, 585 g,
circa 1685



An exceptionally rare quarter-repeating Louis XIV "oignon" verge pocket watch in its original leather covered transport case with applied silver stud decoration – perhaps the largest "oignon" in existence
Case: silver, pierced band, rear bell. **Dial:** enamel. **Movm.:** full plate movement, chain/fusee, 1 hammer, verge escapement, ratchet wheel set-up, three-arm steel balance.

The silver case is open-worked around the edge and ornamented with engraved scrolls, heads of birds, mascarons and two oval medallions with two male profile portraits. The back is polished and holds the bell for the repeater. The Roman hours are blue on white enamel and time is indicated with blue "Poker & Beetle" hands. The magnificent firegilt full plate movement features Egyptian pillars and an impressively large Louis XIV-style balance bridge with exquisite engraving and foliage scrolls, fantastic birds and mascarons; the ornamentation matches the motif on the outside of the case. The repeater mechanism sits in a finely engraved barrel.

This unusually large "oignon" is a wonderful example of the skill and craftsmanship of Nicolas Gribelin, who is regarded as one of the best makers of the late 17th century. The engraving on the case and the balance bridge is probably based on the designs for watchmakers published by Pierre Bourdon and reproduced in E. Geli's "L'Horlogerie Ancienne". The engraving and the open-work ornamentation on the edge of the case are particularly fine and detailed, as are the gently curved silver locking brackets – the work is more delicately executed than in watches half the size of this one.

Nicolas Gribelin was born in Blois in 1637 as son of clockmaker Abraham Gribelin. By the end of the XVII century he was one of the most famous French clockmakers of the time. In 1674 he was appointed Horloger de Monsieur le Dauphin, who was the son of Louis XIV; Gribelin was received at the Faubourg St. Germain as Master in 1675. Gribelin often worked together with Andre Charles Boulle for the cases of his clocks. When the Dauphin's clocks were inventoried in 1689, four of them were by Nicolas Gribelin. Gribelin died in 1719; today many museums hold examples of his work.

Source: Tardy, "Dictionnaire des Horlogers Francais", Paris 1972, p. 274

Nicolas Gribelin 巴黎 – 獨特非凡，罕見的路易十四世“洋蔥錶”早期冠輪懷錶，附二間，原廠銀飾黃金點綴皮革外殼，據了解，這應該是現今還存在的最大“洋蔥錶”

48573 C: 2, 7 D: 2 M: 2, 41
35.000 - 50.000 EUR 39.300 - 56.100 USD 308.000 - 440.100 HKD

