

DE BAECQUE

## PRESS RELEASE

**A REDISCOVERED MASTERPIECE**  
ATTRIBUTED TO FRANCESCO BORDONI  
SCULPTOR TO THE KING (1574-1654)  
THE BRONZE BUST OF PAUL PHELYPEAUX  
DE PONTCHARTRAIN (1569-1621)  
AT AUCTION IN PARIS AT DROUOT  
20 NOVEMBER 2019

**DE BAECQUE ET ASSOCIÉS**  
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**Attributed to**  
**FRANCESCO DI BARTELOMEO BORDONI**

(Francisque Bourdonny)  
(Florence circa 1574 - Paris 1654)

*Paul Phélypeaux, seigneur de Pontchartrain*  
(Blois 1569 – Castel-Sarrazin 1621)

A bronze bust with a brown patina  
on a turquin blue marble socle

Height with base: 87.7cm, 34 ½ in  
Dimensions: 70.5 cm x 66 cm, 27 ¾ x 26 in  
Height of the base: 17.2 cm, 6 ¾ in

On the verso a brass plaque with the inscription:  
« PAUL PHELYPEAUX – SEIGNEUR DE  
PONTCHARTRAIN - SECRETAIRE DESTAT- 1610 »

**Provenance**

Commissioned from Bordoni for the chapelle des  
Trépassés, Church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Paris

- Louis II Phélypeaux, comte de Pontchartrain  
(1643 - 1727) before 1714
- Jérôme Phélypeaux,  
comte de Pontchartrain (1674-1747)
- Jérôme Phélypeaux,  
comte de Pontchartrain (1674-1747)
- Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux,  
comte de Maurepas et de Pontchartrain (1701-1781)
- Diane-Hortense Mancini-Mazarini, (1742-1808)  
spouse of Louis-Hercule de Cossé-Brissac,  
duc de Brissac (1734-1792)
- Adélaïde de Cossé-Brissac (1765-1818),  
spouse of Jean-Baptiste de Rochechouart,  
duc de Mortemart (1752-1812)
- Thence by descent

**Estimation**

500 000 / 800 000 €

**Expert**

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# FIVE KEY FACTS

**This major work of sculpture shows the historical importance of Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain** (1569-1621), minister to Henri IV who brought stability to the kingdom following the assassination of the king.



**Never before at public auction has there been such an important 17th century bronze of this superb quality**

representing a key figure of the history of France. The sale of this unique bust by DE BAECQUE & Associés is an important event for the art market.



**Scientific and technical analyses, as well as important archival research** undertaken by the experts of Sculpture et Collection have allowed for the attribution of this exceptional cast to Francesco Bordoni (1574-1654), an artist of Italian origin who became the official sculptor to the king of France.



**Today, only a dozen such royal portraits in bronze** are known and they are all held in private collections and museums, notably at the Louvre. This bronze will now enrich the extremely small number of existing busts of dignitaries.



**Intended for the church of the Louvre – Saint-Germain L'Auxerrois** - the sculpture has remained for 400 years with the descendants of Pontchartrain himself.





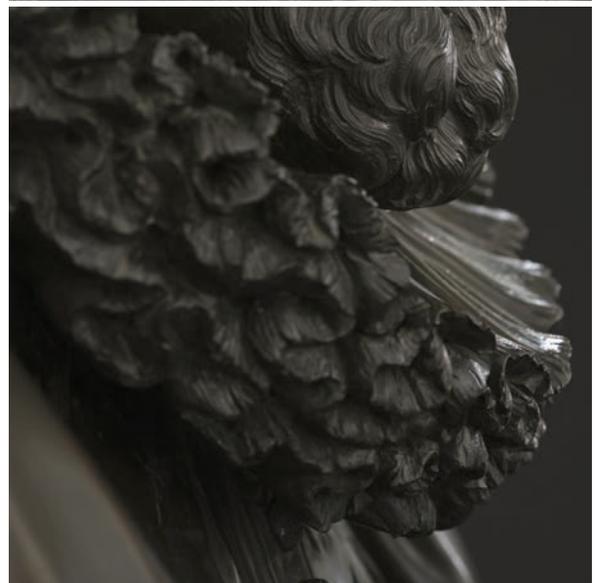
**To have a hitherto unpublished bronze portrait from the 17th century, of such fine quality and in remarkable condition, representing a historical figure of such importance is a major event for the art market.**

The auction at Drouot in Paris with DE BAECQUE & Associés on 20 November 2019, will be an opportunity to give back to its sitter, Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain (1569-1621), his rightful place in the history of France. This minister to King Henri IV was able to stabilize power after the assassination of the king and to maintain peace in the kingdom. Scientific and technical analyses, as well as important archival research undertaken by the experts of Sculpture et Collection have allowed for the attribution of this exceptional cast to Francesco Bordonì (1574-1654), an artist of Italian origin who became the official sculptor to the king of France. This beautiful cast, at once theatrical and embodying the values of moral rectitude and humility of its model, has been conserved by the descendants of Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain for 400 years.

*« The first time that I saw the bust was during the course of an inventory in a private country home. It seemed too beautiful to be true because it appeared to date from the 17th century, but today, all the bronzes from that period are only to be found in museums or private institutions... **to find such a masterpiece in someone's private home was like a dream** »*, auctioneer Géraldine d'Ouince from DE BAECQUE & Associés tells us. A scientific analysis confirmed the date of the sculpture, which was executed in the first half of the 17th century.

*« At that time, portraits in bronze were reserved for only the most important figures in the kingdom, »* explains Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès and Alexandre Lacroix from Sculpture et Collection. *« Only a dozen busts from this period are known to us today and they are all in museums and private collections and the subjects are essentially that of Henri IV and Louis XIII or Cardinal Richelieu. »* This unique work, **passed on to the descendants of Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain over the past 400 years, can now be added to the extremely small number of portraits in bronze of kings and dignitaries from the beginning of the "Grand Siècle".**

The auction of this statue on 20 November 2019 by Géraldine d'Ouince in Paris at Drouot will illuminate the **historical importance of the man represented in this bust: Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain (1569-1621)**, Minister to Henri IV. He was responsible for both stabilizing power after the assassination of the king and maintaining peace. The scientific and technical analyses, as well as important archival research undertaken by the experts of Sculpture et Collection have allowed for the attribution of this exceptional cast to **Francesco Bordonì (1574-1654)**. This artist, originally from Florence, close to the **Medici family, who became the king's official sculptor ("Premier Sculpteur du Roi")** is **also the author of a bronze portrait of Louis XIII, which is currently to be found in the collection of the Louvre.**



# REPRESENTING THE INTEGRITY OF PONTCHARTRAIN, GUARANTOR OF THE STABILITY OF POWER AND THE MAINTAINING OF PEACE.



## Soberly dressed, in keeping with his position as the king's minister

The aesthetic and stylistic choices made by the artist, notably in the sobriety of the dress of Pontchartrain and the preoccupation with truthful rendering of his portrait, underscore the moral integrity and natural authority and grace with which he was able to successfully preserve the stability of the kingdom and maintain peace. He wears a simple outfit, without jewellery or fancy stitching, made of slashed doublets and a wool cloak. "If the fact that he is wearing a lace ruff seems ostentatious, it was, in fact a very commonly worn item at the time. And that worn by Pontchartrain is not even starched. *This simplicity of dress echoes the sitter's political responsibility as the secretary of state entrusted specifically with easing religious tensions known as "réformée". The Huguenots were critical of the mannerism and the overly rich ostentation of the high-ranking officials of the time*", explains Géraldine d'Ouince.

## A natural charisma that was essential to the stability of power following the assassination of Henri IV

The movement that the artist has given the cloak, "which gives fullness to his silhouette by underlining his charisma", as noted by the auctioneer, as well as the statue's imposing size (86 cm high with the base) and the protective gaze, slightly inclined downward that Pontchartrain gives to all those who observe him - all these elements display the natural authority and benevolence of this statesman. As Géraldine d'Ouince reminds us, "Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain is appointed minister three weeks before the assassination of Henri IV. By remaining in the highest levels of power, he would facilitate the transition of the regency of Marie de Medici, and then enable Louis XIII to assume authority. Pontchartrain was the guarantor of the stability of power in a particularly troubled time, between an assassinated king, an Italian regent, a "prime minister", Concino Concini, who confiscated power, the emergence of cardinal Richelieu who was then bishop of Luçon..."

## A naturalistic portrait that underscores his integrity and his honesty

The sculptor was intent on creating a portrait as realistic as possible of his sitter. This naturalistic representation, which corresponds to the taste of the period, takes into consideration every detail down to the mole that we see on his cheek, "for us this detail is very important because it underscores a scrupulous depiction of the sitter who is here shown exactly as he was. In reading the memoirs of Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain, what is striking is *his awareness of public welfare and his objectivity regarding the events. It is by keeping far away from intrigue and by remaining objective that he was successful in easing those religious tensions that were rising in the beginning of the 17th century. It was he who in fact managed to obtain the signature of the Treaty of Loudun in 1616 which kept peace between the nobles of the kingdom, separated in two clans, the Catholics and the Huguenots*" add Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès and Alexandre Lacroix from Sculpture et Collection.

# PAUL PHÉLYPEAUX DE PONTCHARTRAIN (1569–1621) IN 4 DATES

## 1600

At the age of 31, Paul Phélypeaux is appointed Secrétaire des commandements to Marie de Medici upon her marriage to Henri IV. In this position he is responsible for writing and enforcing the queen's orders.



Frans Pourbus the younger  
Marie de Médicis Queen of France, 1611

## 1610

Paul Phélypeaux is made Secrétaire d'Etat. His functions begin only three weeks before the king's assassination.



Frans Pourbus the younger, Henri IV, King of France

## 1616

During the period of the Regency, Paul Phélypeaux relinquishes his work as minister in charge of military affairs in order to devote himself to matters concerning religion and in this way keeping watch on maintaining peace between the Catholics and the Huguenots. In 1616, in spite of rising tensions amongst the nobility, Paul Phélypeaux manages to put an end to their desire for civil war with the signature of the Treaty of Loudun.

## 1621

Paul Phélypeaux accompanies King Louis XIII to the siege of Montauban, where the royal army is confronting the rebelling Huguenots. Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain leaves for Castelsarrasin, where he dies on 21 October.



Gérard Edelinck, Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain (detail)

# A MASTERPIECE WHERE ALL OF THE CLUES LEAD STRAIGHT TO BORDONI

## A magnificent cast that could only have been made by an Italian sculptor

At the start of the 17th century, bronze was a material that was little used for portrait sculpture. Poorly mastered, it could be very costly. *“Only a great artist could have cast a bronze of this scope”*, add Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès and Alexandre Lacroix, insisting on the fact that the bronze would have been executed in one go, which is in itself a major technical feat. *«Our first intuition directed us towards an Italian artist, because at the time there were practically no bronze busts executed by French artists - one does find, however, portraits with this same sort of presence in Italy at the court of the Medici »* The experts are emphatic about the virtuosity of the bronze *«which seems to rest on barely a half centimetre on the base. It is a major technical feat, which gives lightness to the bust and a theatrical air, as if it was going to fly away».*

## Bordoni, official court sculptor and Pontchartrain’s neighbour

Some of the anatomical elements of the bronze portrait, such as the circles under the eyes, the wrinkles, the way the eyelids and the arch of the eyebrows are drawn, are detailed with such exactitude and realism that the *“artist is very likely to have known Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain personally. At the time, there was just one Italian sculptor in Paris whose work corresponds to all of the criteria that we find in the creation of this bust – Francesco Bordoni (1574-1654) who frequented the same church as Pontchartrain; the church of Saint-Germain l’Auxerrois, near the Louvre”*, add Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès and Alexandre Lacroix. Originally from Florence, Bordoni was trained in the studio of the greatest sculptor of the time, Jean de Bologne. After that, Francesco Bordoni settled in Paris where his talent led to his being appointed to the position of sculptor to the king of France. From the Château of Fontainebleau to the parvis of Notre-Dame to the equestrian statue of Henri IV that graces the Pont Neuf in Paris, **Bordoni participated in the most important creations of his time, as an important specialist of works in bronze. It was a technique that he mastered to perfection.**



Francesco Bordoni, Louis XIII, Louvre Museum.

## Scientific analyses and analysis of the artist’s technique confirm the attribution

Scientific research on the sculpture, one being analysis using X-ray micro fluorescence, as well as stylistic comparisons with the Louvre’s bronze portrait by Francesco Bordoni of Louis XIII, have allowed for the confirmation of the attribution of the work to the artist. *“The bronze alloy, principally composed of copper, was used in the 17th century, notably by Bordoni. Additionally, the translucent brown patina, with gold highlights, which covers the metal, corresponds to what one finds in an antique patina”*, reports Marie-Emmanuelle Meyohas, restorer trained at the Istituto Centrale del Restauro in Rome and person in charge of the technical examination of the bust. This specialist adds that in addition to excelling in the casting of the bronze, *“Francesco Bordoni was excellent in cold work, as seen in his reworking elements once the cast has cooled, the artist has in fact chiselled each millimetre of the hair, the beard and the eyebrows using a small chisel. This chiselling, which contrasts with the very smooth quality of the skin gives the bust a certain movement.”* The experts estimate that a bust by Bordoni such as this one would have taken the artist roughly six months, or even an entire year to complete.



# A PORTRAIT BRONZE THAT HAS REMAINED IN THE FAMILY ESTATE OF THE DESCENDANTS OF PONTCHARTRAIN

## Created for the church of the Palais du Louvre: Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois

The research carried out by the experts of Sculpture et Collection has allowed them to retrace the history of the bust from its creation in the first half of the 17th century until its rediscovery 400 years later by auctioneer Géraldine d'Ouince. *“The first information regarding the work came from the brass plaque on the bust itself which gave us the name of Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain along with his title as «Secrétaire d'État» and the year of his nomination, 1610»,* explains Alexandre Lacroix.

Documentary research discovered an engraving by the artist Gérard Edelinck (1640-1707) representing Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain in the same attitude and dress as is shown in the sculpture. The portrait in bronze would have thus served as a direct inspiration for Edelinck in the creation of his engraving that was used to illustrate a passage about Paul Phélypeaux in the book, *Les Hommes illustres* (1696), by Charles Perrault. *«The bust appears again in a 1694 drawing by a well-known architect at the time, Robert de Cotte. . The statue is depicted in Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, the church of the Louvre frequented by the most important political and artistic figures of the time, including Bordonni and where the Phélypeaux family had their own private chapel. The bronze is shown at the top of one of the walls»,* adds Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès.

The experts then understood why in the portrait bust Paul Phélypeaux is looking downwards and why the bust is 20% larger than life-sized; it is because it was placed at a certain height and intended to be viewed from below.

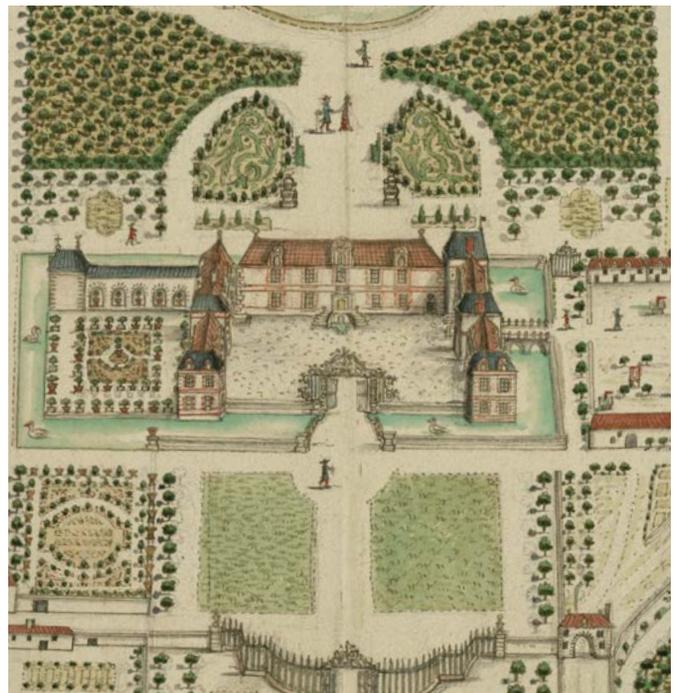
## Saved from destruction by Pontchartrain's lineage

For Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès and Alexandre Lacroix, one of the questions that needed to be answered was how exactly this sculpture had managed to *survive the destructions of history unlike the majority of important bronzes from this period*, «Whether to satisfy the need for canons in time of war, or to destroy the iconography of the Ancien Régime during the French Revolution, most bronzes had been melted down” add the experts from Sculpture et Collection. Paul Phélypeaux was able to rely on his grandson, Louis Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain, who was also appointed *Secrétaire d'État* and

thus minister to the king. Louis was determined to protect the importance of his lineage and highlight the career and influence of his grandfather. In rising to the position of *secrétaire d'État* in 1610, Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain paved the way for his own descendants. The Phélypeaux family would count eleven ministers and secrétaires d'État during the years of the French monarchy. At the end of the 17th century, Louis Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain decided to pay homage to his grandfather and brought together the whole of the family patrimony in a grand collection exhibited in the Château de Pontchartrain. In moving the bust to the chateau, Louis Phélypeaux saved the statue of his grandfather by exhibiting it at the heart of a prestigious collection of sculptures of the greatest masters such as Giambologna, François Girardon and Michel Anguier...

## A historic auction

The bust is to be found again at the end of the 19th century in the same country house in the west of France where it was recently discovered by Géraldine d'Ouince. *«We were able to quickly affirm that Paul Phélypeaux seigneur de Pontchartrain was a direct forbearer. But the owners had absolutely no idea as to the value of this sculpture.»* Today, the auctioneer knows that the sale on 20 November 2019 will be a historic one: never before has there been a 17th century bronze of this quality, in such remarkable condition and representing a person of such historical importance for sale at auction until now. The portrait in bronze of Paul Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain will be offered at auction with an estimate of 500,000 – 800,000 euros.



Gallica BnF, Perspective plan of the Château de Pontchartrain  
Louis Boudan, 1703/1709 (detail)



Gallica Bnf, Robert de Cotte, Paris, Church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Elevation drawing of the Phélypeaux monument



Gallica Bnf, Monument of Martin Fréminet Wall mounted monument with bust and cartouche

## PAUL PHELYPEAUX SECRETARE D'ESTAT.



PAUL PHELYPEAUX Seigneur de Pontchartrain naquit à Blois en l'année 1569. Ses Ancestres parurent dans des postes considerables dès l'année 1360. Louïs, second fils de Jean Roy de France, qui eut pour appanage le Duché d'Anjou, fit Jean Phelypeaux son Intendant pour le Comté de Beaufort, & luy donna la Charge d'Intendant des Turcies & Levées d'Anjou, Charge alors tres-considerable. Ses enfans furent honorez des memes emplois sous Louïs II. & sous René son fils, tous deux Ducs d'Anjou & Roys de Sicile.

Celuy dont je parle vint au monde avec un esprit dont la force & la vivacité luy acquirent en peu de temps tout ce qu'on a d'ordinaire beaucoup de peine à faire apprendre aux jeunes gens pendant plusieurs années, & le rendirent capable presque au sortir de l'enfance de toute sorte d'emplois. Il n'avoit que quatorze ans lors qu'il fut pourveu de la Charge de Secretaire ordinaire de la Chambre du Roy, par Lettres Patentes enregistrées en la Chambre des Comptes; & à l'âge de dix-neuf ans il travailla sous Monsieur Revol aux affaires les plus importantes du Royaume. Il y fit voir tant de capacité, que trois ans après le Roy luy fit expedier des Lettres portant permission de signer en Finance, marque d'une confiance & d'une distinction si singulieres, qu'il seroit difficile d'en trouver un pareil exemple. Cette grace fut accompagnée du don d'une Charge de Secretaire du Roy de l'Ancien College, Sa Majesté prenant plaisir à témoigner par de frequents bienfaits la satisfaction qu'elle recevoit de ses services. Monsieur de Villeroy ne fut pas plustost restabli dans sa Charge de Secretaire d'Etat par la mort de Monsieur Revol, qu'il voulut l'avoir auprès de luy pour l'associer à son travail. La maniere aisée dont il expedioit les affaires les plus importantes & les plus difficiles, porta le Roy à le choisir en l'année 1600. pour estre Secretaire des Commandemens de la Reyne Marie de Medicis.

Les services qu'il rendit à cette Princesse luy furent si agreables, qu'elle demanda au Roy avec empressement qu'il fust pourveu de la Charge de Secretaire d'Etat dont Monsieur Forget avoit permission de se defaire, & qu'il fust preferé à Monsieur de Preaux son concurrent. Le Roy n'eut pas de peine à le rendre aux prieres de la Reyne, quoyque Monsieur de Preaux eust un merite tres-distingué, & lorsque Sa Majesté pourveut Monsieur de Pontchartrain de cette Charge, Elle dit avec des marques de joye sur le visage, *qu'il ne croyoit pas la pouvoir remplir d'un personnage plus digne, plus fidele ny plus capable.*

Le Roy estant mort peu de temps après, la Reyne qui devint Maistresse de toutes les affaires, en remit une grande partie aux soins & à la conduite de Monsieur de Pontchartrain, & particulièrement les affaires de ceux de la Religion Pretendue Reformée, qui estoient alors les plus importantes du Royaume. Elles n'estoient pas de son département; mais sa pieté & son zele pour la Religion les luy firent souhaiter, & quitter sans peine, pour les avoir, celles de la

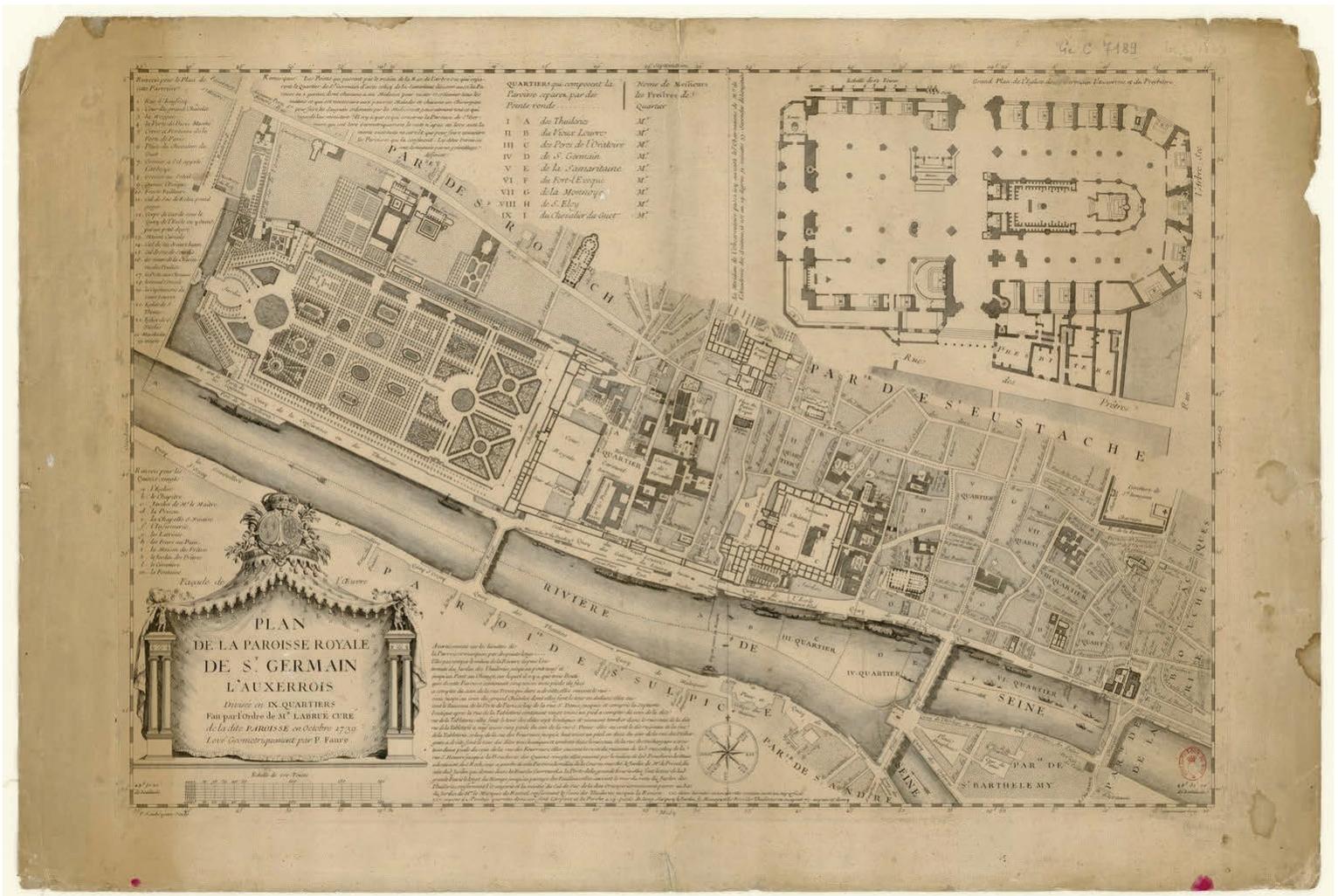
pagne, le retira de la Cour, & comme il estoit d'une grande consequence d'empêcher qu'il ne se mist à la teste des Mécontents, le Roy Louïs XIII. choisit Monsieur de Pontchartrain pour aller à Coucy négocier le retour de ce Prince. Tout ce que l'esprit, l'adresse & l'éloquence peuvent faire, il l'employa dans cette rencontre, & mit le Prince dans la disposition de rentrer entierement dans son devoir, ce qu'il fit peu de temps après.

Il fut envoyé ensuite par le Roy à la Conference de Loudun où pendant trois mois qu'elle dura, il débrouilla les differents interets de tous les Pretendans qui s'y trouverent. Il combatit vigoureusement toutes les demandes des Religioneux, & les reduisit enfin aux termes des Edits. Il sceut porter si heureusement les Esprits à la douceur & à l'obeyssance qu'on peut dire qu'il fut un des principaux instrumens de la Paix, qu'il eut la gloire de conclure & de signer. Ayant suivi le Roy au Siege de Montauban, il y tomba malade; & s'estant fait porter à Castel-Sarrasin, il y mourut le 21. jour d'Octobre 1621. âgé de cinquante-deux ans. Anne Beauharnois sa femme, fille de François Beauharnois sieur de Miramion, fit apporter son corps à Paris dans l'Eglise de Saint Germain l'Auxerrois sa Paroisse, & luy fit élever un tombeau dans la Chapelle où il est enterré.

La Reyne, en reconnoissance de ses services, conserva à son Fils sa Charge de Secretaire d'Etat, & voulut que M. Phelypeaux de la Vrilliere frere du defunt en fit les fonctions, jusques à ce que le Pupille fust en âge de l'exercer. Monsieur de la Vrilliere en rempli si bien tous les devoirs, qu'elle luy demeura, & passa ensuite à ses Descendans.

Il laissa un fils & trois filles; & l'on remarque que sa famille a donné à la France sept Secretaires d'Etat en l'espace de quatre-vingts ans ou environ.

Gallica Bnf, Les hommes illustres, qui ont paru en France pendant ce siècle, avec leurs portraits au naturel. Charles Perrault (1628-1703). Edition: 1697-1700



Gallica BnF, plan of the royal chapel at Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois

## DE BAECQUE & Associés

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The French auction house of DE BAECQUE & Associés is an association of three commissaires-priseurs (French auctioneers) Etienne de Baecque, Géraldine d'Ouince and Jean-Marie Sarrau with a team of 15 in Paris and Lyon all working in collaboration with over thirty experts across roughly fifteen different areas of specialisation. As generalists, the auction house of DE BAECQUE & Associés sells an array of works from 18th century furniture and works of art to design to Modern and Contemporary painting, books and manuscripts as well as jewellery... In addition to these different categories, the three associates have developed sales devoted to sculpture, tribal art, drawings, Old Master paintings, Folk art, arms and armour, private collections... In 2018 alone, the auction house sold for over 10 million euros.

## SCULPTURE & COLLECTION

@sculptureetcollection

Sculpture et Collection are experts in art devoted to Western sculpture from the Middle Ages to today. Alexandre Lacroix, who is responsible for art from the 17th to the 20th century and Elodie Jeannest de Gyvès, for Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque art, rely on their strong network of consultants, art historians, academicians, figures from the art market as well as with founders and restorers which allows them to approach each work by addressing its unique needs. Sculpture et Collection work with auction houses, museums and public institutions, private collectors, notaries as well as insurance companies. The specialists authenticate, estimate and bring added value to the works of art that are entrusted to them.

## Practical Information

SALE: Wednesday 20 November 2019  
Drouot Salle 5  
9, rue Drouot 75009 Paris

## Viewing

From Monday 4 November to Thursday 7 November – on view at Drouot, salle 9  
Saturday 16 November, Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 November 2019  
– on view at Drouot, salle 5

## Press

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