

Zacharie Raingo, maker van muziekdozen ?



Clock sold by Cottone Auctions

History

A world-class watchmaker, and hardly known in his own country.

This is the sorry but accurate description of Zacharie Raingo (1775-1843), born in Hainaut (part of Belgium) in 1775. Active as a watchmaker in Tournai and Ghent until 1813 and then left for Paris, after which his name and fame particularly quickly reached far beyond the country's borders.

The biography on Z. Raingo reads like a book with many pages missing.

Yet we know that he was born in Bergen, was the son of a watchmaker and had two uncles in the musical instrument business, with musical instruments (flutes) in all the major museums.

By the early 19th century, spheres, planetariums, globes, land and sea charts had become particularly popular.... Z. Raingo himself went on to design a pendulum with planetarium, the result of which he showed at l'Académie des Sciences in Paris in 1804.

He had built a pendulum in the shape of a temple with 4 columns. Between the 2 front columns was suspended a watch with striking mechanism. On top of these columns, he built a platform with a large opening in the centre, into which he integrated a planetarium with the sun, Earth and moon, i.e. a tellurium.

On request, this clock could be extended with a pedestal and a musical score.

The clock struck hours and half-hours on a bell, and could mark the hours with a melody from the musical work.



Musical mechanisms

Music box connection

In the pendules scientifiques et géographiques of the early years (1805-1815), Raingo incorporated Swiss musical works from Geneva and/or la Chaux-de-Fonds; after 1815, Raingo built these musical works himself. In the report 'Les Annales de l'Industrie Nationale et Etrangère', published on 14/04/1823, this musical work is described in detail by Mr Francoeur, himself a musician and mechanic :

- the teeth of the comb, each with its own sound
- the rotating cylinder with pins whereby these teeth are lifted and abruptly released to produce sounds
- the cylinder on which the pins are placed very precisely and meticulously in order to produce a pleasant melody.

- the solid tools and instruments used for this tuning of the cylinder and tuning of the bridge and tuning of the bridge made precision work possible
- the large Raingo family in Paris (Z. Raingo worked in Paris together with his brother and also had five children) who could provide cheap labour.

There are musical mechanism by Z. Raingo with a comb of 96 teeth, always with 2 teeth per screw. This, according to Francoeur, is much more than usual in Swiss music boxes. And still according to Francoeur, this made the music sound much richer and more melodious, the musical accompaniment was much more elaborate, and a pleasant-sounding melody emerged.

We would be surprised if Z. Raingo had used all this technology, knowledge and skill only for musical works, built into pendules of his own making, and then only in his pendules scientifiques et géographiques.



Foto 1

Musical mechanisms

We know of a total of 9 pendulums with musical mechanisms, of which 4 pendulums have a musical mechanism built with some certainty in Z. Raingo's workshop.

Therefore, we ask whether readers recognise the style and construction of these musical mechanisms and/or have seen similar ones before.

Of course, it would be fascinating if several musical mechanisms would be recognised and may be assigned to Z. Raingo.

We believe the following features represent Reingo's signature :

- The spring drum bearing that extends to the top of the spring drum and has the same curve as the spring drum. Photo 1
- The bearing of the spring drum screwed at the bottom of the bedplate - photo 1
- The gear wheel on the cylinder axis which is attached with a pin photo 1
- Large cover plate on top of the regulator.
- The regulator wings supported in the middle rather than at the corner.
- The relatively large 2nd wheel in the regulator
- The use of presumably sealing lacquer instead of shellac to fiks the sections of the comb. Photo 3



Foto 2

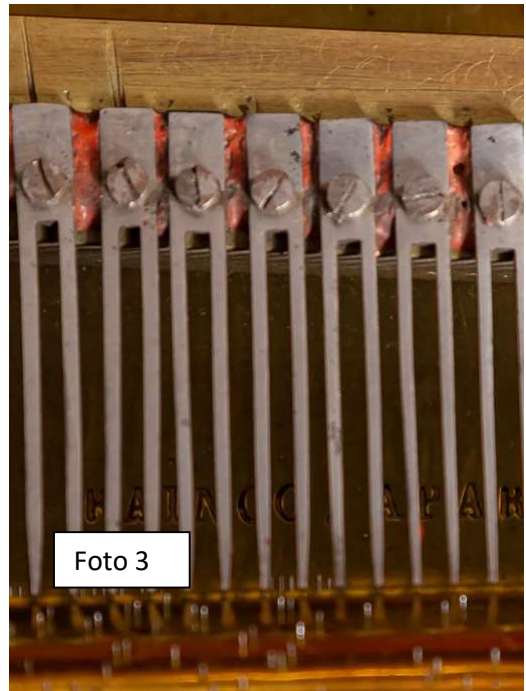


Foto 3

Questions

Are more of music boxes known with these special features? Is more known about Raingo as a music box maker?

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