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Pendulum by the Raingo brothers, Louis XV style, circa 1850, kept at the Victoria Museum in Australia.



Raingo pendulum, around 1810, conserved at the Royal Museum of Brussels



Raingo clock kept in the Science Museum. Science Museum/Science & Society Picture Library

Born in Mons in Belgium on the 2nd July 1775, Zacharie Joseph Raingo is the son of Nicolas- Joseph, the watchmaker, and Marie-Magdelaine Decroly. He lived in Tournai from 1795 to 1807, and developped his business from 1810 in Gand before setting up in Paris on rue de Cléry in 1813. During his time in Gand, following the example of Antide Janvier, he made his first planetary pendulums, his specialty. Also called astronomic clocks, they are mounted with a rotating sphere mechanism, designed to show the proportions, positions and trajectories of Celestial Bodies. In 1810 he patented his "pendulum with a moving sphere" and published a pamphlet for it in 1823.

From 1823, Zacharie Raingo was named the watchmaker-engineer of S.A.A. Monseigneur the duke of Chartres (future king Louis-Philippe) and the following year he is the watchmaker-engineer of the Garde-Meuble of the throne. The king of England George IV aquired a planetary pendulum in 1824 for 300 guineas which can now be found at Windsor castle.

The Raingo brothers, which includes four sons of Zacharie, is founded in 1823 and set up around 1830 at 8 rue de la Tourraine. It includes the sons Adolphe Hubert Joseph (Tournai 1796- Paris 1839), Charles François Victor (Tournai 1801- Paris 1884), Denis Lucien Alphonse (Tournai 1802- Paris 1870) and Dorsant Emile Joseph (Tournai 1805- Paris 1859). During the exhibition of Industrial products in 1844 in Paris, the company is favourably mentioned by the judging panel *The RAINGO brothers, in Paris, rue Saintonge, 11.*
Before talking about their products, we will mention its manufacturers: it is an industrial family made up of four brothers whose intelligence is constantly shown through the prosperity of their establishment, in Paris and abroad. The commercial side dominates, and the amount of goods they export is a considerable amount. Out of the large quantity of objects exhibited, we have been drawn to the Louis XIV pendulum, Neptune's chariot, accompanied with two candelabras and two very elaborate vases; a Renaissance style pendulum, decorated with painted porcelain, and vases decorated in bronze; two group statues, subjects of hunting; a pendulum, Poetry and Eloquence, with candelabras. These products are all clear evidence of the level of zeal and activity which prevails in this factory. Considering the importance of this company and level of service, the judging panel awards the bronze medal to the Raingo brothers.
(Report from the central board, exhibition of Industrial French Products in 1844)

The Raingo brothers are quickly recognised for their bronze work. In fact the Raingo brothers, at first known as watchmakers, add bronzed art and furniture to their collection. From 1860, the Raingo brothers create remarkable items for the the Emperor and Empress Eugénie, a collection which can be admired today in the Louvre museum. The Raingo brothers carry out antique productions, and then, later on, they produce little models of pieces of work by contemporary artists such as Pradier, Carrier-Belleuse or Auguste Moreau. They also work in collaboration with the famous cabinetmaker François Linke.

In 1862, the company exhibits work at the Universal Exhibition in London. At the World's Fairs in Paris in 1867, 1878 and 1889, it won prizes at all of them, including a gold medal at the World's Fair of 1889. The workshop is then situated at 202 Veille du Temple in Paris. The work of the Raingo brothers can be found in many museums, including the Musée des Arts et Métiers in Paris, the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels, the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan and the Palacio Real in Madrid.

See also

Louis XIV style — Louis XVI style — Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse — Gilt bronze — 1862 World's Fair — 1867 World's Fair — 1878 World's Fair — 1889 World's Fair

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