OUAISS ANTIQUITÉS
Galerie des Arts



WRITING CASE IN ENAMELED GOLD, LATE 18TH CENTURY

Era: late 18th century.

Materials: gold, enamel, ivory.

Dim: H 3.3 in (8,5 cm)/ W 1.6 in (4 cm).

Weight: 2.5 oz (72 gr).

Bear head, 1795-1797, likely a prestige mark.

Rectangular case in enameled gold. A button serves to open the hinged lid. The case is composed of four gold sections that are overlaid with translucent, royal blue enamel which leaves the intricate geometric points of the gold underneath visible. The lid features a delicately sculpted motto which reads “Souvenir d'amitié” (Souvenir of Friendship). The two main faces of the case display medallions, one of which shows a woman in a yellow dress and a man in a harlequin costume, in front of a landscape background. The medallion on the other side displays a monogram in gold letters sewn on a piece of fabric protected by a dome of glass. The panels of the case are framed with an enameled frieze of flowers on a matte gold background. The fashion of small cases developed during the 18th century. Eventually, small, flat cases like this one appeared, which contained ivory tablets and pencils for writing down meetings and appointments. These cases are the predecessors of dance cards, which developed during the 19th century. Work from the end of the 18th century.