



# ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE

*from*

## THE FRICK COLLECTION

---

1 EAST 70TH STREET • NEW YORK • NEW YORK 10021 • TELEPHONE (212) 288-0700 • FAX (212) 628-4417

---

### MAJOR BEQUEST TO THE FRICK COLLECTION FEATURED IN FALL EXHIBITION *THE ART OF THE TIMEKEEPER: MASTERPIECES FROM THE WINTHROP EDEY BEQUEST*

*November 14, 2001, through February 24, 2002*

With its major fall and winter exhibition, The Frick Collection introduces to the public a significant gift of clocks and watches from the estate of a remarkable collector and scholar, Winthrop Kellogg Edey (1937-1999). *The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey Bequest* features a group of thirteen clocks and eight watches selected from a larger, multi-faceted gift—many of which are on view for the first time. Ranging in date from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, arguably the most remarkable period in the history of timekeeping, they reveal the breadth of Edey's passion for collecting. They also illustrate several significant technical developments that influenced the design and appearance of clocks and watches and offer a sense of the impact that improved methods of timekeeping had upon the growth of Western civilization. *The Art of the Timekeeper* is organized by guest curator and museum consultant William J. H. Andrewes, formerly David P. Wheatland Curator, Harvard University, author of *The Quest for Longitude* (1996) and co-author with Dava Sobel of the bestseller *The Illustrated Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time* (1998).

On view from Wednesday, November 14, 2001, through Sunday, February 24, 2002, the presentation is made possible through a generous gift by Winthrop Edey; a challenge grant made in honor of William J. H. Andrewes, guest curator; Montres Breguet; Janine Luke; The Heimbold Foundation; The Thorne Foundation; Brooke Astor; Richard and Ronay Menschel; James S. Marcus; David Owsley; The Ridgefield Foundation; Stanley and Betty DeForest Scott; and the support of the Fellows of The Frick Collection.

## **PROFILE OF A REMARKABLE COLLECTOR**

Kelly, as his friends called him, came from a wealthy family. Morris Kellogg, his grandfather, was an engineer who made his fortune designing and building oil refineries, and Kelly inherited enough money to do whatever he wanted after he left college. In addition to horology, he was passionate about Egyptology and was an accomplished photographer. He kept his collection at his home in New York City, where he maintained an eccentric, private, and somewhat nocturnal lifestyle, surrounded by remarkable English and French longcase clocks, mantel clocks, and stacks of books and catalogues.

As a child of twelve, Kelly already owned a number of timepieces and had begun the journal in which he recorded nearly all of his horological acquisitions. Over the next forty-nine years, he purchased a large number of clocks and watches, many of which he exchanged or sold to upgrade his collection with artifacts of greater significance. This continual refinement over a period of nearly five decades enabled him to assemble a small but exceptionally fine collection, illustrating both the stylistic and the technical development of timepieces from about 1500 to 1830. His enduring interest in the decorative qualities of the case as well as the details of the mechanism was focused during the 1960s in particular on French clocks, a field in which he became a respected authority. During the 1980s, he worked as a consultant for Christie's, New York; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; and The Time Museum, Rockford, IL. In addition to several scholarly articles, Edey wrote two books on French clocks. The first, entitled *French Clocks*, was published in 1967, when he was thirty. The second, *French Clocks in North American Collections*, was the catalogue of the exhibition that he organized at The Frick Collection in 1982.

## **THE GIFT OF A NOTABLE CONNOISSEUR ENHANCES THE FRICK COLLECTION'S HOLDINGS IN THE DECORATIVE ARTS**

Comments Samuel Sachs II, Director, "Kelly was a fascinating figure in the collecting community, and although many of his colleagues were aware of some of the treasures in his possession, nobody knew, perhaps, the full extent of his holdings. Nor has the public had the opportunity, until now, to see a significant number of recently catalogued and conserved objects in his marvelous gift to The Frick Collection. With this long-anticipated presentation, we hope to delight our visitors and to satisfy the mounting curiosity among collectors and historians as to what this generous bequest comprised. Indeed, it includes some twenty-five clocks and fourteen watches as well as a remarkable research library on the history of time measurement, a component that enhances the holdings of the Frick Art Reference Library. This multi-faceted gift represents a very exciting development for the institution as a whole."

Adds guest curator William J. H. Andrewes, “The quality of this collection is exceptional, and this exhibition will provide visitors with the rare opportunity to examine the work of both the clockmaker and the casemaker. Through the mechanical ingenuity and intrinsic beauty of the artifacts, visitors will be able to glimpse the world that captured the imagination of Winthrop Edey when he was a young boy and see what inspired him to become a collector and scholar in this fascinating field.”

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EXHIBITION

The weight-driven mechanical clock was invented in England around 1280. About a hundred years later came the development of the alternative source of power, the mainspring, which allowed a timekeeper to be portable. Although very few spring-driven timekeepers made before 1550 have survived, Edey acquired two, both featured in *The Art of the Timekeeper*. The first is a small French table clock made by **Pierre de Fobis** (1506-1575). The Gothic-style pillars and manner in which the striking train is controlled suggest that this example was made during the early 1530s when de Fobis was living in Aix-en-Provence. The second is a small portable drum clock probably made in southern Germany shortly before 1550. Drum clocks are the earliest surviving spring-driven timekeepers that were small enough to be carried by their owners and are considered to be the forerunners of the pocket watch. All timekeepers of this period were inaccurate and unreliable, and it was probably for this reason that clocks and watches made before 1650 were appreciated primarily as decorative objects and intriguing curiosities for those who could afford them.

One of the major landmarks in the history of time measurement was the invention of the pendulum clock by the astronomer and mathematician Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695), which occurred in the Netherlands in 1656. The pendulum brought about both a major advance in the accuracy of clocks and a radical change in the design of their cases. It was not long before pendulum clocks were being made in England and France, and national styles began to emerge. While the English designed the case to conform to the movement, the French focused increasingly on the appearance of the case, the movement and the dial being treated only as elements in the overall design. Indeed, during the 1670s, the cabinetmaker **André-Charles Boulle** (1642-1732) and his contemporaries developed a uniquely recognizable French style of clock case. Boulle—appointed Ebéniste du Roi (royal cabinetmaker) by Louis XIV and celebrated for his remarkable style that combined elaborate marquetry of tortoiseshell, pewter, brass, and ebony with spectacular gilt bronze mounts—is represented in *The Art of the Timekeeper* with no less than three fine examples, including a *religieuse* clock with a movement by **Balt[h]azar Martinot II** (1636-1714). Edey was able to find only three examples of this particular design, with ivory twist columns and domed roof. A large mantel clock, ca. 1690, represents one of Boulle’s most well known models. Its bold and elaborate form

displays the integration of its overall shape, bronzes, and marquetry into a unified whole, characteristic of the work of his mature years.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, clocks were developed in the baroque and rococo styles; in the later part of the century, the more restrained neoclassical aesthetic—with increasingly elegant proportions—dominated. In the exhibition, a fine example of late-eighteenth-century French clockmaking will be represented in the work of **Robert Robin** (1742-1799).

“**Abraham-Louis Breguet** was a phenomenon without parallel. He was the genius of his age, perhaps the most outstanding horologist of his time.” So said Edey in his 1982 catalogue in describing what may be an utterly unique timepiece, a two-sided desk watch made for the Duc de Choiseul-Praslin. This fascinating object displays simultaneously two systems of timekeeping, showing the traditional hour system on one side and the decimal-hour system instituted by the Revolutionary government on the other. Choiseul-Praslin seems to have communicated from imprisonment in the Bastille with Breguet about the making of a two-sided watch. It may be speculated that he—who survived the Revolution and emerged as Citoyen Praslin—could have maintained a degree of personal security later by displaying such a watch conspicuously on his desk, revealing whichever face and system of time-telling appealed to visitors. A work of great beauty, this *Deux Styles* timepiece survives, and will be on view in the exhibition at the Frick. The decimal-hour system, however, did not survive more than a decade. Guest curator William J. H. Andrewes points out that “the traditional method of reckoning time had become such an accepted standard in Western civilization that—despite the successful adoption of the decimal system for measuring distance, volume, and weight—the division of days into hours, minutes, and seconds could not be changed.”

## ILLUSTRATED PUBLICATION:

A fully illustrated booklet by guest curator William J. H. Andrewes accompanies the exhibition. This softcover publication will be available for \$10 in the Museum Shop of The Frick Collection. The Shop can be reached during museum hours at (212) 288-0700.

## FREE PUBLIC LECTURE

**Date:** Wednesday, December 12, 2001, 5:30  
**Speaker:** **William J. H. Andrewes, guest curator**  
**Title:** *The Art of the Timekeeper*

This lecture will describe the fascinating history of clocks and watches from about 1500 to 1800 in the context of art and science and will feature several of the masterpieces from the Winthrop Edey bequest. Seating for this program is unreserved. For further information, please call (212) 288-0700.

## RELATED PRESENTATION AT THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY

In conjunction with *The Art of the Timekeeper*, the Frick Art Reference Library will present a display of books, photographs, and other material from the Winthrop Edey bequest. For further information, please call (212) 288-8700.

## ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION

Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919), the coke and steel industrialist, philanthropist, and art collector, left his New York residence and his remarkable collection of Western paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts to the public “for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a gallery of art, [and] of encouraging and developing the study of fine arts and of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects.” Designed and built for Mr. Frick in 1913 and 1914 by Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings, the mansion provides a grand domestic setting reminiscent of the noble houses of Europe for the masterworks from the Renaissance through the nineteenth century that it contains. Of special note are paintings by Bellini, Constable, Corot, Fragonard, Gainsborough, Goya, El Greco, Holbein, Ingres, Manet, Monet, Rembrandt, Renoir, Titian, Turner, Velázquez, Vermeer, Whistler, and other masters. Mr. Frick’s superb examples of French eighteenth-century furniture, Italian Renaissance bronzes, and Limoges enamels bring a special ambiance to the galleries, while the interior and exterior gardens and the amenities created since the founder’s time in the 1930s and 1970s contribute to the serenity of the visitor’s experience.

Renowned for its small, focused exhibitions and for its highly regarded concert series and lectures, The Frick Collection also operates the Frick Art Reference Library, founded by Henry Clay Frick’s daughter, Miss Helen Clay Frick, located in an adjoining building at 10 East 71st Street. Both a research library and a photo archive, the Frick Art Reference Library is one of the world’s great repositories of documents for the study of Western art. It has served the international art world for more than seventy-five years.

## BASIC INFORMATION

**General Information Phone:** (212) 288-0700

**Website:** [www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)

**E-mail:** info@frick.org

**Where:** 1 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street, near Fifth Avenue.

**Hours:** 10am to 6pm Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from 1pm to 6pm Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year’s Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, December 24, and December 25. Limited hours (1:00 to 6:00pm) on Lincoln’s Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day.

**Admission:** \$10, general public; \$5, students & senior citizens.

**PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection, and those under sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.**

**Subway:** #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68<sup>th</sup> Street station

**Bus:** M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72<sup>nd</sup> Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70<sup>th</sup> Street

**Tour Information:** now included in the price of admission is an INFORM® Audio Tour of the permanent collection, provided by Acoustiguide. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

**Museum Shop:** the shop closes at 5:45pm, and is open otherwise the same days and hours as the Museum.

**Group Visits:** Please call (212) 288-0700 for details and to make reservations.

**Public Programs:** A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

**Frick Art Reference Library, General Information Phone:** (212) 288-8700.

#44, October 10, 2001

**For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Manager of Media Relations & Marketing**

Direct Phone: (212) 547-6866  
Switchboard & extension: (212) 288-0700 x 866  
Fax: (212) 628-4417  
E-mail: [Rosenau@Frick.org](mailto:Rosenau@Frick.org)  
Website: www.frick.org