



**AN EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF LOUIS XIV AFTER
FRANÇOIS GIRARDON (1628-1715)**

Dimensions: H: 43.5 in / 107.5 cm | W: 37 in / 94 cm | D: 14.5 in / 37 cm

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An Equestrian Statue of Louis XIV
After François Girardon (1628-1715)

Cast in a dark patinated bronze, the statue depicts the Sun King as a Roman Emperor, and is signed to the side 'Girardon.'

French, circa 1880

The original 7 metres high monumental statue of Louis XIV once stood in the Place Louis-le-Grand (now the Place Vendôme) weighting over 30 tons. It was destroyed in 1792 during the turmoil of the post revolution years, with only the left foot and a single finger preserved in the Louvre. A 19th century version by Henry Dasso is also in the Louvre, dated 1876.

Literature:

Designed by the sculptor François Girardon, the statue was conceived as the centrepiece to the

square and was commissioned by Louis XIV's war minister the Marquis de Louvois in honour of the king and created by the architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart. Begun in 1685, the square and the statue were themselves created to outdo the magnificence of the nearby Place des Victoires which had similarly been commissioned (in this case by the Duc de La Feuillade) in honour of the king and created in 1679, this time with an equestrian centrepiece of the King by the sculptor Martin Desjardins.

Girardon worked on the model from 1685 to 1687 and depicted Louis XIV as a Roman emperor in the manner of antique classical statues albeit wearing a contemporary voluminous long curling wig. The king with lofty and imperial stance sits astride his mount with no saddle and stirrups to show the mastery of his horsemanship and his saddlecloth is edged with fleurs-de-lis whilst his horse tramples the sword and shield of a defeated enemy.