



Antique Charvet Mantel Clock. Ormolu. France, Circa 1900

3 950 EUR



Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Bronze

Width : 20 cms - 7.87 in

Height : 50 cms - 19.69 in

Depth : 20 cms - 7.87 in

Description

This magnificent French mantel set, dated around 1900, is a true decorative and mechanical treasure, composed of an extraordinary clock signed by Charvet Aîné & Cie and a pair of matching candelabra. The ensemble is crafted in gilt bronze with a white marble base and exquisitely represents the aesthetics of the Belle Époque period, blending academic sculptural language with refined ornamental details. The clock, the true centerpiece of the ensemble, features a fascinating sculptural design: three bronze children with expressive faces and graceful movement raise a large blue globe above their heads, symbolizing the night sky. Within this globe is the clock face, with Roman numerals and fine openwork filigree-style hands. The contrast between the intense blue and the gold

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creates a sublime effect in any setting. The blue enamel dial retains its original beauty, though it has some small areas of enamel loss that have been carefully touched up by hand. These details are barely visible to the naked eye, allowing the full splendor of the piece to be appreciated without distraction. Inside the globe lies a Paris movement signed by the renowned clockmaker Samuel Marti, awarded a bronze medal at the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition. This 7-day movement operates without a pendulum, making it especially practical for modern use without compromising on precision or timekeeping quality. The escapement system ensures greater stability and ease of use, avoiding the traditional balancing issues. Beneath the sculptures, on an octagonal white marble base adorned with gilt bronze garland appliqués, there is a plaque bearing the signature of the clockmaker L. Charvet Aîné & Cie of Lyon, adding collectible value by precisely identifying its original origin. Charvet Aîné & Cie was known for its meticulous work and its partnerships with top-tier clockmakers and bronze casters, confirming the exceptional standard of this piece. The candelabra accompanying the clock form an elegant diptych that visually frames the central scene. Each depicts a lively nude child holding an elaborate bouquet of golden branches topped with four candle arms arranged asymmetrically like open flowers and buds. This naturalistic, plant-inspired design recalls the compositions of late Rococo, though executed with a freer and more modernist style. The details of the leaves, stems and flowers are finely worked, and each candelabrum rests on a white marble base adorned with gilt garlands, visually echoing the central clock. This spectacular set is not only intended to be admired as a work of art, but also serves as a functional element within the home. It would make a magnificent acquisition for any lover of classical decoration and fine antiques, perfect for display on a chest, console or fireplace mantel. The synergy between sculpture, horology and

decoration makes this ensemble a valuable artistic investment with great historical and visual impact. A piece like this never goes unnoticed, its presence transforms any space by adding character, distinction and elegance. This set will not only embellish your home, it will also enrich your collection with a high-quality historical piece. Dimensions: Clock: 20 x 20 x 50 cm (7.87 x 7.87 x 19.69 in), Candelabra: 14.5 x 14.5 x 58.5 cm (5.71 x 5.71 x 23.03 in) History of Charvet Aîné & Cie Charvet Aîné & Cie was a distinguished French house active in the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century, specializing in high-end mantel clocks and objets d'art. Based in Lyon, the firm stood out for its connection with top manufacturers such as Samuel Marti, whose movements were used in many of its creations. Charvet Aîné acted as a distributor and guarantor of quality, offering clients pieces that combined the technical precision of clockmaking with exquisite decorative design, well aligned with the tastes of the upper bourgeoisie of the time. Samuel Marti, for his part, was one of the most influential clockmakers of his time. He founded his firm in 1860 and quickly gained international recognition for the quality of his movements and his prominent presence at world fairs. His company developed highly reliable mechanisms, such as this 7-day Paris movement, designed to function without a pendulum, which greatly simplified its installation in domestic environments. Marti received numerous awards for his innovation and excellence, confirming his reputation as one of the leading horologists of the period. The ensemble presented here, signed by Charvet Aîné and featuring a Samuel Marti movement, represents the kind of collaboration that characterized a golden age of French decorative clockmaking. Pieces like this testify to the refined taste of the time and to a level of craftsmanship that is now part of the history of European decorative arts.