



Pierre - Philippe Thomire - Rare Directory Period (1795-1799) Mantel Clock With Bacchus



13 500 EUR

Signature : Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751-1843)

Period : 18th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Bronze

Length : 44

Height : 57

Depth : 14.5

Description

See our website for more detailed photos: [LINK](#) We send this article worldwide, professionally packaged, with registered and fully insured shipping at a fair price. This remarkable museum-quality French Directory period mantel clock, depicting Bacchus, is attributed to the eminent bronzier Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751-1843). Dating from the final years of the 18th century, during the Directory period (1795-1799), this model is also held in the collections of the Musée Masséna in Nice and the Mobilier National in Paris. The clock is crafted in gilt and patinated bronze and features the Roman god Bacchus, unmistakably the work of a master bronzier such as Thomire. Known to the Greeks as Dionysus, Bacchus is the god of wine, theatre, and festivity. In mythology, he is often depicted

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bearing a thyrsus which is a staff entwined with ivy and vines and topped with a pine cone, symbolising fertility and abundance. Other attributes commonly associated with Bacchus include the panther, donkey, goat, ivy, vine, and bunches of grapes. Bacchus is shown seated atop the clock case, which rests on two patinated bronze rock formations. In his hand he holds a lyre, while additional musical instruments, including a pan flute and a tambourine, lie at his feet. The case itself is flanked by a panther's head and tail on either side, as well as an amphora for wine. The clock stands on an oval base with rounded ends, supported by six turned feet decorated with knurled detailing. The front of the base features an ornate bas-relief representing a Bacchic procession. Seated on the chariot is Ariadne, the mortal princess who became the consort of Dionysus in Greek mythology. Dionysus found her on the island of Naxos after she was abandoned by Theseus and made her his wife. The chariot is drawn by two panthers and led by a winged amour. They are accompanied by dancing and music-making bacchantes. This scene is framed by vertical vine motifs, while the ends of the base are adorned with palmettes and floral decoration. The time is indicated by finely worked gilt bronze hands, and the clock movement also includes a date display based on the French Republican calendar, used between 1793 and 1805. The enamel dial bears the signature "De Belle | Rue St. Honoré à Paris", referring to Jean-François De Belle. He became a master clockmaker in 1781 and operated from a workshop on Rue Saint-Honoré, at the corner of Rue de l'Arbre-Sec, from 1787 to 1800. A respected figure in his time, De Belle's name appears in numerous contemporary almanacs. During the French Revolution, he served on the jury responsible for assessing the adaptation of clocks and watches to the decimal time system introduced on 24 November 1793. De Belle was also renowned for his work with automaton clocks. Today, examples of his work can be

found in the Royal Spanish Collections in Madrid and at the Musée National du Château de Fontainebleau. The clock features an eight-day movement with a wire suspension pendulum and a twin-barrel mechanism, striking the hours and half-hours on a bell via a count wheel. This Directory period clock, attributed to Thomire, is preserved in exceptional condition, retaining its original mercury gilding. The movement is in perfect working order and has been recently serviced by a professional clock maker. It is sold complete with its pendulum, winding key, and bell. Origin: Paris, Directory period 1795-1799. Dimensions: Height 57 cm (22.4''); Width 44 cm (17.3''); Depth 14.5 cm (5.7''). Literature- Collection Mobilier National, Paris, inventory number GML-4591-000.- Collection of the Masséna Museum in Nice.- Tardy, "La pendule française" II, p. 360.- Elke Niehüser, "French Bronze Clocks", p.221 #511.- Tardy, "Dictionnaire des horlogers français", p. 158.