



19th Century Napoleon III Mantel Clock



9 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Width : 52 cm

Height : 65 cm

Depth : 25 cm

Description

Exceptional Gilt and Patinated Bronze Mantel Clock with Malachite Inlays, Charles X / Early Louis-Philippe Period, Circa 1825-1835. This magnificent mantel clock, masterfully executed in a refined neoclassical style, dates from the transitional period between the last years of the French Restoration (Charles X) and the dawn of the reign of Louis-Philippe. It embodies the enduring fascination with classical antiquity that pervaded the French decorative arts, even as new artistic sensibilities were beginning to emerge. The clock stands on a substantial and elegantly proportioned base, sumptuously veneered with vibrant turquoise malachite. This highly prized mineral, renowned for its captivating concentric patterns and intense coloration, creates a striking visual contrast with the metalwork. Although

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ancient beliefs attribute air-purifying and protective properties to malachite, its primary appeal in the decorative arts lies in its unparalleled aesthetic richness, frequently used in objects intended for the most discerning collectors. The clock's upper register, serving as a dramatic backdrop to its principal figures, is superbly crafted in dark brown patinated bronze, a deliberate choice to provide a profound visual depth that accentuates the vivid gilt-bronze elements. This dark bronze forms a robust and dignified base upon which stand two captivating allegorical gilt-bronze figures. The composition depicts a poignant scene: a male figure, rendered with profound anatomical accuracy, kneels in a gesture of homage and admiration before a regal female figure. She sits in a pose imbued with regal grace and authority, her bearing exuding an air of contemplative beauty. The lifelike quality of their rendering is truly remarkable; Their facial expressions are meticulously sculpted, conveying a narrative depth that transcends mere decoration. This painting likely depicts an allegorical scene of devotion to a muse, an ideal, or perhaps a personification of a virtue. The contours of the plinth and various architectural elements are exquisitely adorned with finely crafted gilt-bronze inlays, showcasing the craftsman's mastery in this demanding medium. These intricate motifs include classical elements such as graceful anthemions (palmettes) and scrolling acanthus leaves, meticulously integrated into the design. In addition, the lower corners of the main pedestal are dynamically embellished with two proudly rearing dragons, symbolizing strength and protection, a motif that adds a captivating layer of symbolism and visual interest. The enameled dial presents a clear and elegant time display. It features finely drawn Roman numerals for the hours and precise Arabic numerals for the minutes, encircled by a fine minute track. The two exquisite gilt bronze hands are fashioned in an elegant leaf pattern, emphasizing the clock's overall refinement and nobility. Condition: This

magnificent timepiece is presented in excellent original condition, retaining its remarkably well-preserved original mercury gilding, which displays a rich, warm patina consistent with its age. Minor wear is commensurate with its historical use and venerable age. The integrity of the malachite plating and bronze mounts remains exceptional.