Empire Style Mantel Clock



2 625 EUR

Signature : FERDINAND BERTHOUD À PARIS

Period : 19th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Bronze

Width : 31 cm

Height : 38 cm

Depth : 10 cm

Description

Exceptionally rare and historically significant, this gilt bronze mantel clock, made in Paris at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, bears witness to a pivotal period in horological advancement and artistic evolution, bearing the prestigious signature of 'Ferdinand Berthoud à Paris'. This striking clock boldly reinterprets classical forms with a growing interest in historical romanticism, a fascinating development in post-revolutionary French decorative arts. On its rectangular case, a finely chased bronze troubadour, resplendent in medieval attire, is depicted playing the flute, an "aria called 'Du Troubadour'" resting delicately on the clock's surface. This evocative figure, a medieval French musician known for composing and performing lyric poetry for the nobility, offers a direct link to the intellectual curiosities of

Dealer

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the early 19th century and the rediscovery of medieval civilization. Complementing this central figure, a beautifully rendered gilt-bronze lute or hurdy-gurdy rests on a small stool on the opposite side of the clock case, enriching the musical narrative. The immaculate white enamel dial proudly bears the famous "Berthoud" inscription, framed by a bronze surround meticulously engraved with a delicate palmette motif, itself surrounded by elegant C-scrolls and wreaths. The original blued-steel hands gracefully indicate the hours with Roman numerals and the minutes with Arabic numerals. The hexagonal base supporting this magnificent composition is adorned with exquisite reliefs. These depict two classical fountains or water basins on either side, framing a prominent lyre. The carved image of the lyre, raised above the background, is further embellished with garlands of foliage, tied at the top with exquisite ribbons, adding layers of symbolic and decorative richness. The clock sits securely on seven elegantly rotating feet. This piece not only illustrates the artistic liberty taken by bronze makers during the 1790s, enabled by the freedom of trade of the French Revolution and the rise of large integrated manufactories, but also reflects the gradual evolution of case designs towards a more Baroque and Renaissance-inspired style during the Empire, away from strict Classicism. Condition Report: This splendid clock is presented in an excellent state of preservation and is in perfect working order. We are pleased to confirm that the timepiece has recently undergone a thorough cleaning and service by a professional watchmaker, ensuring its exceptional performance and longevity.Movement Details: The robust eight-day power reserve movement features a traditional wire-suspended balance. It accurately strikes the hour and half-hour on its original bell with a clear sound. The clock is offered complete with its period balance, winding key, and striking bell.This Empire clock is a remarkable collector's item, merging the pinnacle

of horological precision from the esteemed Berthoud workshop with a unique and historically resonant artistic narrative.