



## 19th Century Louis XV Mantel Clock - Id: 844371



2 500 EUR

Signature : HENRI & PICARD

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bronze

Width : 39 cm

Height : 45 cm

Depth : 16 cm

### Description

This exceptionally rare and captivating mantel clock, executed in the highly sought-after Empire style, is a magnificent early 19th-century piece, presenting a truly enchanting tableau dedicated to the eternal theme of viticulture and joy. Bearing the esteemed signature of an unrecorded master, this model demonstrates exquisite craftsmanship and sophisticated artistic vision, reminiscent of the finest bronzes produced during the Directoire and early Imperial periods. The Empire style (circa 1800-1815), which flourished under Napoleon Bonaparte, was a deliberate adoption of classical Greco-Roman antiquity, seeking to evoke the grandeur and authority of ancient Rome. This aesthetic permeated all forms of decorative arts, from furniture to sculpture and, significantly, horology. Clocks of this period

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were not mere timepieces, but important sculptural works, often depicting mythological figures, historical allegories, or scenes from classical literature. The use of sumptuous materials such as patinated bronze, gilded ormolu, and fine marbles became the hallmark of the style, reflecting the imperial ambitions and refined taste of the time. The meticulously composed scene unfolds with an elegantly rendered figure of a Bacchante, a handmaid of Bacchus (Dionysus in Greek mythology), the god of wine, ecstasy, and joy. Depictions of Bacchantes, often in states of ecstatic frenzy or relaxed abandon, were popular in classical art and experienced a significant revival during the Neoclassical and Empire periods. They symbolized the intoxicating power of nature, freedom, and uninhibited celebration, aligning perfectly with the era's appreciation for classical beauty and mythological narrative. Here, she sits gracefully in a relaxed pose, adorned with lush vine patterns in her hair, symbolizing abundance and prosperity. Her attention is captivated by a tambourine, held aloft as if in anticipation of a celebratory beat, a common attribute of the Bacchae used in their ecstatic dances. She leans with elegant casualness against a barrel, which overflows with meticulously carved bunches of grapes, further evoking themes of a bountiful harvest and joyous revelry. The immaculate white alabaster dial, subtly integrated into the composition, is discreetly positioned in the base, adding to the visual harmony of the scene without disrupting its narrative. Other architectural elements enrich the composition's depth and elegance. The alabaster base itself is a work of art, sumptuously adorned with precise gilt bronze scrollwork, classical masks, and acanthus leaves, creating a harmonious interplay of form and function. These decorative motifs were essential to the Empire style, drawing directly from ancient Roman friezes and architectural ornament.

Condition Report: This splendid clock is in perfect condition, demonstrating both meticulous

original craftsmanship and exceptional subsequent conservation. As a testament to its superb quality, it has recently undergone a thorough cleaning and comprehensive service by a specialist in the conservation of antique timepieces, ensuring its continued functionality, accuracy, and longevity. Movement Details: The clock retains its original mechanism, featuring an eight-day power reserve. It strikes precisely on the hour and half-hour on its antique bell, producing a clear, resonant sound. The clock is offered complete with its period pendulum and winding key. This remarkable Empire mantel clock is more than just a timepiece; it is a significant sculptural work that embodies the artistic and cultural spirit of its time. Its complex narrative, combined with its exceptional craftsmanship and historical context within the flourishing Empire period, make it a truly unparalleled acquisition, destined to be a focal point in any discerning collection.