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19th Century Mantel Clock



5 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Brass

Width : 36 cm

Height : 53 cm

Depth : 13 cm

Description

We are honored to present this magnificent mantel clock, an exceptional example of early 19th-century French craftsmanship, dating from the reigns of Louis-Philippe and Charles X. This sumptuous timepiece embodies a perfect fusion of elegance, sophistication and deep historical richness, reflecting the enduring taste for neoclassicism and precious materials.Greatness of the Empire Style and Classical Symbolism:Although produced during the reigns of Louis-Philippe and Charles X, this clock is firmly rooted in the aesthetics of the Empire style, a current that marked the apogee of French neoclassicism. This style is characterized by clean lines, direct references to Greco-Roman antiquity and the use of noble materials. The central composition features a masterful figure of a

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muse, most likely Clio, the muse of history, holding an inscribed tablet. This allegorical iconography is highly representative of the decorative arts of this period, underlining the importance of knowledge, the arts and historical commemoration in the collective imagination.Noble Materials and Master Craftsmanship:The opulence of this clock is magnified by the expert use of gilt bronze (ormolu) and malachite, two of the most prized materials of the period. Gilded bronze is used with admirable mastery to shape the figure of the muse, the lyre symbolizing music, and the intricate ornamentation, revealing the perfection of casting and chasing. Malachite, with its concentric bands of deep, vibrant greens, provides a sumptuous, chromatically rich base, much sought-after for its exotic beauty and its often distant origin (notably from Russian deposits in the Urals), which made it a sign of great luxury. The intricate details, such as the lyre work and decorative elements, are finely chased, attesting to the exceptional skill of the bronze craftsmen of this period.Historical context: The Louis-Philippe and Charles X Period:This clock is part of a pivotal period in French history. After the fall of Napoleon I and the end of the First Empire, France experienced a period of monarchical Restoration under Louis XVIII and then Charles X, followed by the establishment of the July Monarchy under Louis-Philippe. This era was marked by a revival of the decorative arts, where, despite the political upheavals, a deep attachment to the sources of Antiquity and a penchant for refined luxury persisted. The Empire style, born of Napoleon's desire for an imperial aesthetic, continued to influence furniture and objets d'art, adapting to the tastes of the new bourgeois and aristocratic elites. This clock is a perfect example, combining imperial grandeur with a more nuanced elegance.