

# *La Pendulerie*



**Thomire - Lamiral - Coteau**

**Rare Gilt Bronze and Rouge Griotte Marble Antique Mantel Clock “The Sacrifice to Love”,  
Louis XVI period**

Lamiral

Enamel Dial by Joseph Coteau (1740-1812)

Case Attributed to Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751-1843)

Paris, late Louis XVI period, circa 1790

Height 46 cm; width 43 cm; depth 13.5 cm

The round enamel dial, adorned with polychrome motifs, is signed “Lamiral à Paris”; it indicates the hours in Roman numerals and the fifteen-minute intervals in Arabic numerals, by means of two pierced gilt bronze hands. The date is indicated by a blued steel hand. The superb case is of finely chased gilt bronze and Italian red griotte marble. The movement is housed in a case modelled as an antique temple, supported by four griffons and adorned with ram’s heads in the upper corners. Surmounting the clock, a flaming brazier rests upon a moulded terrace decorated with a finely fluted motif. On either side of the altar stand two priestesses in long antique palla; one, with outstretched hands, is playing the trumpet; the other holds a bird in her hands as she prepares to offer it as a sacrifice. The whole rests upon a red griotte Italian marble base with diagonally fluted sides; it is richly ornamented with chased gilt bronze mounts, trophies of arms and ewers and three beribboned flower wreaths linked by bird-inhabited branches. The base rests upon a white statuary marble plinth and is raised upon eight finely gadrooned toupie feet.

## **HISTORICAL**

The unusual design of this clock, and in particular the flaming altar supported by griffons, is inspired by preparatory drawings done by several Parisian designers of the late 18th century, and notably a drawing by Jean-Démosthène Dugourc (1749-1825) representing a plan for andirons in the form of griffons with a flaming altar. The piece was intended for the Count de Provence, brother of Louis XVI (sold in Paris, Me Renaud, Hôtel Drouot, June 3, 1988, lot 85). The rarity of the model and the quality of its chasing and gilding allow it to be attributed to Pierre-Philippe Thomire. Thomire created several other clocks based on the theme—quite rare—of priestesses or vestals. Among these, one example

was delivered by Robin in 1788 to Marie-Antoinette's Cabinet des Bains in the Tuileries Palace; it is today in the Paris Musée des Arts décoratifs (illustrated in P. Verlet, *Les bronzes dorés français du XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, 1999, p. 326); a second example is illustrated in P. Kjellberg, *Encyclopédie de la pendule française du Moyen Age au XXe siècle*, Paris, 1997, p. 336.

**Artist description:**

Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1757-1843)

Having become a master founder on May 18, 1772, he was the most important Parisian bronzier of the first quarter of the 18th century and the early years of the following century. Initially he worked for Pierre Gouthière, chaser-founder to the king, and as of the mid-1770s he worked with Louis Prieur. He later became one of the official bronziers of the Royal Sèvres Factory, creating bronze he bought the stock of Martin-Eloi Lignereux and became the main supplier of bronze furnishings for the imperial palaces. He also had a number of wealthy several of Napoleon's marshals. He retired in the mid-1820s and died in 1843.