

La Pendulerie



Breguet - Thomire

Rare Patinated and Burnished Gilt Bronze Antique Mantle Clock, Empire-Restoration period
Breguet Neveu et Cie N°2833

The patinated bronze putto figure by Pierre-Philippe Thomire

Paris, Empire-Restoration period

Height 50.5 cm; base 16.8 cm x 16.8 cm

The round silvered metal dial, signed "Breguet" and numbered "2833", indicates the Roman numeral hours and the outermost minutes graduations by means of two blued steel Breguet hands. It is housed in a drum case whose bezel is adorned with bead friezes, and is supported by a child who is wearing draperies and is kneeling on one knee. The stepped circular base, placed on a quadrangular plinth, is decorated with a stylized laurel torus.

HISTORICAL

According to the archives of the Breguet firm, the most famous horological firm in Europe during the 19th century, the exceptionally well chased bronze putto was purchased by the Maison Breguet in 1813 from Pierre-Philippe Thomire, the most famous bronze caster of the time. This very unusual clock model, with its perfectly balanced design, was produced by the Maison Breguet beginning in the Empire period; only five examples were made. Today only a very few examples are known to exist. One

gilt bronze clock, whose dial is signed "Breguet et Fils", was sold by Antiquorum in Genève on November 14, 2004, lot 87. A second example is illustrated in Tardy, *La pendule française*, 2ème Partie: du Louis XVI à nos jours, Paris, 1974, p. 396, fig. 3. One further such clock, which was described in January 1827 at the sale of the collection of Baron Dominique Vivant-Denon: "860. A small clock by Breguet; it is supported by a half-kneeling child; a pretty bronze figure that is very carefully chased and is gilt in heavy gold ducat gilding (or de ducat). This charming model, which was modeled by the late M. Van-Vaeyenberg, has been cast only five times. Height 17 inches".

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.