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LOUIS XVI ORMOLU AND WHITE MARBLE MANTEL CLOCK
THE MOVEMENT BY RENACLE-NICOLAS SOTIAU,
CIRCA 1780-85

Of impressive scale, the circular glazed white-enamelled dial with Roman and Arabic numerals signed 'Sotiau A PARIS' and twin-barrel movement within a floral-garlanded case surmounted by a leaf-wrapped urn finial with fruiting foliate finial, on ram monopodiae supports, flanked by acanthus-wrapped volute scrolls decorated with flowerheads, on a stepped rectangular breakfront plinth base with beaded edge, centred by a panel decorated with scrolling acanthus, on turned feet, with further laurel trails to the volute scrolls.

The design for this clock was traditionally attributed to the fondeur François Vion. This celebrated model is however perhaps most famously remembered for having been in the collection of Marie-Antoinette and in the apartments of Madame Victoire, daughter of Louis XV, at Versailles where not one but two virtually identical versions of this clock once stood.

An almost identical clock by Vion with mounts chased by Jean-Claude Thomas Duplessis is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Further closely related clocks, formerly in the French and Swedish Royal Collections are recorded, among which a related example at Drottningholm (B. von Malmberg, Slott Voch Herresten i Sverige, *De Kungliga Slotten, Malmö*, 1971, pp. 160, 213) and a pendule executed by the horloger du Roi, Robert Robin (1742-1799), in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris (ill. P. Verlet, *Les Bronzes dorés Français du XVIIIè siècle*, 1987, p.313, fig. 344, and in H. Ottomeyer, P. Pröschel, et al., *Vergoldete Bronzen*, Munich, 1986, vol. I, p. 226, fig. 4.1.2). Among related examples sold at auction, a virtually identical clock signed Sotiau A Paris and G. Merlet, formerly in the Seligman Collection, was sold at Christies', New York, 2 November 2000, lot 157 (\$64,625 with premium).

Renacle-Nicolas Sotiau (1749-1791), maître horloger in 1782.

One of the most prolific Parisian clockmakers of the 1780s, Sotiau collaborated extensively with the marchand-merciers Darnault and Daguerre on commissions from such illustrious clients as Louis XVI, Marie-Antoinette, Mesdames Victoire and Adelaïde, daughters of Louis XV, the duc de Polignac and the Prince Regent, later George IV, King of England. Cases by François Rémond and Pierre-Philippe Thomire were often employed by Sotiau in his productions.

Measurements:

Height:	25 in	64 cm
Width:	20 in	51 cm
Depth:	8 in	20 cm