

FRANK PARTRIDGE

A Late 18TH Century Paris Biscuit Porcelain Clock By Piolaine

Circa 1790

18 x 8 x 17.5 in high (46 x 20 x 44 cm high)

The white enamelled clock face with Roman numerals, surrounded by an engraved ormolu band inset into a biscuit porcelain case, on two gilt bronze turned legs. On the right side stands Venus looking over her sleeping son Cupid. The biscuit base with a gilt bronze plaque in the centre of Cherubs making music and with gilt bronze kissing doves on stands on either side. Resting on six turned gilt bronze feet. Signed on the dial Piolaine A Paris.

The iconography of the composition has also strong ties to the Annunciation with the Archangel Gabriel having a message for the Virgin Mary.

An identical clock with a different base is at the Chateau De Versailles on the second floor of Marie Antoinette's private apartments . It was donated by Duchesse de Massa in 1965 as virtually all of the original contents were auctioned off at the Revolution and dispersed.

Piolaine:

Piolaine was a popular maker and became a Master in 1787. He was among the most important of the last quarter of 18th century and of the first half of the 19th century. He became a maître in August 11, 1787, and set up his studio on Rue Ecrivains and was thought to have moved to rue des Gravilliers in 1810, (see Tardy, Dictionary Parisian watchmakers, Paris, 1971, p.523). He disappeared around 1815 and his widow seems to continue the workshop activity between 1817 and 1820.