

JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

Le Quatuor Favori

JEAN-JACQUES BACHELIER

Sold



Description

Circle of JEAN JACQUES BACHELIER 1724-1806 French School Le Quatuor Favori Oil on canvas 80 x 115 cms 31½ x 45¼ inches

Jean Jacques Bachelier is best known now as a precise and accomplished painter of still-life and animals and one of the foremost followers in that tradition to the important Jean Baptiste Oudry. However that overlooks his significant contribution to the concept of social education when he inaugurated a free school for artisans.

He was born in Paris in 1724 and was a pupil of the history painter Jean Baptiste Pierre and was admitted to L'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture in 1752, establishing a reputation as a flower painter and he exhibited regularly at the Salon between 1751 and 1767. He gained favour at court and was commissioned to paint a number of decorative works for royal chateaux which gained him renown as well as financial reward.

In 18th century France, to be truly admired as a painter, an artist had to produce history paintings and he succeeded in that endeavour when he was admitted to the Académie with his "La Mort d'Abel" in 1763, followed a year later by "Cimon en Prison".

However his still life work was not restricted to paintings on canvas as he became a director at the Sèvres porcelain factory, producing many designs for the biscuit ware. While he was there, he became struck by the level of ineptitude of the workers: they displayed only a tenuous grasp of the rigours of layout, design and drawing. He concluded that this was a result of poor tuition and resolved to amend matters by setting up a school for artisans working in industrial design.

In 1766, he obtained letters patent from the king for the establishment of L'École Royale Gratuite de Dessin situated in the Rue Saint André des Arts. Ten years later, it relocated to the old École de Chirurgie in Rue de l'École de Médecine. He funded all this enterprise himself, investing his entire fortune in the venture.

However, this philanthropic gesture did not garner complete support. Diderot wrote: "This is a fairly good artist hopelessly lost, he forsook the title and functions of the Academy to be a schoolmaster; he preferred money to honour".

Bachelier designed a series of corbels and floral ornaments which were later engraved by Pierre Philippe Choffard and he wrote a treatise "L'Histoire et le secret de la peinture sur la cire". In 1786, he became director of L'Académie de peinture de Marseilles before dying in Paris on 13th April 1806.

Museums where his work can be seen include: Amiens, Angers, Brest, Lyons, Marseilles and Tours.