JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

Venus and Cupid

GEORGE ARNALD A.R.A.

£ POA



REF: 374804

Height: 35 cm (13.8")

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Width: 45.5 cm (17.9")

Framed Height: 44.3 cm (17.4")

Framed Width: 55 cm (21.7")

Description

GEORGE ARNALD A.R.A.
English School
1763-1841

Venus and Cupid

Oil on panel
35 x 45.5 cms133/4 x 177/8 inchesOverall framed size 44.3 x 55 cms 17½ x 215/8 ins

George Arnald was predominantly a landscape painter in the old English manner whose numerous exhibited works (176 at the Royal Academy, 63 at the British Institute and 5 at the Society of Artists) included many fine paintings.

He was born in Farndip in Northamptonshire (although some sources claim that he hailed from Berkshire and indeed Farndip, which is now called Farndish, is in the county of Bedfordshire) in 1763. There is very little known of his early life but it is thought that he worked as a domestic servant prior to becoming apprenticed to the studio of the landscape painter William Pether (c.1738-1821).

Arnald specialised in landscapes both in oils and watercolours which sometimes, upon first sight, seem imbued with almost sombre tones, but which upon closer inspection reveal that they are infused with fine subdued colour. He was at his best in his smaller works which were often done as illustrations to topographical publications and magazines and some of these works were produced on paper. Grant says of him "Many of these glow with bright but always tempered tint laid on with a richness unseen in the larger canvases".

He exhibited at the Royal Academy for the first time in 1788 with a work bearing the title "Scene from Nature". Examples of other works shown at the RA and BI include: "Diana and Actaeon", "Pyramus and Thisbe", "Three Spaniels belonging to Mr Nowel", "Effect on the sea shore at Aldborough", "View of London from Greenwich Park", "Bay of Naples", "A view of Paris from Montmartre", "The Army under Cromwell marching to Winchester" and "Group of flowers from the garden of the painter."

His illustration work included among others: "The New British Traveller" by Thomas Dugdale, "The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland by Sir Walter Scott and "The History and Topography of the County of Essex" by Thomas Wright. Arnald also published his own album of views of the River Meuse and its environs in 1828 and in 1839 published "A practical treatise on landscape painting in oil: illustrated by various diagrams and with two original studies in oil painted on the principles given in the treatise"

He never gained full membership of the Royal Academy partly due to a mutual antipathy with some of the Academicians, notably the important and influential Sir Thomas Lawrence. There might have been an element of intellectual snobbery at play also as evinced by a conversation between one of the founders of the National Gallery and the British Institution and talented amateur landscape artist, Sir George Beaumont and the poet William Wordsworth where the latter said of Arnald: "... would have been a better Painter, if his Genius had led him to read more in the early part of his life. . . . I do not think it possible to excel in landscape painting ...

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