Victor Orsel - Studies Of Hands



2 400 EUR

Signature : André Victor ORSEL (Oullins, Rhône 1795 - Paris 1850)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Paper

Length : 295 x 227 mm

Description

Study of hands Dome of the Chapel of the Virgin in the Church of Notre Dame de Lorette in Paris Circa 1840 - Graphite, gray wash Two stamps from the artist's studio next to each hand An orphan baptized after the Terror, Victor Orsel was raised in a cultured Catholic environment and an aesthete that contributed to the blossoming of his artistic talent. In 1809, he joined the École des Beaux-Arts in Lyon directed by Pierre Révoil. In 1815, he went to the Louvre and discovered with wonder the delicate and fervent palettes of Le Sueur, Poussin, Leonardo and Raphael. His vocation as a religious painter was born. After following the teaching of the neoclassical painter Guérin in Paris, Orsel stayed in Rome from 1822 to 1831 in the company of Alphonse Périn. He also became friends with the group of German

Dealer

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Nazarenes and became particularly close to Overbeck, with whom he shared a new vision of Christian art. The artist was impressed by Raphael's Stanze, especially the fresco of the Blessed Sacrament, the very one his Romantic contemporaries considered too Gothic. He also visited ancient Christian basilicas, whose Byzantine mosaics fascinated him. In Rome, Pisa, and Florence, he admired and passionately studied Fra Angelico, Giotto, Andrea Orcagna, and Perugino. In 1832, the July Monarchy called upon the most brilliant artistic talents of his time to adorn the walls of the new church of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, recently built between 1824 and 1836, and whose plan, designed by the architect Hippolyte Lebas, was inspired by the Romanesque basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. Back in the French capital, Victor Orsel was commissioned to decorate the chapel of the Litanies of the Virgin. Rectangular in plan and crowned with a barrel vault, the artist followed an early Christian iconographic program, where the degree of wall elevation of each figure symbolizes its spiritual elevation. The iconographic program is particularly rare and refined. It represents the Litanies of the Virgin, which is a prayer invoking the Virgin and her blessings in very short sentences. The Virgin is thus represented by theme of mercy on four spandrels: "Auxilium Christianorum" (The Help of Christians), "Refugium Pecatorum" (The Refuge of Fishermen), "Salus Infirmorum" (The Health of the Sick), or "Consolatrix Afflictorum" (The Consoler of the Afflicted). Forced to wait three years after designing the iconography due to the presence of saltpeter on the walls, the artist opted for the mystical technique of encaustic, "the technique of Christian art par excellence." Our drawing, preparatory to the joined hands of a figure praying at the left knee of the Virgin (Ill. 1) for Our Lady of Loreto, constitutes a graphic testimony to the artist's complete journey: "From this chapel alone, Orsel made a name for himself that will not perish. He had two great gifts that

heaven reserved for true painters: the gift of expression and harmonious line. This chapel is as sweet to the eye as it is fertile in thought; it is the unctuous tenderness of the Umbrian school united with the accuracy and measure of the French spirit." Bibliography: Foucart, B. (1987). The Revival of Religious Painting in France (1800-1860), Arthena.Vitet, L. (1853) La Revue des Deux MondesLa Tribune de l'Art, Didier Rykner, article from Monday October 12, 2020, Restoration of the Orsel Chapel at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette