



## Bernardo Canal (1674-1744)

45 000 EUR



Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

### Description

Bernardo Canal (1674-1744) View of the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore Oil on canvas 57 x 73 cm Review by Prof. Dario Succi This evocative, luminous view, depicting the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore, is the work of BERNARDO CANAL (Venice 1674-1744), father of the famous Antonio Canal, known as Canaletto, with whom he worked as a respected set designer in the most important theaters of Venice and Rome between 1716 and 1720. Recorded as "painter" in his son's baptismal certificate Antonio (October 17, 1697), Bernardo Canal was registered in the registers of the Venetian painters' guild in 1717 and 1737-1743. On 28 December 1739 he was elected to the position of Prior of the College of Painters, of which he was a member, obtaining a recognition that seems to foreshadow the

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enjoyment of considerable prestige. By Bernardo Canal, who had fallen into oblivion for over two centuries, not a single painting was known until Giuseppe Fiocco, on the occasion of the exhibition *Pittura Veneta. Prima mostra d'arte antica delle collezione privati venete* (Venice 1947, p. 12, nn. 71-72), made public two views bearing the inscription "Bernardo Canal fecit 1735" on the back of the original canvas. The two paintings were part of a series of five Venetian views formerly conserved in the Palazzo Salom in Venice and later moved by the Salom family to the Villa Mansi near Segromigno Monte (Lucca). The other three views, published by Rodolfo Pallucchini in 1969 (in the article "Notes on Venetian veduism" in the magazine "Muzeum i Tworka", Warsaw) also included the view of Piazza San Marco towards San Geminiano, which constitutes one of the fundamental reference points in the reconstruction of the artist's pictorial itinerary due to the inscription on the back of the original canvas "Bernardo Canal fecit 1734" (the painting was reproduced in color in the catalog of the exhibition, curated by me, Luca Carlevarijs and the Venetian view of the Eighteenth Century, Palazzo della Ragione, Padua, 1994, p. 259). For other contributions of mine on the artist, see the essay "Bernardo Canal: scenographer and vedutista" in the catalog of the exhibition *From Canaletto to Zuccarelli, the landscape Eighteenth-Century Veneto* (Villa Manin, Udine, 2003, pp. 168-173) and the entries in the volume *Il fiore di Venezia | Paintings from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century in Private Collections* (2014, pp. 180-186).

Bernardo Canal is an artist whose pictorial production is now easily identifiable, not only for its distinctive stylistic and chromatic qualities, but also by comparison with other signed and dated views that have resurfaced in recent years. These works are characterized by a diffuse luminosity that perfectly encapsulates the painter's expressive talents throughout the various phases of his artistic career. Bernardo Canal's works are

characterized by an accurate, yet not lenticular, rendering of architectural elements, by the pearly blues of skies crossed by zigzagging cumulus clouds, and by the rounded contours impressed in the manner of speckles inspired by the models of Canaletto or Richter. The painting studied here depicts the Basin of San Marco with the church of San Giorgio Maggiore, seen from the top of the bulbous bell tower, whose renovation (replacing the previous inverted cone) was completed in 1727. The interplay of light, based on cool tones, is particularly striking, with the church's façade reflected in the lagoon waters bustling with boats of various kinds and brightly dressed rowers. A stylistically similar but smaller view (17 x 25 cm), depicting the entire complex of the island of San Giorgio Maggiore from a slightly right-angled perspective, was published in my book "Il fiore di Venezia" (2014, p. 186) along with its companion piece, "The Church of Santa Maria della Salute." The painting studied here, characterized by a subtle play of light and shade underneath, the sky moved by the typical zigzagging clouds, constitutes a notable document of the productive activity of the Venetian master datable around the 1730s.