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Pierre Duval Lecamus (1790-1854) Little Chimney Sweep Sitting In The Snow - Child Portrait



6 800 EUR

Signature : Pierre Duval Lecamus

Period : 19th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 21,5 cm hors cadre

Width : 16,5 cm hors cadre

Description

Pierre DUVAL LECAMUS(Lisieux 1790 - Saint-Cloud 1854) Little chimney sweep seated in the snow Oil on canvas H. 21.5 cm; L. 16.5 cm Circa 1819 Exhibition: very probably Salon de Lille of 1822, under number 175, titled A little Savoyard eating his bread Related works:- Copy made in 1824 and kept at the Château de Daubeuf until 2013- Painting exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1824, number 620, titled A Little Savoyard, and acquired by the Duchess of Berry. The composition also represents a small Savoyard eating his bread, but standing. A pupil of Claude Gautherot and Jacques-Louis David from 1808, Duval Lecamus was one of the main representatives of the genre scene under the Restoration and the July Monarchy, exhibiting continuously and successfully at the Salons from

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1817 to 1853, not only in Paris but also a lot in the Provinces. His meticulous and slick workmanship, inspired by the Nordic artists of the 17th century, corresponds perfectly to the tastes of the Duchess of Berry and the Duke of Orléans (future Louis-Philippe), and ranks him in the same sphere of artists such as: Boilly, Drolling, Grenier de Saint-Martin, Mallet, Roehn, Haudebourg-Lescot or Pingret. A relatively common practice among artists, he had attached to his name (Duval), and this from 1817, that of his wife (married in 1813), who belonged to a milieu much higher than his own, in order to open doors in terms of clientele, but also to avoid confusion with another painter, Eustache-François Duval (1760-1836). Founder of the museum of Lisieux and a time mayor of Saint-Cloud where he spent the end of his life, he had a son, Jules-Alexandre (1814-1878), who also had a fine career as a painter. His works can be found in many French museums but also at the Hermitage in Saint-Petersburg, or at the Clark Art Institute (USA). Pierre Duval Lecamus had two specialties: - Full-length portraits of elegant models, against a landscape background, small format and brilliant and refined execution. - The scenes of genre, interior or of peasant and popular inspiration (peasants, hunters, sailors...), just as precise in their technique. It is to this last category that our painting belongs, and in particular to the theme of the little Savoyard chimney sweeps, which Duval Lecamus treated on numerous occasions at the beginning of his career, and to which Jessica Volet, a specialist in the artist, devoted a detailed article. The work can be associated with that of the Narbonne museum, titled *Un petit ramoneur*, of almost identical dimensions and also unsigned, which can be dated to 1818/1819, the composition being indeed faithfully described in an inventory of 1819 of the merchant Alphonse Giroux. The Narbonne painting and ours were copied by the Marquise Georgine de Portes, copies offered on December 24, 1824 to her uncle Marquis d'Aligre, owner of

the Château de Daubeuf in Seine-Maritime, and kept in this place until the sale of the furniture of the castle in 2013. The copies are of the same dimensions as the originals. One (probably the reworking of Narbonne) is dated 1820; the other (probably ours) is dated 1824. Our painting could therefore have been executed at the same period (1818/1819) as the little chimney sweep of Narbonne (especially since, like him, he is neither signed nor date). But it could also have been made around 1822, when it was probably exhibited in Lille. However, it cannot be completely ruled out that the painting in Lille is the same as the one exhibited in Paris in 1824 and acquired by the Duchess of Berry. Our painting is both portrait, genre scene and social image. The young chimney sweep indeed seems to be photographed by the artist and in interaction with the spectator who would have "stumbled upon" him at the corner of a street, naturally meeting his slightly sad but dignified gaze for a few seconds; he takes advantage of a moment of pause to taste his piece of bread, the movement of the cut being particularly precise; the artist details the utensils of his activity: the broom, the soot squeegee, the hat, the leather knee pads to move in the chimney flues, the tarpaulin, the studded shoes, and introduces some picturesque elements such as the posters or terminal ; the simplicity of the food, the snow and the cold as well as the absence of shelter or human life, reflect the difficult and solitary existence of these little chimney sweeps. In the spirit and dress of chimney sweeps, our canvas is similar to that of Claude-Marie Dubufe (1790-1864), friend of Duval Lecamus, dated 1820, exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1822, and preserved today. at the Grenoble Museum.