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Portrait Of A Dog (1856) By Louis Godefroy Jadin (1805-1882) - Dedicated To Hector Lefuel



2 750 EUR

Signature : Louis Godefroy Jadin (1802-1882)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 30

Height : 38

Description

An exceptional portrait of a terrier-type dog dating from the Second Empire period (1856), painted by the famous imperial animal painter Louis Godefroy Jadin (1805-1882). The work is mounted on its original oval oak panel, set in a period gilded wood frame. This painting boasts a prestigious historical provenance and impeccable traceability. On the right side of the panel, the artist has inscribed a personal dedication in his own hand: "To my friend Lefuel / G. Jadin / 1856" This inscription directly links the work to Hector Lefuel (1810-1880), the eminent chief architect appointed by Emperor Napoleon III to oversee the monumental project of completing the Louvre Palace and the Tuileries. Given the close friendship that bound the two men at court, the animal depicted was most likely Lefuel's own

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faithful companion. The reverse side of the wooden panel preserves a valuable handwritten archival label from the period detailing the family genealogy. This label traces the work's history from Lefuel's home through his son-in-law's family (the Hochon family), while also noting the presence of works by Jadin in the national collections of the Musée de Compiègne. Nicknamed during his lifetime the "Raphael of the Puppies" by his contemporaries (notably by his friend Alexandre Dumas) due to the psychological sensitivity and anatomical accuracy he imbued in his subjects, Jadin brilliantly captures here the lively, alert, and deeply endearing expression of this terrier. A high-quality piece combining elite animal art with the grand history of the imperial entourage. Dimensions: Unframed 30 x 38 cms. Universal Condition Report (French) Support & Wood Panel: Unlike most works of this size, which are often painted on canvas, this oil painting was executed on a very high-quality oak panel. The reverse side reveals superb fine woodworking: the panel is reinforced with an original cross-grid cradling (cradling). This high-end professional system ensures the wood remains perfectly and permanently flat, protecting the work from any risk of warping or cracking due to humidity fluctuations over the centuries. The panel is sound and exceptionally stable. Painting Medium (Bitumen Effect): On the left side of the dark background, one can observe surface alterations that are entirely typical and normal, resulting from the use of Judean bitumen (or asphaltum). This pigment, highly prized in the mid-19th century for producing blacks of incomparable velvety depth, has the unique chemical property of drying on the surface while remaining malleable deep within for decades. Over time, the surface layer has shrunk, creating textured folds and micro-cracks caused by tension ("alligator skin"). Now perfectly set and stabilized, this authentic texture serves as an undeniable temporal signature, confirming the

work's dating to the mid-1850s. Frame & Label of

Provenance: The original oval gilded wood frame features a splendid period patina, with slight surface wear and tiny localized chips in the gilding, entirely consistent with its age. On the back, the historic paper label is glued directly to the mounting board; it remains perfectly legible despite some natural wear and a slight tear along its lower edge.