



PROANTIC
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Michael Wutky (1739-1822) - Bay Of Naples, Grand Tour Miniature, Mounted Under Glass



850 EUR

Signature : Michael Wutky (1739-1822)

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Glass

Length : 7 cm

Diameter : 7 cm

Description

MICHAEL WUTKY (1739-1822) A Shepherd by the Bay of Naples Signed on the reverse
Woutkÿ Reverse painting on glass (fixé sous verre) Diameter: 63 mm Original gilt-bronze frame with brass backing, diameter 89 mm (excluding suspension ring) The Grand Tour gave birth to one of Europe's most enduring myths: Italy. Not merely the land of classical antiquity, magnificent ruins and artistic treasures, but a country of sunshine, simple pleasures and the sweetness of everyday life -- an idyllic world in which the ancient pastoral ideal seemed to survive. This charming miniature captures precisely that vision. A young shepherd rests beside his animals, gathered at a watering place, while beyond them stretches the Bay of Naples, bathed in the soft light of the Mediterranean. It is an image of Italy

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as eighteenth-century travellers loved to imagine it: peaceful, picturesque and effortlessly beautiful. The miniature is executed in the rare and exceptionally delicate technique of *fixé sous verre*, particularly appreciated in eighteenth-century Europe. Unlike traditional reverse painting on glass, the artist painted in oils on a fine support of silk or taffeta, which was then fixed with a translucent layer of natural glue to the inner surface of a convex glass. The painting and glass thus form an inseparable whole -- a remarkable union of artistic refinement and material fragility, entirely in keeping with the eighteenth-century taste for precious and delicate objects. Over more than two centuries, the natural adhesive has undergone subtle changes, leaving a small area of reduced adhesion visible in the lower part of the miniature -- a discreet trace of its long history. The original textile backing remains an integral part of the painting and must never be removed. Mounted in an elaborate gilt-bronze frame, the miniature is a particularly refined example of the precious objects associated with the culture of the Grand Tour: intimate works of art intended to preserve the memory, or perhaps simply the dream, of Italy.

The Artist Michael Wutky (1739-1822) was an Austrian painter trained at the Vienna Academy under Martin van Meytens. He became a member of the Academy in 1770 and spent many years in Italy, particularly in Rome and Naples. He is best known for his dramatic views of Mount Vesuvius, whose eruptions he studied in the company of the British diplomat and antiquarian Sir William Hamilton. His paintings reflect the extraordinary meeting of Austrian artistic culture, Italian landscape traditions and the cosmopolitan tastes of Grand Tour travellers. Although celebrated principally as a landscape painter, Wutky also practised miniature painting. Eduard Leisching, in *Die Bildnis-Miniatur in Österreich 1750-1850* (Vienna, 1907, p. 70), records a self-portrait miniature on ivory exhibited in Vienna in 1905.

He also mentions that the artist was said to have worked in Russia. The present work bears the unusual signature Woutkÿ, apparently reflecting the French pronunciation of the artist's name and possibly suggesting a French-speaking patron. A delightful meeting of Austrian painting, Italian pastoral poetry and the refined decorative arts of eighteenth-century Europe. Literature: Eduard Leisching, *Die Bildnis-Miniatur in Österreich 1750-1850*, Vienna, 1907, p. 70 (artist's activity as a miniaturist).