Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Henry D'Estienne (1872 - 1949)

Portrait of a Young Girl

Oil on card.
252 x 156 mm. (9 7/8 x 6 1/8 in.)

ACQUIRED BY THE BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM OF ART, BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA.

The same young model seen in this oil sketch may have posed for d'Estienne's genre painting The Doting Mother, which appeared at auction in London in 1986.

Provenance:

Possibly the d'Estienne studio sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 25 March 1998
Martin Moeller, Hamburg, in 2003
Private collection, Florida, until 2012.

Artist description:

The son of a sculptor, Henry d'Estienne studied in Carcassonne and Montpellier before arriving in Paris, where he took lessons at the Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs. He was soon admitted into the

Ecole des Beaux-Arts as a student of the leading Orientalist painter Jean-Léon Gérôme. D'Estienne made his public debut at the Salon of the Société des Artistes Français in 1896, where three years later he exhibited a portrait of his grandmother, which was acquired by the State for the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Carcassonne. The painting, today in the Musée d'Orsay, also won the artist a bronze medal at the Exposition Universelle of 1900, for which he also painted a landscape diorama of the coast of Somalia that earned him an appointment as painter to the Ministère des Colonies. A trip to Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily and Venice resulted in a number of paintings and pastel drawings which he later exhibited at both the Société des Artistes Français and the Société des Peintres Orientalistes Français. One of these paintings, a portrait of an old woman in the costume of a native of the province of Aragon in Spain, was acquired in 1902 for the Musée du Luxembourg and is today also in the Musée d'Orsay.

Henry d'Estienne is perhaps best known today as a painter of Orientalist subjects. He traveled to Turkey and Egypt, and between 1927 and 1929 his work was exhibited in Cairo and Alexandria. He received a number of portrait commissions from Egyptian dignitaries, with King Fouad I owning several of his works. He also took part in the Expositions Artistiques de l'Afrique Française, and contributed to the Salons of the Société Coloniale des Artistes Français. His reputation as an Orientalist painter led to his appointment as a member of the fine arts commission and jury for the great Exposition Coloniale Internationale held in Paris in 1931.

Apart from his extensive travels throughout the Near East and North Africa, d'Estienne also spent much time in Brittany throughout his career. He was particularly drawn to the depiction of Breton customs, rituals, festivals and costumes, and this resulted in such paintings as A Feast in Brittany, exhibited at the Salon of 1904 and bought for the Musée du Luxembourg. (Other genre scenes of Breton life are in the Museo des Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires.) After the First World War, d'Estienne seems to have devoted himself mainly to portraiture, exhibiting several paintings of his wife and daughter, among other sitters. His works were exhibited at a number of Parisian galleries, notably the Galerie Georges Petit and Galerie Bernheim, and he was also a member of the Cercle de l'Union Artistique. In 1937 Estienne won a gold medal at the Exposition Internationale in Paris. An auction of more than 270 paintings and drawings from the studio of the artist was held in Paris in 1998.