

**Mosé Bianchi (1840 - 1904)**

**Along the Promenade, Naples (Ricordo di Napoli)**

Pencil and gouache on thick buff paper, with framing lines in pencil.
Signed with initials MB at the lower right.
Inscribed with the signature of a Bernasconi heir on the verso.
350 x 185 mm. (13 3/4 x 7 1/4 in.) [image]
416 x 288 mm. (16 3/8 x 11 3/8 in.) [sheet]

Datable to 1886, the present sheet is a study for a small painting by Mosè Bianchi that was formerly in a private collection in Milan. In the painting or oil sketch, which is now lost but was apparently of fairly small dimensions, the artist seems to delight in the contrast between the group of elegant women walking on the quayside at the right with the peasant folk in the foreground. The drawing differs from the finished painting mainly in the absence of the long boat seen in the middle distance of the present sheet. Stylistically and thematically, both the drawing and the painting may be related to a number of works Bianchi produced in the 1880's of figures along the promenade in Chioggia; a fishing town at the southern end of the Venetian lagoon.

This drawing was part of a large group of paintings and drawings by Mosé Bianchi purchased from the artist by the brothers Juan (d.1920) and Felix Bernasconi (d.1914). The Bernasconi brothers were prominent Milanese industrialists who formed an impressive collection of works by contemporary Italian painters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

**Provenance:**

Acquired from the artist by Juan and Felix Bernasconi, Milan
By descent in the Bernasconi family to Anna Maria Elvira Celia Mendez [?] de Bernasconi (her

signature in ink on the verso)
The Bernasconi sale, London, Christie's, 27 March 1987, part of lot 252
Borghi & Co., New York, in 1987
Private collection.

**Literature:**

Paolo Biscottini, Mosè Bianchi: Catalogo ragionato, Milan 1996, p.310, no.445 and under no.444.

**Artist description:**

A native of Monza, Mosé Bianchi received his artistic training at the Accademia di Brera in Milan. Even in his earliest works - academic history subjects and altarpieces - the lightness of touch and fluidity of handling for which he would be known is readily evident. In 1866 he went to Venice, where he was strongly affected by the work of Giambattista Tiepolo. The following year he was in Paris, where he met the art dealer Goupil, who did much to spread the artist's reputation outside Italy. In 1877 Bianchi completed his first significant decorative project, the fresco decoration of the Villa Giovanelli at Lonigo, near Vicenza. A family of bankers and merchants, the Giovanelli were well known as collectors and connoisseurs, and their employment of Bianchi enhanced the artist's reputation and led to further fresco commissions. Much of the effect of these ceiling frescoes, painted in three rooms of the villa, has today been lost as a result of poor restoration and conservation. It is only through the surviving preparatory studies and oil sketches for these frescoes that some sense of their Tiepolesque freschezza can be appreciated. Bianchi continued to develop his distinctive, painterly style in his views of Venice of the 1880's and of Milan in the following decade. His oeuvre also includes many scenes of rural life, notably around Gignese on Lake Maggiore, and several superb portraits.