

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Philippe-Jacques De LOUTHERBOURG (Strasbourg 1740 - London 1812)

Pastoral Scene with a Shepherd and Shepherdess

Pen and brown ink and brown wash, over a pencil underdrawing.

Inscribed P. Louthembourg on the verso.

285 x 414 mm. (11 1/4 x 16 1/4 in.)

This large pastoral landscape may be dated to between 1772 and 1774, in the early years of the artist's time in England. Its composition reflects the influence on the young Louthembourg of Dutch 17th century painters such as Nicolaes Berchem. It is not a study for a painting but was in all likelihood intended as a finished work of art in its own right. Nevertheless, the drawing may be compared with a number of paintings of a similar pastoral theme and composition by the artist that are datable to the period before he settled in England, such as a canvas known as *The Enterprising Shepherd*, which was on the art market in Paris in 2009.

The pencil inscription on the verso may transcribe the artist's signature on a previous mount. Louthembourg traditionally signed his drawings not on the sheets themselves, but on their mounts, which he often made himself.

Provenance:

An unidentified collector's mark (in Cyrillic?), not in Lugt, stamped in black ink on the verso.

Artist description:

Born in Strasbourg in Alsace, the son of an engraver and miniaturist of Swiss origins, Philippe-Jacques de Louthembourg arrived in Paris in 1755. Although he was to be mainly active as a landscape painter, he received a comprehensive artistic education, studying with the history painter Carle Vanloo, the battle painter Francesco Casanova and the engraver Jean-Georges Wille. Agrée at the Académie Royale in 1763, the same year as his Salon debut, he gained full membership in 1767. He continued to exhibit regularly at the Salon, where his pastoral landscapes, painted with fresh and vivid colours and imbued with a Romantic sensibility, proved very popular with the public. Louthembourg submitted a total of some eighty works to the Salons between 1763 and 1771 when, despite his success in Paris, he decided to move to England, and the second phase of his career began.

It was in England, where he remained for the rest of his career and where he was known as Philip

James de Loutherbourg, that he first took up the practice of producing designs for the stage. Employed by David Garrick as the chief scene designer of the Drury Lane Theatre, Loutherbourg soon became as well known for his scenographic work as for his paintings. Elected to the Royal Academy in 1781, he exhibited views of England and Wales during much of the following decade. A failed attempt at working as a faith healer aside, he continued to enjoy a measure of public success in England. In 1784 one critic wrote of Loutherbourg that 'We may observe in general, that this great Artist discovers in all his works a fine Imagination; that his choice of objects is made with judgment; that his colouring is harmonious; that he has a thorough knowledge of the Chiaro Oscuro, and a wonderful freedom of pencil.' By the 1790's he had begun to produce grandiose history pictures and battle scenes, and in 1807 was appointed historical painter to William Frederick, the Duke of Gloucester. Many of Loutherbourg's drawings were intended for engravings, and several of his English views were published as *The Picturesque Scenery of Great Britain* in 1801, followed four years later by *The Picturesque and Romantic Scenery of England and Wales*.