Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Eugène Boudin (Honfleur 1824 - Deauville 1898)

A Fish Market in Rotterdam

Watercolour over an underdrawing in pencil.
Stamped with the atelier stamp E.B. (Lugt 828) at the lower left.
Inscribed and dated Rotterdam. -76 at the lower right, and further inscribed with colour notes in pencil.
159 x 202 mm. (6 1/4 x 8 in.)

Eugène Boudin made numerous sketching trips along the coasts of Northern France, Belgium and Holland. He seems to have made his first visit to Holland in 1873, perhaps at the suggestion of the Dutch artist Johan Barthold Jongkind, and returned several times in his later career, working in Rotterdam, The Hague and Dordrecht. The artist visited Rotterdam in 1873, 1876, 1879, 1880 and 1888. The present sheet dates from 1876, when the artist spent the months of June and July in the Low Countries, and that year he painted at least nine paintings of Vues de Rotterdam, including some of the fishmarket in the port. A handful of watercolours of the fishmarket are also known.

Boudin's notebooks, which he used to record ideas and thoughts related to his work, reveal his fondness for markets, and particularly fish markets, as pictorial subjects. These notebooks included such notes to himself as 'Fishmarkets. There is a gold mine to be exploited. How many have I sketched? If I apply myself I should produce a certain number with figures of a foot or so. Trouville, and Rotterdam - consider', as well as 'A large market with the people shown on their striking side. For that all the material must be gathered on the spot.'

Provenance:

The studio of the artist
Probably the Boudin atelier sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 20-21 March 1899
Schoneman Galleries, New York
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schoneman, New York, by 1976
Their sale, New York, Christie's, 5 May 2010, lot 211
Private collection, Scotland.

Artist description:

The son of a sailor, Louis-Eugène Boudin established a small stationery and framing shop in the port

city of Le Havre. Encouraged by some of the artists living or working in the area, whose work he sometimes exhibited in his shop, he took up painting himself in 1847. By the early 1850's he had established a modest career as a landscape painter, working in Le Havre, Rouen, Honfleur and Paris. Praised by contemporaries such as the critic Charles Baudelaire, Boudin began painting marine scenes that attracted much favourable comment when he began exhibiting regularly at the Salon from 1859 onwards. He travelled extensively around France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and made yearly visits to favourite sites in Normandy and Brittany, in particular the fashionable seaside resorts of Deauville and Trouville. Much of Boudin's work was small in scale, and was shown both in Paris and in provincial exhibitions around the country. He found a ready market for his paintings and, from 1881 onwards, enjoyed a fruitful relationship with the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, who sold his works in France and in America.

Boudin's paintings and lively watercolours, with their interest in capturing effects of light and colour, were an important early influence on Claude Monet, who was his pupil. Some six thousand drawings, watercolours and oil sketches – most of the contents of Boudin's studio at his death - are today in the Louvre, while other significant groups of drawings and watercolours were given by the artist or his descendants to the museums of Le Havre and Honfleur.