Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Roger Joseph Jourdain (Louviers 1845 - Paris 1918)

A Young Woman Seated on a Riverbank

Watercolour.
Signed and dedicated à mon ami Businach(?) / son très reconnaissant / Roger Jourdain at the lower left.
183 x 272 mm. (7 1/4 x 10 3/4 in.)

A member of the Société des Aquarellistes Français, Jourdain was a gifted watercolourist. The present sheet may be a portrait of the artist's wife, Henriette Roger-Jourdain (d.1928), the daughter of the painter Henri Moulignon and a noted beauty. An elegant society couple, the Jourdains were at the centre of the Parisian art world of the 1880's. They lived on the Boulevard Berthier, where among their neighbours was Sargent, who drew a somewhat similar watercolour of Henriette Jourdain lying on the grass with an open parasol resting beside her1. Mme. Jourdain was also painted by both Giovanni Boldini and Paul-Albert Besnard, whose full-length portrait of her was exhibited at the Salon of 1886 to considerable acclaim.

Provenance:

Given by the artist to a friend (Businach?).

Artist description:

Although heir to a prestigious family clothing business, Roger-Joseph Jourdain chose to embark on a career as a painter. He was a pupil of Alexandre Cabanel and Isidore Pils at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and made his Salon debut in 1869. A fervent admirer of Manet, he embarked on a trip to Spain, where he made copies after the paintings of Velasquez. At the celebrated Parisian salon of his half-sister, Marguerite de Saint-Marceaux, Jourdain met a number of artists, writers and composers, including John Singer Sargent, Henri Regnault, Marcel Proust, Colette, Gabriel Fauré and Claude Debussy. Although he briefly flirted with painting Orientalist subjects, he soon developed a speciality as a painter of bucolic genre scenes, and was particularly fond of the theme of the Parisian bourgeoisie at leisure. His genre paintings often depict figures promenading along the Seine at Bougival, or bathing on the Normandy coast, where Jourdain often painted at the little port of Villerville in Calvados. He became a member of the Société des Artistes Français in 1883 and won medals at the Exposition Universelle of 1889 and the Exposition Universelle of 1900. An exhibition of Jourdain's work was held in 2005 at the Musée Municipal in his native town of Louviers, which houses a fine collection of his work.