Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Jean Henri ZUBER (Rixheim 1844 - Paris 1909)

Study of Sky and Clouds

Watercolour, over a pencil underdrawing.
Signed with initials H.Z. at the lower right.
Inscribed Claude and Marc on the verso.
Stamped with the Oeuvre Henri Zuber / catalogue général stamp (not in Lugt) on the verso, as Serie f, No.123 and entitled 'prairie'.
91 x 150 mm. (3 5/8 x 5 7/8 in.)

Henri Zuber is noted to have often said that, “The language of the sky, the earth, and the sea is eternal!”, and this is particularly evident in many of his watercolours. As a watercolourist, Zuber’s work at times comes close to that of his older contemporary, Henri-Joseph Harpignies, and like him was greatly admired by English collectors. (In a review of an exhibition of Zuber’s watercolours held at the Goupil galleries in London in 1883, a critic in the Pall Mall Gazette noted of the artist that ‘His treatment of water-colour is much more English than French...It is evident that his sympathies are with the younger English school, to whom, however, the purity and freshness of his tones might often be objects of envy.’)

Provenance:

Pierre Miquel
His posthumous sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 3 April 2004, part of lot 1095
Private collection, Paris.

Artist description:

Born in Alsace, Jean Henri Zuber spent most of the 1860’s serving in the French navy, mostly in the Pacific, and it was during this time that he began producing watercolour sketches. When he left the navy in 1868, he entered the atelier of Charles Gleyre, and began to establish a career as an artist. In 1869 he exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français for the first time, and, apart from 1871 and 1872, showed there every year thereafter until his death in 1909. Working from a studio on the rue de Vaugirard in Paris, Zuber came to specialize in views of the city – in both oil and watercolour – as well as scenes elsewhere in France. He exhibited at the Salons from 1869 onwards, and from 1884 also showed with the Société des Aquarellistes Français. In 1889 he won a gold medal at the Exposition Universelle, and during the 1890’s made several visits to London and the South of France. He would sometimes go on sketching tours in the company of his fellow painter Paul Lecomte, and would spend each summer in the town of Ferrette in Alsace. In 1910, the year after his death, a large retrospective exhibition of Zuber’s work was mounted at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Works by the artist are

today in the Louvre and the Musée d’Orsay, as well as in many provincial museums in France.