

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Alfred-Émile MÉRY (Paris 1824 - Paris 1896)

Study of Rooftops

Watercolour and gouache.

Signed ÆMERY at the lower right.

327 x 501 mm. (12 7/8 x 19 3/4 in.)

A similar watercolour and gouache drawing of Swallows Landing on a Wall and a Tiled Roof by Alfred-Émile Méry is in the collection of the Musée Bonnat-Helleu in Bayonne.

Artist description:

A painter, watercolourist and etcher of landscapes, animals, interiors, still-life subjects and portraits, Alfred-Émile Méry was a student of the military painter Jean Adolphe Beaucé. He made his Salon debut in 1848, and continued to exhibit paintings and gouaches there regularly, winning a medal in 1868. Ruined financially after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, when his studio was plundered and destroyed, Méry exhibited at the Salon every year between 1873 and 1877. He was a member of the Société des Artistes Français, and showed mainly gouaches and watercolours at the annual Salons organized by the Société in Paris. Méry was perhaps best known for his animal subjects, and was particularly fond of depicting insects, birds (especially swallows) and fowl, as well as monkeys - a painting of a macaque was purchased by the State at the Salon of 1874 - and other animals. Edgar Degas owned two paintings by Méry, one of hens and the other of a mouse, which he acquired from the dealer Ambroise Vollard in exchange for his own drawings. Méry also produced a number of prints, notably an etching of Bees published by the Société des Aquafortistes in 1866. Among the few works by Méry in public collections is a painting of a Wasp's Nest, signed and dated 1865, in the Musée Ingres in Montauban, while two paintings of Apple Boughs and Nestlings Amid the Blossoms, painted in 1866 and 1870 respectively, are in the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art. Other paintings or drawings by the artist are in the museums of Angers, Dieppe, Langres and Limoges. His two sons, Charles and Paul-Auguste, were also artists, and received their training from him.