

Jean-Baptiste HUET (Paris 1745 - Paris 1811)

Winter Landscape with Two Children

Charcoal and black chalk, extensively heightened with white chalk, on buff paper.

Signed and dated j. huet. 1767. at the lower right.

272 x 412 mm. (10 3/4 x 16 1/4 in.)

Dated 1767, this refined landscape drawing is one of Jean-Baptiste Huet's earliest known works in this genre. A closely comparable drawing by the artist of the same size and date, depicting a Landscape with a Shepherd by a Lake, is in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Valenciennes.

Exhibitions

Paris, Galerie Didier Aaron, Histoires Naturelles…: Deux Siècles de Peinture de Chasse et de Paysage, 2001, no.24.

Literature:

Laure Hug, Recherches sur le peintre Jean-Baptiste Huet (1745-1811), unpublished MA dissertation, Université de Paris IV - Sorbonne, 1995-1996, Vol.II, Catalogue of Drawings, no.2

Paris, Galerie Didier Aaron, Histoires Naturelles…: Deux Siècles de Peinture de Chasse et de Paysage, exhibition catalogue, 2001, unpaginated, no.24; Benjamin Couilleaux, Jean-Baptiste Huet: Le plaisir de la nature, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2016, p.84, under no.34.

Artist description:

Born into a family of artists, Jean-Baptiste Huet was the son and pupil of the animalier painter Nicolas Huet the Elder. He also studied with another animal painter, Charles Dagomer, before entering the studio of Jean-Baptiste Le Prince. In 1769 he was accepted into the Académie Royale as a 'peintre d'animaux and the following year made his debut at the Salon, where his paintings of animals, indebted to the example of Jean-Baptiste Oudry, were much admired by critics. Huet regularly exhibited drawings of animals at the Salons until 1787, and again between 1800 and 1802. He also had a particular fondness for pastoral and bucolic genre subjects, often with shepherds or herders, in which the influence of François Boucher is readily evident, while Huet also found inspiration in the work of the Dutch genre painters of the 17th century. In 1794 he was appointed peintre du roi, and in addition produced designs for the Gobelins and Beauvais tapestry factories and for printed textiles at the Manufacture Oberkampf in Jouy-en-Josas.

Huet was an extremely accomplished draughtsman, and many of his drawings were reproduced as engravings, usually by the printmaker Gilles Demarteau the Elder. Between 1765 and 1770 he painted a series of pastoral landscapes and animal subjects to decorate the interior of Demarteau's house in Paris, a project to which both Boucher and Jean-Honoré Fragonard also contributed. He also produced a large number of book illustrations. Huet assembled a personal collection of drawings by artists such as his teacher Le Prince, as well as works by Boucher, Hubert Robert and Jean-Honoré Fragonard, alongside prints by Northern artists such as Nicolas Berchem, Paulus Potter and Philips Wouwerman; all of whom can be seen to have had an influence on his own work. His son and pupil, Nicolas Huet the Younger, enjoyed a successful career as a natural history draughtsman and engraver.