

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Toshio BANDO (Tokushima 1895 - Boulogne-Billancourt 1973)

View from the Window of the Hôtel de Nice, rue des Beaux-Arts, Paris

Watercolour and pencil on a page from a sketchbook.

Signed *T Bando* and in Japanese in pencil at the lower right, and inscribed *Hotel de Nice* on the verso.

326 x 251 mm. (12 7/8 x 9 7/8 in.)

This fine watercolour can be dated to the very beginning of Toshio Bando's time in Paris, around 1922, and depicts the view from his room in the Hôtel de Nice, in the 6th arrondissement on the Left Bank. This inexpensive and somewhat bohemian hotel or boarding house, located at no. 4 rue des Beaux-Arts in the Saint-Germain-des-Prés neighborhood, had long been popular with artists and writers. The open window, the details of the wallpaper in the room, and the chair facing towards the viewer all speak to a feeling of intimacy and offer a glimpse into the artist's internal world.

A small number of comparable works on paper, all in private collections, share the intimacy and immediacy of the present sheet and provide evidence of Bando's interest in the subject of the artist's studio and domestic interiors. These include, in particular, the watercolour *La chaise longue dans l'atelier*, drawn on a page from one of the artist's sketchbooks, as well as *Dans l'atelier*, a watercolour and ink drawing of c.1926, and a pastel study of the artist's studio in Pierrefitte sur-Seine, drawn in 1930. Bando also produced a large watercolour of Foujita at work in his studio, executed in 1923.

Artist description:

Born into a prosperous family on Shikoku Island in Japan, Toshio Bando displayed a particular talent as an artist from an early age. At the age of eighteen he moved to Paris to study with the painter Takeji Fujishima, who introduced the young artist to the modernist trends of European art. After exhibiting in

Tokyo, Bando arrived in Paris in 1922, quickly becoming associated with the artists of the School of Paris based mainly in Montparnasse. At the beginning of his time in Paris, between 1922 and 1924, Bando shared a studio with his compatriot Tsuguharu Foujita, who had settled in the city several years earlier. Although the two Japanese painters were often compared by French critics, Foujita was arguably more interested in drawing while Bando concentrated on painting, exhibiting his work at the Salon d'Automne. In 1925 Bando began to be represented by the Galerie Chéron in Paris, which already showed the work of Foujita, Amedeo Modigliani and Chaim Soutine, and his inaugural exhibition at the gallery found favour with both critics and collectors. Between 1925 and 1938 Bando lived away from Paris, at Pierrefitte sur-Seine and Villette-en-Yvelines. and, after the death of his gallerist Georges Chéron in 1931, chose not to have a contract with any one dealer. Bando was to spend most of his career in France and was particularly appreciated for his ability to bridge seamlessly between Western art and his Japanese roots, as expressed in portraits, landscapes, nudes, studies of animals (particularly cats and dogs), flowers and other still life subjects. His daughter Kimie, born in 1944, was trained by Bando and became a talented artist herself, once exhibiting her works alongside those of her father. Declining health reduced Bando's activity from the late 1950s onwards, however, and for the last fifteen years of his life his work was rarely exhibited in Paris. Nevertheless, Bando is today recognized, alongside Foujita, as the most significant 20th century Japanese artist working in the modern European tradition.