

Lot 1067



Auction **Fine Art**

Date 19.11.2020, ca. 14:40

Preview 13.11.2020 - 10:00:00 bis
16.11.2020 - 18:00:00

FLEGEL, GEORG
1563 Olmütz - 1638 Frankfurt/Main

Title: Still Life with Fruits and Birds.

On a tabletop shot birds next to nuts, apples and a pomegranate. On a grape branch a goldfinch.

Technique: Oil on canvas.

Mounting: Relined.

Measurement: 48 x 56,5cm.

Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Literature:

A.-D. Ketelsen-Volkhardt: Georg Flegel 1566-1638. Munich 2003, p. 186, no. 11, ill. 61.

Exhibitions:

"Die Magie der Dinge. Stillebenmalerei 1500 - 1800" Exhib. Städel Museum Frankfurt/Main / Kunstmuseum Basel
20.03.-17.08.2008 / 05.09.2008-04.01.2009. In cat. no. 33 with ill.

Provenance:

Private ownership, Germany.

When this painting was created - probably about 1620 - the still life as an independent genre in painting was still very young. The painter Georg Flegel is generally regarded as "the first German still life painter".

Georg Flegel's life can only be incompletely reconstructed from few sources. He was born 1566 in Olmütz, Moravia. It is assumed that he learned the craft of painting in Linz, Austria, under Lucas van Valckenborch and moved to Frankfurt/Main together with his master in 1593. From 1594 until his death in 1638 Georg Flegel is recorded in documents in Frankfurt. In 1597, the year of Lucas van Valckenborch's death, he became a citizen and it is assumed that Flegel worked as an independent master craftsman from that time on.

Georg Flegel achieved great fame and reputation with his art and was in great demand by collectors. In a memorable copper engraved portrait of the painter, which was published shortly after his death, he was described as a "second Apelles and Dürer", "very much celebrated in his lifetime".

It is a radical painting that at first glance combines "Thanksgiving" and hunting still lifes, and shows the objects shown in oblique top view on a tabletop, mostly additive, separated next to each other. There is no distracting surrounding

space, no foreground or background. The observer's gaze is directed to the "Nature-morte" as if through blinders. Specimens of flora and fauna are presented as if in a cabinet of art and curiosities.

Alive, the now dead birds were - perhaps the day before - competitors who were competing with humans for the fruit - like the goldfinch that has settled on the vine and picks at the grapes.

Georg Flegel often arranged the objects in his paintings with a sophisticated, dynamic composition, as we find it in this picture: On the one hand, the groups of objects "birds" and "fruits" face each other in the two vertically divided halves of the painting; on the other hand, the stronger illumination of the front half of the table also creates a horizontal optical division of the painting. However, the birds and fruits are also arranged in such a way that diagonal compositional lines are clear, as is typical of Georg Flegel's later works.

With this trick, the painter charges the "Nature morte" with energy and guides the eye of the beholder with radical consistency through the pictorial space that is so severely restricted.

Estimate: 30.000 € - 40.000 €, Hammer: 22.000 €
