

Lot 1013



Auction Fine Art

Date 17.05.2024, ca. 14:10

Preview 10.05.2024 - 10:00:00 bis
13.05.2024 - 18:00:00

LIEVENS, JAN
1607 Leiden - 1674 Amsterdam

Title: River Landscape with Tree and Cross.

Date: Ca. 1655-65.

Technique: Pen drawing on parchment.

Mounting: Mounted.

Measurement: 10 x 16.4cm.

Frame: Framed.

Expertise:

Listed on the online databank of the RKD, The Hague, under the ill. no. 300246.

Literature:

Jan Lievens (1607-74) Prenten and Tekeningen/Prints and Drawings. Exhib.Cat. Rembrandthuis Amsterdam 1988/89, p. 18;

H.Schneider: Jan Lievens, sein Leben und seine Werke, Haarlem 1932, p. 73

R.E.O Ekkart: Lievens als Zeichner. In: Jan Lievens ein Maler im Schatten Rembrandts, Exhib.Cat. Brunswick 1979, p. 27.

Provenance:

Finance Council H.W. Campe (1771-1862) Leipzig;

Privy Councillor E.H. Ehlers (1835-1925) Göttingen;

Sold C.G. Boerner, Leipzig, 10.5.1930, under no. 550;

Katrin Bellinger art dealer, Old Master Drawings May 1995;

Private collection, South Germany;

Private collection, Germany.

Bernhard Schnackenburg wrote about this work in an email to the previous owner in September 2020:

"The work before me is truly a masterfully beautiful drawing that is a joy to behold! The quality is equally good in all parts and the style clearly speaks in favour of Jan Lievens! The richness of the graphic formal language with which the old tree trunk in the foreground is characterised is unmistakable. Gnarled old tree trunks are a favourite motif of the landscape artist Lievens and are the focus of several drawings (sheets in Dresden, Rotterdam and London, British

Museum). For these drawings, the catalogue of the Lievens exhibition in Washington 2008 suggested 1655-1665, which could also apply to your drawing. The unusually small format is probably due to the piece of vellum available to Lievens. This use is extremely rare."

It is a wonderful coincidence that this catalogue contains both a painting and a drawing by Jan Lievens, thus presenting the artist's work in two media.

Dr Bernhard Schnackenburg dates this small landscape drawing to around 1655 - 1665, i.e. after Lievens' return to Amsterdam.

A wide river landscape lies before the viewer, whose eye can follow the path coming from the lower edge of the picture, further below the edge of the embankment into the depths. On closer inspection, two people and perhaps a dog can be recognised on the path. The mighty tree trunk overlapping the upper edge of the picture intercepts the strong line of the embankment on the left. A cross at the edge of the path is another landmark. An architectural ensemble with a square tower can be seen behind the bend in the river. On the far right at the edge of the picture, in the distance, a church tower rises in the haze.

Above this landscape, composed as it were of many triangles and angles, the wide sky takes up about three quarters of the small-format drawing.

Jan Lievens had a preference for gnarled tree trunks as a motif for his drawings. Such wide panoramic landscapes, however, are extremely rare in his drawings. The use of vellum instead of the Japanese or laid paper he usually used also makes this autonomous drawing a rarity in the artist's oeuvre. The use of parchment, which hardly absorbs the ink, makes a completely different drawing technique possible. In the area of the tree trunk, the artist has scratched and hatched into the still wet ink. The cross at the edge of the path has also been modelled in this way. The appeal of a drawing that is conceived as an autonomous work of art also lies in the fact that it allows the artist's handwriting and technique to be experienced undisguised. This is particularly impressive in Jan Lievens' present work on parchment.

Estimate: 9.000 € - 18.000 €; Hammer: 18.000 €

