Marie Lucas-Robiquet (1858-1959) - Mother and daughter in Volendam



Oil on canvas, signed lower right

Dimensions : H. 41 cm x W. 33 cm (with frame: H. 62.5 x W. 54.5 cm)

Marie Lucas-Robiquet was an exceptionally talented French painter. Born in 1858, she was refused admission to the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, as were all female students until 1898; Lucas Robiquet, therefore, did not benefit from the teaching of the greatest masters of the time. Yet this incredibly gifted draftswoman exhibited regularly at the Salon des Artistes Français from 1879. Clearly influenced by Edouard Manet, this early artist produced her famous religious and military scenes, landscapes of Brittany and Holland, and portraits of women adorned in pink and black satin. Later, she achieved success with her Orientalist paintings of market scenes, washerwomen and weavers. Without a doubt, Marie Lucas Robiquet would be one of the world-famous Orientalists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, had she been a man.

A neo-impressionist, Marie Lucas-Robiquet's technique is based on vividly colored, juxtaposed and slightly spaced brushstrokes, similar to those of Henri Moret or Henri Martin. She is one of the few artists to have used this style to paint orientalist subjects, presenting the villages of the Maghreb as sun-drenched fairytales. Lucas-Robiquet was an active exhibitor at the Société Coloniale des Artistes Français, as well as at the Salon de la Société des peintres. She also took part in the Colonial Exhibitions in Marseille in 1906 and 1922. Marie Lucas-Robiquet won numerous awards, and was decorated with the Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur.

In her Orientalist works, Lucas-Robiquet idealized the rural condition, transforming views of the Maghreb into veritable theatrical scenes, as in her paintings "Arab Interior in Orellal" and "Date Harvest in Algeria". But this great artist also left us delicate family scenes and striking portraits painted in Europe, North America and South America. She lived in the United States during the First World War and painted many portraits in New York and Chicago.

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Our painting :

We date this work to circa 1905. This oil on canvas is treated with mastery and speed. The lively, spaced-out brushstrokes give it a light, watercolor-like feel. Yet the thick material lends the vivid colors an astonishing liveliness to this intimate scene, where we can guess at the relationship between the two characters. The light is magnificently rendered, its effects giving movement to the water and the little girl's apron. The smaller child is the main character. Slightly off-center to the right, the pretty figure is at the crossroads of the composition's vanishing lines: the scene appears completely natural to the viewer, even though it has been designed to convey a vision of an idyllic life. On its original canvas, the painting is in perfect condition. The colors have retained their original brilliance. The work is set in a beautiful Dutch-style blackened wooden frame, which perfectly places this painting in its context.

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