Henry Stacy Marks - Sulphur Crested Cockatoos

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Sold



REF: 2978

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Description

HENRY STACY MARKS, RA, RWS (1829-1898)
Sulphur Crested Cockatoos
Signed with initials l.r.: H.S.M.Watercolour heightened with bodycolour over traces of pencil
24 by 15 cm., 9 ½ by 6 in.(frame size 42 by 33 cm., 16 ½ by 13 in.)
Provenance:The Fine Art Society, London.
Henry Stacy Marks was born in London, the fourth child of John Isaac Marks, a solicitor. He studied in London at the Royal Academy Schools and later in Paris. He exhibited at the Royal Academy and elsewhere from 1853. He was elected ARA in 1870 and became a full RA in 1878. His father's business failed and it fell upon Henry to support his extended family and he therefore supplemented his income from painting by carrying out decorative work for various firms such as Minton and the stained-glass makers Clayton and Bell. He supplied several interior schemes including the design for a frieze for the outside wall of the Royal Albert Hall, for the house of the artist Lawrence Alma-Tadema and his important patron, Hugh Grosvenor, 1st Duke of Westminster.
His earlier works were usually historical and literary, especially Shakespearian and often humorous. As his career progressed, he became increasingly interested in painting birds, being particularly fond of parrots. These bird studies were particularly selected for praise by John Ruskin. Marks had three exhibitions in six years at the Fine Art Society in London, the first of which was Birds in Bond Street in 1889. He was a frequent visitor to London Zoo, "painting poultry" as a fellow RA put it. He was frequently approached by other curious visitors – he noted in his preface to the 1890 catalogue: "The most common remark I hear is, "Ah pretty creature! Don't he seem to know he's sitting for his picture?" and concluded "… I hope I may be excused, and not held too eccentric, in preferring to converse with a parrot for one hour, rather than with a politician for two". The Victoria and Albert Museum holds three of Marks' finished watercolour studies of birds.