Arthur Boyd Houghton - Sunday Afternoon - An Interior

Arthur Boyd Houghton

£2,500



REF: 2817

Sarah Colegrave Fine Art
London & Oxfordshire
+44 (0)77 7594 3722 sarah@sarahcolegrave.co.uk

Description

ARTHUR BOYD HOUGHTON
(1836-1875)

Sunday Afternoon

Signed l.l.: Houghton
Oil on canvas
Framed

20.5 by 25.5 cm., 8 by 10 in.
(frame size 30.5 by 34.5 cm., 12 by 13 ½ in.)

Provenance:
William Drummond;
Private collection.

Probably painted in 1864, the present work evokes the peaceful contentment of everyday family life, with its small scale further reinforcing the intimacy of the scene. It is one of a series of small intimate family scenes produced during this happy period of his life. A male figure, possibly the artist's himself, slumbers in a chair, a handkerchief draped over his face whilst Susan, the artist's young wife reads by the window. Their child, either Arthur or Georgina, plays on the floor with a discarded newspaper. The room is at 4 Adelaide Villas, St Mary's Grove, Richmond, the house Arthur and Susan moved to shortly after their marriage in 1861. The chaise and window, with its pots of geraniums, also feature in the 1864 painting Coach and Horses (private collection) which depicts Susan, with her hair down, playing with Arthur and Georgina. A pot of daffodils placed beside the same geraniums in the present work suggest it may have been painted in the spring of that year. Such domestic bliss would shortly come to a tragic end when Susan died of pyaemia following the birth of their third child in June 1864.

Houghton was born in India, the son of a captain in the East India Company's marine service. Both is father and older brother were accomplished military draughtsmen and he probably received early training from them. His family returned to England in the early 1850s and he began studies at Leigh's and the Langham Art Society before entering to the Royal Academy Schools in 1854. Although he considered his paintings in oils and watercolour to be his most important work, financial concerns make him turned increasingly to illustrating. He became one the most distinguished illustrators of the mid 19th Century, working for a number of magazines including, The Graphic, Good Words, The Sunday Magazine and others. His most important book illustrations were those for Dalziels' Arabian Nights (1865) and The Adventures of Don Quixote (1866).

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