JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

“A Bit of Sugar”

THOMAS EARL

£ POA

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REF: 374839

Description

THOMAS EARLFl. 1836-1885English School “A Bit of Sugar” Oil on canvas, signed and dated 1854, painted tondo 66 x 66cms26 x 26insOverall framed dimensions 87 x 87 cms 34¼ x 34¼ ins Exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists in 1854 no. 526Literature: Illustrated in Dog Painting: The European Breeds by William Secord p.353 pl.506 as The Favourite Treat.Provenance: Joan Peck, New York Collection of Frances G Scaife Thomas Earl was the eldest of this well-known family of animal painters. He was George's (fl.1865-1883) older brother and the uncle of Maud (1863-1943) and the horse painter Thomas Percy (1874-1947) and was painting about twenty years earlier than George. Both brothers were highly proficient portrayers of dogs, with an ability to capture the character of their subject with superbly painted eyes. Their styles are similar though Thomas tended towards a more sentimental rendering and his paintings often had a narrative theme rather than just being an observed portrait of the animal that he was portraying.Whereas George Earl concentrated on depicting sporting dogs, influenced by the fact that he was a keen participant in field sports, his brother Thomas mainly painted portraits of pets. Thomas did paint sporting animals, a favourite subject was terriers with a rabbit, but to a lesser extent than his brother and many of his works are in a domestic interior with the animal seated or standing on a chair or table with an abundance of objects around. The sentimental influence of Sir Edwin Landseer can be discerned in his work, something that can be also traced in the paintings of Horatio Henry Couldery, Edwin Douglas and Briton Riviere.Earl chose dogs and rabbits as his most frequently painted subjects. Forty-seven of his paintings were exhibited at the Royal Academy between 1840 and 1880, one hundred and eight at the Royal Society of British Artists and sixty-two at the British Institute. Titles included Otter Hounds, Terrier asleep, Cat and Dog Life, The Dream of the Hound “Like a dog he hunts in dreams” – Tennyson, The Gull’s Nest, The gorged Falcon; from a Greenland Specimen, Pet and Fido; spaniels of the late Mr Hudson, and The Rabbit Family.He did occasionally venture into genre and portrait subject matter with a Royal Academy exhibit in 1841 with the title Sleeping Girl, Rustic Piper in1842 and Rustic Figures in 1849 and at the British Institution: Cromwell’s daughter interceding for the life of Charles, Welsh Children, Little Red Riding Hood and Gipsie’s Camp. Earl painted a portrait of William ‘Bendigo’ Thompson in 1850 which is now in the National Portrait Gallery. It is thought that he occasionally painted the animals in the landscapes of the renowned Norwich School painter, Henry Bright. He was based in London all his life, sending exhibited works from addresses in Camden Town, St James’s, Kentish Town and Highgate Road.The Derby Museum and Art Gallery has a painting by Tho...

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