

ADRIAN ALAN

Fine Art & Antiques



After JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD (1732 - 1806)

'The Musical Contest'

Circa: Circa 1920

210 x 195 cm (82⁵/₁₆ x 76³/₁₆ inches)

Oil on Canvas

France

1920

'The Musical Contest', After Jean Honoré Fragonard.

The original picture by Fragonard, now in the Wallace Collection, London, was acquired by the 4th Marquess of Hertford. The picture dates from Fragonard's early period immediately following his time in Boucher's studio, c. (1754-5) and is strongly influenced by the latter's pastorals.

Literature:

Sheriff, Mary D. *Moved by Love: Inspired Artists and Deviant Women in Eighteenth-Century France*; University Of Chicago Press, (Chicago), 2004.

Sheriff, Mary D. *Fragonard: Art and Eroticism*, University Of Chicago Press, (Chicago), 1990.

Massengale, Jean Montague. *Jean Honoré Fragonard*, Harry N Abrams, 1993.

Artist description:

Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806), French painter of the rococo age, was popular in the courts of Louis XV and Louis XVI for his delicately coloured scenes of romance, often in garden settings. Born in Grasse on April 5 1732, the son of a haberdasher's assistant his family moved to Paris around 1738,

and in 1747 he was apprenticed to a lawyer, who noticed his talent for drawing and suggested that he study painting. François Boucher accepted him as a pupil (c. 1748), and in 1752, he competed for the Prix de Rome to study under the court painter to Louis XV, Carle Van Loo and in 1756, he went to the French Academy at Rome. At the academy he copied paintings by Roman Baroque artists, and made numerous sketches of the Roman countryside.

After returning to Paris, Fragonard exhibited some landscape paintings at the Salon, one of which was purchased for King Louis XV. Subsequently, he was commissioned to paint a companion piece, granted a studio in the Louvre Palace, and accepted as an Academician. However, after 1767 he ceased to exhibit at the salons, and concentrated on landscapes (often in the manner of 17th-century Dutch painter Jacob van Ruisdael), portraits and decorative, semi erotic outdoor party scenes in the style of Boucher. His admiration for Rembrandt, Peter Paul Rubens, Frans Hals, and a Venetian contemporary, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, are evident in a large series of heads of old men, between 1760 and 1767, and a series of portraits (c. 1765-72). In the last years before the Revolution, Fragonard turned from Rococo to Neo-classical subject matter and developed a less fluent style of painting. His work however was closely associated with the pre-Revolutionary period and the Revolution, which destroyed the nobility on which Fragonard depended for commissions, ruined him financially. Although befriended by Jacques-Louis David, the leading painter of the new neo-classical school, Fragonard did not adjust to the new style and died impoverished in Paris on 22 August 1806.