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Galería de Arte
Soraya Cartategui

Dear friends,

This October the gallery presents this wonderful port scene, made by Johannes Storck, a prominent Dutch painter of the 17th century.

Best wishes,
Soraya Cartategui



Johannes Storck

(Amsterdam 1603 - 1673)

Mediterranean caprice with figures

Oil on canvas

79 x 112 cm. (31,10 x 44,09 in.)

Important Dutch painter specializing in marines. He came from an important family of artists, father of the famous painters Jacobus Storck (1641-1692) and Abraham Storck (1644-1708). Often his paintings have been confused with those of his children, especially with Jacobus due to the compositional similarity. He spent his entire life in the city of Amsterdam where he was active for about fourteen years and his works were highly appreciated.

In his paintings, he gives great importance to the representation of dream cities where we see masterfully painted buildings such as churches, markets, etc. And in turn, all the characteristic activity of a city, such as characters fishing, strolling, trading, carrying out activities of daily life that complete his compositions.

However, the sea is the protagonist, with blue and gray tones showing those typical Dutch seas where we also find large ships painted in different perspectives with the Dutch flag waving, with a vibrant movement. He creates scenes whose composition is very balanced, with a soft color range where the sky takes on great importance, occupying three-quarters of the canvas and giving the work absolute complexity and beauty.



Our painting is a fantastic, very typical marine within the repertoire of Johannes Storck, which represents several planes in its composition, on the one hand a sea with boats and on the other, the view of a city with characters.



Storck uses a very careful and meticulous brushstroke when representing all the elements that make up his works, such as the large ships that we observe, in which he pays great attention to all the details that make them up, such as the masts, the sails, the ropes, etc. The boats appear in different positions, as proof of the great mastery of the painter when it comes to representing the various points of view. In addition, the puffed sails and waving Dutch flags indicate to the viewer the strong winds from the north seas.

The author makes a composition clearly divided into two parts. On the left the protagonist is the sea, which is relatively



and several curious citizens approach the shore to see them off. In addition we also observe very close to the port a humble boat with men who enter the sea to fish, accompanied by all their utensils.



On the right, however, a beautiful city is discovered, which reminds us of Venice, where the author creates a square with a Renaissance-style cathedral. Right in front, a large obelisk with the figure possibly of a saint due to its proximity to the church. And at its doors, numerous characters of different social classes, stroll, chat, work ... a clear example of the traffic of the streets and the daily chores of the Dutch society of the seventeenth century. We can observe numerous groups of

villagers playing, nobles strolling and even beggars, which are portrayed as small genre scenes. The depth is achieved masterfully through the representation, in the distance, of buildings that look much less clear but that in turn direct the viewer's gaze to carefully observe all the elements of this magnificent work.

To finish, it should be noted that in marine paintings there are two absolutely leading elements. In the first place, the sky that occupies more than two thirds of the composition, was the scene in which the Dutch artists ratified themselves as masters of light, being authentic students of the different atmospheric effects, which bring such sudden changes as a consequence in the shapes of the clouds.



And secondly, in this case the most important, the sea with all the effects of lights and shadows that the sky causes on it, with its back and forth movements creating different

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loaded with movement, transporting the viewer to those rough seas of the North.



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- I.H. van Eeghen, *De schildersfamilie Sturck, Storck of Stuckenburch*, Oud Holland 68, 1953, p. 216.223.
- L.J. Bol, *Die holländische Marinemalerei des 17*. Braunschweig 1973, p. 315

PROVENANCE

- Private collection, France.

MUSEUMS

There are works by Johannes Storck in the museum collections of the following cities, among others: Sinebrychoff Art Museum, Helsinki (Finland).

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