

# JOHN FREDERICK HERRING JNR

(Doncaster 1815 - 1907)

## *Feeding Time*

signed 'J.F. Herring' (lower left)

oil on canvas

36 x 50.8cm (14 x 20 in)

**Provenance:** Anonymous Sale, Christie's, London, 5 June 1998, lot 54.

**F**EEDING TIME GRACEFULLY CAPTURES THE TRANQUIL rusticity of a summer's day on the farm. Three horses, one a beautiful chestnut mare, stand placidly beneath the shade of an oak tree as an inquisitive group of pigs forage around their hooves. The same composition can be seen in another of John Frederick Herring Jnr's works (fig. 1). The chickens and a lone cockerel next to them peck enthusiastically, seeking grain or seedlings amongst the unkempt grass. The complementary positioning of the three pigs mirrors that of the horses and leads the viewer's eye further into the picture towards a shallow, silvered puddle with yet another group of horses beyond that.

The scene is framed by the muted green tone of the trees and grass. Herring Jnr's use, in general, of a simple colour palette allows the dappled sunlight in the bottom right hand corner of the work to mingle with the green and create a sweep of colour from right to left, leading the eye towards two low-thatched outbuildings and opening up a wide vista. A similar approach to his favoured compositional motif can be seen in *Farmyard Scene* (fig. 1). In this work, the same tonal palette is used as well as looser brushstrokes to convey the landscape, enabling the horses, with sun glistening off their sleek coats, to stand out.

Herring Jnr was the eldest surviving son of John Frederick Herring Snr. (1795-1865). He specialised mainly in farmyard scenes, collaborating occasionally with other artists such as Alexander F. Rolfe. This was unsurprising given that he was married to Rolfe's sister, Katherine. Known to the rest of his family as Fred, he signed his earliest work, J. Fred Herring, sometimes adding Jnr to his signature. He began to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1863 where he presented: *The Farm - Autumn* (1863), *Farmyard* (1864), *Watering the Team* (1869), *The Homestead* (1871) and *A Farm*



John Frederick Herring Jnr, *Farmyard Scene*, Private Collection (Figure 1)

*Yard* (1872) among others. His clear love of depicting unspoilt English landscapes complete with their traditional farm animals, especially horses, is showcased in this present work.

Herring Jnr continued to paint, in the tradition of his father, sporting and animal pictures, however, as his artistic prowess developed his style changed - he began to favour looser brushwork and a widening of his panoramas. The placement of farm animals at the banks of a stream or in a farmyard, were characteristic of his work; *Feeding Time* is one such fine example.



