SPHINX FINE ART



Thomas Barker of Bath (Pontypool 1769 - Bath 1847)

The Farmer's Boy

oil on canvas
39 x 35 cm (15¼ x 13¾ in)

Artist description:

Thomas Barker of Bath was a painter and lithographer. He received his early training through the patronage of the Bath auctioneer Charles Spackman, whom he depicted in a joint portrait of 1789, *Thomas Barker and his Preceptor, Charles Spackman* Under Spackman's direction, Barker assiduously copied paintings by the Old Masters, gaining a proficient technique. In his early works, such as the Tate's *The Woodman and his Dog in a Storm* the influence of Thomas Gainsborough is particularly evident. He studied in Italy from 1790 to 1793, but there is little sign of any artistic development in paintings executed after his return to Bath. His most innovative works are the 1813 series *Impressions of Rustic Figures after Nature*, the first one-man collection of lithographs printed in England, and the *Massacre of the Inhabitants of Scio by the Turks*, a fresco painted in 1825 onto the walls of the picture gallery in his home, Doric House, Sion Hill, Bath. As an expert on fresco technique, Barker advised on the redecoration of the Houses of Parliament in 1841. In later years his popularity declined, and he died in poverty.