



Guillaume Charles Brun

1825-1908

The Bengala player, Constantine

Oil on canvas

Dimensions : 95,5 x 72,5 cm

Dimensions : 37.40 x 28.35 inch

Exhibition : Salon of French Artists, Paris 1881 - n°319



Dimensions with frame : 124 x 100 cm
Dimensions with frame : 48.82 x 39.37 inch

Biography

Guillaume-Charles Brun enrolled in the School of Fine Arts in April 1847 in order to complete his training alongside his Montpellier friend Alexandre Cabanel. François Picot is then Cabanel's professor, and upon the recommendation of the latter, Brun joins the studio of the master. The talent of the young artist starts to thrive. He obtains his first award in 1847, and from 1851 he presents regularly at the French Art Salon various everyday life scenes in Northern Africa, notably in Algeria.

From 1859, he opens at the Salon a series of paintings dedicated to Constantine: "The prayer", "Constantine Province" and "A view taken in Constantine". Thanks to his accurate technique, he provides an astonishing and realistic depiction of the old city. His compositions are flawless and abound in colourful details.

Constantine soon becomes the main destination for the artists who regret the Europeanization of Alger and seek a typical and authentic Arab life, still preserved though. The artist emphasizes the importance of depicting the old Arab city, its side-by-side houses with roman stones groundwork, and its mud bricks walls coated with lime. The tile roofs worn out by the age provide to the city an original feel.

A lot of his works illustrate his constant focus on depicting the contrasting shapes and architecture or the play of light that liven up the city: "An Algerian mother with her child" shown at the 1880 Salon, "Appointment in Constantine" 1861, "A Moorish woman", 1867 and lastly "Oriental Street scene" in 1889. Brun is appointed member in the French Artists Society. He also becomes the official painter of the War Office.

Museums

Poitier: Musée Sainte Croix

Bibliography

Bénézit, Dictionnaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs, Gründ 1999

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Marion Vidal-Bué, L'Algérie des Peintres 1830 - 1960, Edif 2000