SARAH COLEGRAVE
FINE ART

Amsterdam

John Sergeant

Sold

Sarah Colegrave Fine Art
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REF: 350800

Height: 28 cm (11")

Width: 25 cm (9.8")

Framed Height: 47 cm (18.5")

Framed Width: 42.5 cm (16.7")

Description

JOHN SERGEANT (1937-2010)

Amsterdam

Signed and extensively inscribed: There is a strong sense of freedom in Amsterdam ”“ a go as you please, do as you please city. It is enchanting ”“ the narrow gabled houses like so many books packed tightly along bookshelves. From the harbour side St Nicolas church dominates the city, but everywhere are elegant church spires, tiny humped bridges, the cry of seagulls, reflections gently moving. In Dam Square every hour the bells ring out a tune: quite possibly part of a popular son, cleverly adapted, and these, with the chimes at each hour punctuate the day so prettily. The Amsterdammers seem to like an audience. They don’t draw their curtains at night; and there are placard carriers, demonstrators, young people in old top hats, graffiti, majorettes, bands and beards all in abundance. The man who was so helpful in giving directions. “You go this way.” He said, pointing down a seedy-looking street towards the red-light district. “But be careful of the business womans; no photographs!”

Pen and ink and watercolour

28 by 25 cm., 11 by 9 in. (frame size 47 by 42.5 cm., 18 by 16 in.)

Sergeant was born in London, the son of a civil servant. His family soon moved to Faversham in Kent after they were bombed during World War II. He studied at Canterbury College of Art from 1954-57, during which period he met John Ward, who was to become a lifelong friend and supporter. In 1959 he entered the Royal Academy Schools, where he won a Drawing Prize in 1961. In 1962 he married a fellow student, Carolyn Cann. After graduating from the RA he taught part-time at art schools in Kent and worked on commissions including book jacket designs and illustrations and series of ”˜room-portraits’ of interiors. He moved to near Builth Wells, Wales in 1983. In 1989 the Prince of Wales asked Sergeant to contribute drawings to his book Vision of Britain; two years later he accompanied the prince on an official visit to Prague. A superb draughtsman, he was a great exponent of the teaching of drawing in art school: “If you can draw you can paint. All you need to know as Whistler used to say, is which end of the brush to put in your mouth”. In his 2006 Colnaghi exhibition he described himself as a “serious serial draughtsman who explores, scrutinizes the same subject back, front, sideways, this way and that. It is all part of trying to understand”. He held one-man exhibitions in London at the Maas Gallery, Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox and Colnaghi.

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