Ferdinand Joseph Gueldry (1858 - 1945)

The boat race

Signed, lower right: *F. Gueldry*

Oil on canvas

20¼ x 25½ in – 51.5 x 65 cm

Frame size

26¼ x 31½ in – 66.7 x 80 cm

Provenance:

Private collection

Artist description:

Ferdinand Joseph Gueldry was a pupil of the great historical and genre professor of art Jean-Léon Gerome (1824-1904) at l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He learnt to paint very similarly to Gerome in terms of colour and technique employing great clarity in his work when necessary but particularly when depicting people. Gueldry was a genre painter and he concentrated at first painting ordinary people working at the factories and mills in and around Paris occasionally painting the markets like Victor Gilbert (1847-1933). His depiction of workers in the factories and mills have a deep sincerity of expression; for example, this can be seen in Le Decoupage des Metaux, which is in the Amiens Museum.

However, what Gueldry is most renowned for today is his boating and rowing scenes whether it be along the Seine typically or views on the Thames which he painted when he visited England. In these river views he showed rowers in the clubhouse, during a race or just generally at leisure with their boats by the river. Gueldry captured the realism of the moment yet with romantic overtones portraying both the competitiveness and fun of racing.

He first exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1878 and continued to exhibit there up until 1933. He won a series of prizes throughout his painting career, including the Silver Medal at the Exposition Universelle

in both 1889 and 1890. He was also made a Knight of the Legion of Honour in 1908.