



José Gallegos y Arrosa (1859 - 1917)

The Valets Banquet

Located in Rome; dated, upper right: 1902

Oil on mahogany panel

10½ x 15 in – 26.5 x 38 cm

Frame size

15½ x 19⅞ in – 39.4 x 50.5 cm

Artist description:

José Gallegos y Arrosa was born on 3rd May 1859 at Jerez de la Frontera between Cadiz and Seville in southern Spain. He studied in Madrid under Frederigo de Madrazo (1815-1894), an artist who had achieved considerable success in Paris, being appointed Legion d'Honneur. Madrazo had returned to Madrid as director of the National Gallery and as director of the School of Painting. A painter of historical subjects and portraiture, Madrazo was to have little influence in terms of subject matter on his pupil Gallegos.

Gallegos first exhibited in Madrid in 1880, but soon like so many of his contemporaries was to travel to Italy, in search of patronage, subject matter, and in search of the international travellers who sought out paintings on the Grand Tour of Italy. Gallegos settled in Venice and produced sunlit views of the canals with which he found great success. He later moved to Rome painting views, genre and religious subjects, for which he was to become renowned, and also visited Naples. His paintings of Cardinals are rendered with a jewel-like technique, an unimaginable fineness of detail. Gallegos applied this same technique to his religious scenes on his return to Seville where he portrayed marriages, baptisms and ecclesiastical subjects allowing him to paint ornate interiors, figures and fabrics, a triumph of technique, colour and content. Gallegos also continued to paint secular subjects and genre. He exhibited internationally, his work being highly sought after and was widely collected throughout Europe and in the United States.