

SA1233121

William McAlpine, The Burning Of A Ship - Antique Oil Painting

Price

GBP 4,000

| USD \$5,454 | EUR 4,668

Item Reference: SA1233121

Date of manufacture: 1870

Dimensions

Height = 104 cm (40.9")

Width = 156 cm (61.4")

Depth = 10 cm (3.9")

Description

This late 19th-century oil painting by Irish artist William McAlpine (1821/22-after 1891) depicts a sailing vessel consumed by fire upon calm coastal waters. Flames tear through the centre of the ship as a great column of smoke rises into an expansive, turbulent sky. Figures gather towards the bow, while smaller vessels remain nearby. Across the foreground, the catastrophe is reflected upon an eerily placid surface. McAlpine has concentrated almost all of the drama into a relatively small area at the centre of an unusually broad composition. The burning vessel occupies only a fraction of the canvas, yet the eye is immediately drawn towards it. Brilliant touches of orange and red emerge through black smoke before dissolving into the surrounding cloud, while passages of clear blue remain visible beyond. The sheer amount of sky is particularly effective. This was an area in which McAlpine excelled. Although he described himself simply as an "Artist (Shipping)" in the census of 1881, his surviving works demonstrate an interest extending beyond the accurate depiction of vessels. Ships frequently became vehicles through which he explored weather, light, smoke and movement,...

Internal Ref: BRV2309

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