

KUNKEL FINE ART

Zeichnungen, Gemälde und Skulpturen
des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts



MAURICE DENIS

(1870 Granville - 1943 Saint-Germain-en-Laye)

Le goûter sous les châtaigniers, 1914

Oil on canvas

80.5 : 123 cm

Signed and dated lower left: "MAURICE DENIS 14"

The work will be included in the catalogue raisonné of Claire Denis and Fabienne Stahl under no. 914.0022.

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Provenance:

Galerie Druet, Paris, 1 July 1916, no. 8685
Returned to the artist on 22 April 1918
Matsukata Kōjirō, 1921 (acquired directly from the artist)
Confiscated by the French government in 1944
Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 21 November 1947
Private collection, since 1985
Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 18 March 1986, lot 45
Richard Green Gallery, London
Private collection, acquired in the late 1980s
Christie's London, 23 June 2016, lot 315

Exhibitions:

Œuvres récentes de Maurice Denis, Paris, Galerie Druet, 1916
Exposition Maurice Denis, 1888 - 1924, Paris, Pavillon de Marsan, April - May 1924,
cat. no. 228 (titled *Le goûter*)
Maurice Denis à Perros-Guirec, Perros-Guirec, Maison des Traouieros, July - August 1985, cat. no. P80, p. 57

The motif of a shimmering summer landscape dissolved in colourful patches of paint identifies Maurice Denis as a member of the Nabis group of artists and a pioneer of modernism. The forms unfold a life of their own in the vivid contrast of blue and yellow, confirming the painter's conviction that a picture is "first and foremost a flat surface covered with colours in a certain order". At the same time, Maurice Denis laid the foundations for a new style, Symbolism. This becomes clear in the motif of several people who have retired for a picnic on a sunny day in the shade of large chestnut trees, which makes their clothes glow, accentuated by individual reflections of light. With symbolic intent, the painter is also hinting at the carefree emotional state of people who are completely absorbed in the cheerful mood of a summer's day. Painted in the year of the beginning of the war, the artist sought refuge in an idyll that would soon be brought to an end by the cruel reality.