Girl Reading a Letter by Lamplight

William Henry Hunt



REF: 2176

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Description

Guy Peppiatt Fine Art Ltd.
Riverwide House, 6 Mason's Yard, Duke St. St. James's, London, SW1Y 6BU
T: 020 7930 3839 M: 07956 968 284 E: guy@peppiattfineart.co.uk www.peppiattfineart.co.uk

William Henry Hunt (1790-1864)
Girl Reading a Letter by Lamplight

Signed lower left: W. Hunt 1827
Watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour and scratching out
38.2 by 27.2 cm., 15 by 10 ¾ in.

Provenance:
Bought by Sir John and Lady Witt, 1970;
Their sale, Sotheby's, 19th February 1987, lot 147, illustrated on cover, sold £23,000 hammer;
Private Collection until 2019

Literature:
John Witt, William Henry Hunt (1790-1864) - Life and Work with a Catalogue, 1982, no.548

Exhibited:
Probably London, Society of Painters in Water-colour, 1829, no. 13 or no.214;
Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Museum, Preston Harris Museum and Art Gallery and Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, William Henry Hunt 1790-1864, 1981, no.101

Born in London, Hunt was apprenticed to John Varley in about 1804. He showed talent as a landscape artist but having been born with deformed legs, he concentrated on interior scenes and still-lives of fruit and flowers from the mid1820s. This is one of his best known works showing a woman who appears to have recently returned home to find an eagerly awaited letter. She has rushed into the room without removing her coa, bonnet or both gloves.

Sir John Witt (1907-1982) was the son of Sir Robert Witt, lawyer and art historian, collector, co-founder of the Courtauld Institute and the Art Fund and founder of the Witt Library. Sir John, also a lawyer, was a senior partner of his father's law firm served as Chairman of Trustees of the National Gallery, London as well as of the Management Committee of the Courtauld Institute of Art.

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