HARVEY WOODD

BEATRICE HUNTINGTON (1889 - 1988) The Pilgrim or a Scottish Midwife

Sold

Beatrice M. L. Huntington

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REF: 1334

Height: 127 cm (50")

Width: 76 cm (29.9")

Description

BEATRICE HUNTINGTON (1889 - 1988)
The Pilgrim or a Scottish Midwife

1922
Oil on canvas
127 x 76 cm

Signed lower left, 'B.M.L. Huntington 1922'
Framed

Exhibited: Society of Scottish Artists, 1923
Royal Academy Annual Exhibition, 1950
The Scottish Gallery, 1990, cat. no.7, as 'The Scottish Midwife'

Labelled verso:
ROYAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION, 1950, James Bourlet & Sons Ltd,?18 Nassau St. London W.1.
'7. A Scottish Midwife, £8,000' (The Scottish Gallery, 1990)
Two handwritten artist's labels inscribed 'Beatrice M.L. Huntington' plus evidence of further labels.
Stretcher inscribed 'B.M.L. Huntington' in chalk

The costume of the sitter - her cape and black cap - identifies her as a Scottish midwife (it was catalogued as such in the Scottish Gallery 1990 exhibition), although a signed black and white photo is inscribed in Beatrice's hand: ''Le Pelerin', The Pilgrim, exposé à Edimbourg 1923 au Société des Artistes Ecossais'. As The Pilgrim, it was illustrated in the St Andrews Citizen, 19 September 1925, alongside an appreciation of Beatrice's work extracted from the French art journal, Les Artistes d'Aujourd'hui.1

Whether a pilgrim or a midwife, Beatrice has invested the sitter with a monumental stature. With the focus on the exaggerated hands of which the elongated sinews stand bold against an expanse of black skirts, we see Beatrice experimenting with a stylisation that she was to take further with A Muleteer from Andalucia and The Cellist.
Unusually, she chose to submit the painting to the Royal Academy many years later, in 1950. This re-appraisal of her earlier oeuvre may have been prompted by her recent success in submitting Nurse and Baby (1939), exhibited at the Royal Academy in London in 1948 and selected for a touring exhibition though painted nearly a decade before.

1. The British Newspaper Archive

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