

HUBERT ROBERT

French school, 1733 - 1808

Born in Paris on May 22, 1733, Robert was trained at the Collège du Navarre and then by the sculptor Michel-Ange Slodtz. Under the patronage of the Marquis de ~~Menars et de Mangy~~^{Menars}, Minister of Fine Arts, and the Duc de Choiseul, a leading French collector of the time, he went to Rome in 1754 to study at the French Academy there, and remained in Italy for eleven years. He became a friend of Piranesi and Pannini there, and devoted himself like them to depicting antique ruins. Following Pannini's example, Robert combined representations of actual monuments with imaginary prospects. In 1761 he travelled with Fragonard to Naples. On his return to Paris, he used the drawings from nature he had made in Rome and nearby as the basis for countless painted variations. He became a member of the Académie in July 1766, and thereafter busied himself with providing decorative panels for French palaces and houses. He also drew plans for parks and gardens, including those of the Petit Trianon built at Versailles for Marie Antoinette. His range of subject-matter came to include Gothic ruins, street-views of Paris, genre scenes and still lifes as well as landscapes. Having been appointed keeper of the King's pictures under Louis XVI, he also became one of the first curators of the Louvre when this museum was created. He died in Paris on April 15, 1808.

The Statue

oil on canvas, 33x66 ins.

Colln. Edith Clowes.

Provenance

Acquired by Mrs Clowes in 19 .

The horizontal format and perspective suggest that this was one of a set of decorations, such as overdoor paintings.