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**New York | 28 Jan 2010, 10:00 AM | N08610**



**LOT 163**

**SOLD BY THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART TO BENEFIT FUTURE  
ACQUISITIONS**

**ALONSO DE ESCOBAR**

**DOCUMENTED 1602 - AFTER 1637**

**STILL LIFE WITH FISH AND GAME HANGING FROM A WOOD BEAM, WITH A PIG ON A  
PLATTER, CHEESE, A CARDOON AND OTHER OBJECTS RESTING ON A TABLE  
oil on canvas**

43 3/4 by 64 in.; 111.2 by 162.6 cm.

**ESTIMATE 80,000-120,000 USD**

## PROVENANCE

Constantinus Lucas Fliermans, Jr., Nijmegen, Netherlands and Los Angeles;

Thence by inheritance to his wife, Maria F. K. Fliermans;

Gift of Maria F. K. Fliermans, in memory of Constantinus Lucas Fliermans, Jr., to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1949 (acc. no. 49.11.2).

## EXHIBITED

New Orleans, Louisiana, Isaac Delgado Museum of Art, Fêtes de la Palettes, November 16, 1962-January 7, 1963, cat. no. 23.

## LITERATURE

W.R. Valentiner, "Meat, saints and poetry," in *Art News*, March 1950, pp. 64-65, reproduced opp. p. 34 (as Jacopo Chimenti da Empoli, and as such in all literature until 1988);

P. Wescher and E. Feinblatt, Los Angeles County Museum, *Catalogue of Paintings, I: Catalogue of Italian, French and Spanish Paintings, XV-XVIII Century*, Los Angeles 1954, p. 39, cat. no. 35, reproduced;

S. Bottari, "Due 'nature morte' dell' Empoli," in *Arte Antica e Moderna*, Vol. 9, 1960, pp. 75-76;

G. de Logu, *La Natura Morta Italiana*, Bergamo 1962, p. 180;

G. Maggi, "Attualità della natura morta", in *Antichità viva*, I, 1962, p. 13, note 5;

M. Gregori, "La Natura Morta Italiana", in *Antichità viva*, 1964, p. 76;

B. Fredericksen and F. Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections*, Cambridge, MA 1972, pp. 52, 592;

M. Bianchini, "Jacopo da Empoli", in *Paradigma*, 3, 1980, p. 143;

G. Cantelli, *Repertorio della pittura fiorentina del seicento*, Florence 1983, p. 42;

G. Godi, G. Cirillo, "Nature Morte di Jacopo da Empoli", in *Scritti di Storia dell' arte in onore di Federico Zeri*, vol. II, Milan 1983, p. 545, reproduced fig. 533;

E. Fumagalli, "Il Seicento Fiorentino, Pittura", in *Antichità viva*, Florence 1986-7, p. 134, no. 1.33;

S. Schaefer et al, *European Painting and Sculpture in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art*, Los Angeles 1987, p. 30, reproduced;

A. Marabottini, *Jacopo di Chimenti da Empoli*, Rome 1988, p. 275, no. A8 (under 'Opere Attribuite' and where attributed to Alejandro de Loarte).

## CATALOGUE NOTE

This large still life, which has been attributed to numerous different artists in the past, can finally be placed securely into the oeuvre of the little known and newly discovered painter Alonso de Escobar. Escobar was only identified in 2003 when a pair of large still lifes, one of them signed, appeared at auction in Madrid (Alcalà) and it was only then that William B. Jordan could assign a name to a small but cohesive group of anonymous paintings. Until then he had labelled their author the 'Stirling-Maxwell Master' on account of the former owner of a painting that he considered the central picture to the group, now in the collection of Mrs. H. John Heinz III.<sup>1</sup>

Escobar had previously been known only from the baptismal records of his many children, between 1602 - 1616, as

well as certain other documents published by Mercedes Agullo y Cobo. He was a Madrilenian active in Toledo in the wake of Juan Sánchez Cotán who had first popularized still life painting circa 1600 with his hyper-realistic depictions of suspended fruit and game. Escobar's style is rooted in that of Cotán and indeed several of the elements included here are lifted directly from the latter's work. Motifs of his own, too, recur throughout his small oeuvre, with the large sea bream, for example, appearing in both one of the Alcalà paintings and the ex-Stirling-Maxwell work. Likewise the turkey at the right of the present work recurs in the other Alcalà painting.

Escobar was already a painter at the time of the birth of his first child in 1602 and he was thus considerably older than both Juan Van der Hamen and Alejandro de Loarte who further popularised still life painting through the late 1610s and 1620s. Like most artists of his generation he probably trained as a figurative painter, only turning to still lifes when a market for them really began to develop. There being no records of important commissions from him it seems he was something of a journeyman painter and he may have run a shop in the Corral del Olivo, in the Parroquia de Santa Cruz, where he lived.

The painting has an understandably colourful attributional history; it was attributed to Juan Sánchez Cotán until 1949 when Valentiner instead suggested the name of Jacopo Chimenti da Empoli, an attribution that remained with the painting until relatively recently and one endorsed by, amongst others, Bottari (1960), Zeri and Fredericksen (1972), Gregori (1964) and Godi (1983). Marabottini however, in his 1988 monograph on Empoli, rejected the attribution in favour of one to Alejandro de Loarte and stated therein that Mina Gregori was also now of this opinion on the painting's authorship. The painting has remained erroneously attributed to Loarte until now.

We are grateful to Bill Jordan for clarifying the attribution for this work.

1. See W. Jordan & P. Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velásquez to Goya*, exhibition catalogue, London 1995, p. 33, no. 4, reproduced.