DB FA DAVID BROOKER FINE ART

19th century Still life of Strawberries and a butterfly

$6,950

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REF: 2358

Height: 48.24 cm (19")

Width: 55.86 cm (22")

Description

Henry George Todd (British, fl. late 19th century)
Still Life of Strawberries with Butterfly
Signed and dated 1878, lower left
Oil on canvas
Presented in an ornate giltwood frame with artist's plaque

A richly observed and finely executed Victorian still life by Henry George Todd, depicting a generous arrangement of freshly gathered strawberries resting upon broad, curling green leaves. Painted in 1878 and signed lower left, the composition is both naturalistic and quietly poetic, embodying the Victorian fascination with the beauty of the everyday and the fleeting pleasures of the natural world.

Todd renders the fruit with remarkable delicacy-their ripened surfaces softly dappled with light, each berry distinct in form and hue. The leaves beneath are painted with equal care, their veining and subtle tonal shifts providing a lush counterpoint to the vivid reds of the fruit. Above, a butterfly hovers gently in the shadowed background, introducing a note of movement and ephemerality, a subtle reminder of the transience so often alluded to in 19th-century still life painting.

The composition is set against a dark, atmospheric ground, allowing the strawberries to emerge with striking clarity. This contrast, combined with the artist's sensitive handling of light, reflects the enduring influence of earlier Dutch still life traditions, which continued to inform British painters well into the Victorian period.

The painting is housed in an elaborate giltwood frame of scrolling acanthus and foliate design, which complements the richness of the subject and enhances its decorative presence. The survival of the original plaque bearing the artist's name and date further adds to its authenticity and appeal.

A charming and highly decorative example of late 19th-century English still life painting, combining technical refinement with a sense of quiet, natural beauty-equally suited to a traditional interior or a carefully curated collection.

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