



GALLERY  
NOTES®

*from*

JOHN MITCHELL  
FINE PAINTINGS

EST 1931

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When it was exhibited at the Paris Salon, this beautifully preserved picture was entitled *Une vue de Cora, ville de Latium*, which should be interpreted as the town of Cori at the foot of the Alban Hills in Lazio.

As a master of the *paysage historique*, Jean-Victor Bertin drew his inspiration from the Roman *campagna*. With its timeless buildings and an ordered vision of a tranquil, almost dreamy scene, complete with herders dressed in togas, this painting defines the neo-Classical tradition of landscape.

From 1748 onwards, with the rediscovery of and subsequent excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii, there was a resurgence in interest in archaeology. By 1800 it centred around Rome and enticed writers, painters and architects towards neo-Classicism - an attempt to offer a fresh interpretation of antiquity. Landscape artists undertook to elevate the status of their paintings by idealizing and ennobling nature. In moving away from the *rococo* style that had dominated French painting during the previous century, artists became more interested in reproducing visual impressions with finesse and perfection.

By the time Bertin painted *Shepherds in a Classical Landscape*, French landscape painting was on the cusp of change as an increased interest in atmosphere and direct observation, painting *en plein air*, came to the fore. As a pupil of Bertin and the direct precursor of Impressionism, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot proved that his master can be considered as one of the most influential teachers of the next generation of landscape painters.

WILLIAM MITCHELL  
May 2018



**Jean-Victor Bertin (1767-1842)**

*Shepherds in a Classical Landscape*

oil on canvas

12  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 16 in. (32.5 x 40.6 cm.)

signed and dated 1822.

Exhibited: Paris, *Salon*, 1822, no. 95 as *Vue de Cora, ville de Latium*.

## GALLERY NOTES®

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# JOHN MITCHELL

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