



**Xavier Mellery (Laken 1845 - Laken 1921)**

**Christus in het Begijnhof**

Houtskool, potlood en inkt op papier

295 x 235 mm

Gesigneerd in het rood X Mellery, rechtsonder

**Artist description:**

Born in 1845, the painter, draftsman and illustrator Xavier Mellery is widely seen as a precursor of the Belgian Symbolism movement. Son of a gardener of The Royal Palace of Laeken (Brussels), he initially worked as a decorative painter before enrolling at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, one of his teachers being the academic painter Jean-Francois Portaels. Mellery won the Prix de Rome and traveled to Italy where he studied paintings from the Renaissance. Symbolism is a movement of a younger generation of painters who were similarly rejecting the conventions of Naturalism. Symbolist painters believed that art had to reflect an emotion or an idea rather than representing the natural world in an objective, scientific way and that the symbolic value or meaning of a work of art stemmed from the recreation of these experiences in the viewer through color, line, and composition. In painting, Symbolism represents a synthesis of form and feeling, of reality and the artist's inner subjectivity.