

# COLNAGHI



Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida  
(Valencia 1863 – Madrid 1923)

## *Children in the sea*

1908

oil on canvas

60 x 100 cm.;

23 5/8 x 39 3/8 in.

Signed in the lower left-hand corner:  
J. Sorolla y Bastida, 1908

---

### Provenance

Inglehart Collection, New York;  
Private collection, New York;  
Private collection, Paris.

---

### Exhibitions

*Catalogue of Paintings by Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida*, New York (The Hispanic Society of America), 1909, p. 151, no. 319.

---

### Literature

B. de Pantorba, *La vida y la obra de Joaquín Sorolla*, Madrid, Mayfe, 1953 (second edition 1970), no. cat. 1675

A. de Beruete et al., *Ocho ensayos sobre Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida*, 2 vols., Oviedo, Novel, 2009, no. cat. 319

---

# COLNAGHI



LONDRES

MADRID

NUEVA YORK

# COLNAGHI

This masterpiece by Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida was painted in 1908 during a particularly fruitful period of the artist's life. With his unique ability to treat light, movement, and the transience of a moment, Sorolla presents us with a vivid and dynamic vision of a group of children bathing in the sea during the summer. *Children in the sea* is not only a work exploring the beauty of youth interacting with natural forces, but also a testament to Sorolla's genius for capturing life with extraordinary realism and vitality.

His solo exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in London in April 1908, followed by Archer Huntington's invitation to show his work at the Hispanic Society the year after, marked a period of great activity and international recognition for the painter.

Sorolla spent the summer of 1908 with his family on the beaches of Valencia, painting his most important seascapes for presentation in New York in February of the following year. His standout works from this period are brimming with life — often depicting children playing in the water and frolicking on the beach. Sorolla conveyed the spontaneous movements of children coupled with the unpredictability of the sea with rapid, precise brushstrokes, capturing each ephemeral moment that so stirred him. He pithily translated his *modus operandi* into words by saying: "You have to paint fast, because everything slips away". Another outstanding work from this period is *Running along the beach*, in the collection of the Asturias Museum of Fine Arts.



Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida, *Running along the beach*, 1908. Asturias Museum of Fine Arts. Pedro Masaveu Collection

Like *Running along the beach*, the present work masterfully exhibits the focal features of Sorolla's visual language. Through a series of parallel belts that show different shades of blue corresponding to the depth of the water, and with the help of white sails strategically placed on the top-most belt, Sorolla imbues the work with a unique sense of movement and spontaneity simultaneously rooted in a precise maritime study. As these ribbons of blue hues approach the shore, they are interrupted by the spume of the waves — beautifully rendered in off-white. The ribbons twist in a subtle diagonal, adding to the dynamism of the composition. The child in the foreground anchors the seascape to the shore, letting the other children draw the viewer's eye towards the horizon — their movements beckoning to the surf and the sailboats, adding to the overall vivacity of the scene.