KLAAS MULLER

ALESSANDRO TURCHI

Cupid Chasing a Butterfly, symbolizing Psyche and a human soul

This intimate early work by Alessandro Turchi captures a youthful Cupid in graceful pursuit of a butterfly, a motif rich with symbolic meaning in the 17th century. Painted on slate—a support prized for its smooth surface and luminous depth—the composition highlights Turchi's refined handling of flesh tones and his characteristic blend of delicacy and drama.

The butterfly, traditionally associated with Psyche and the human soul, transforms the playful chase into an allegory of desire, innocence, and the fleeting nature of life. Cupid's softly modelled body and outstretched gesture convey both movement and tenderness, while the dark background enhances the sculptural clarity of the figure.

Created around 1605, when Turchi was emerging as one of Verona's most promising painters before establishing his career in Rome, the work reflects the artist's early mastery of intimate mythological subjects and his sensitivity to emotional nuance.

ca.1605

oil on slate, 13.8 x 16.5 cm ($5\ ^{3}/_{8}$ x $6\ ^{1}/_{2}$ inches)

Circa: ca.1605