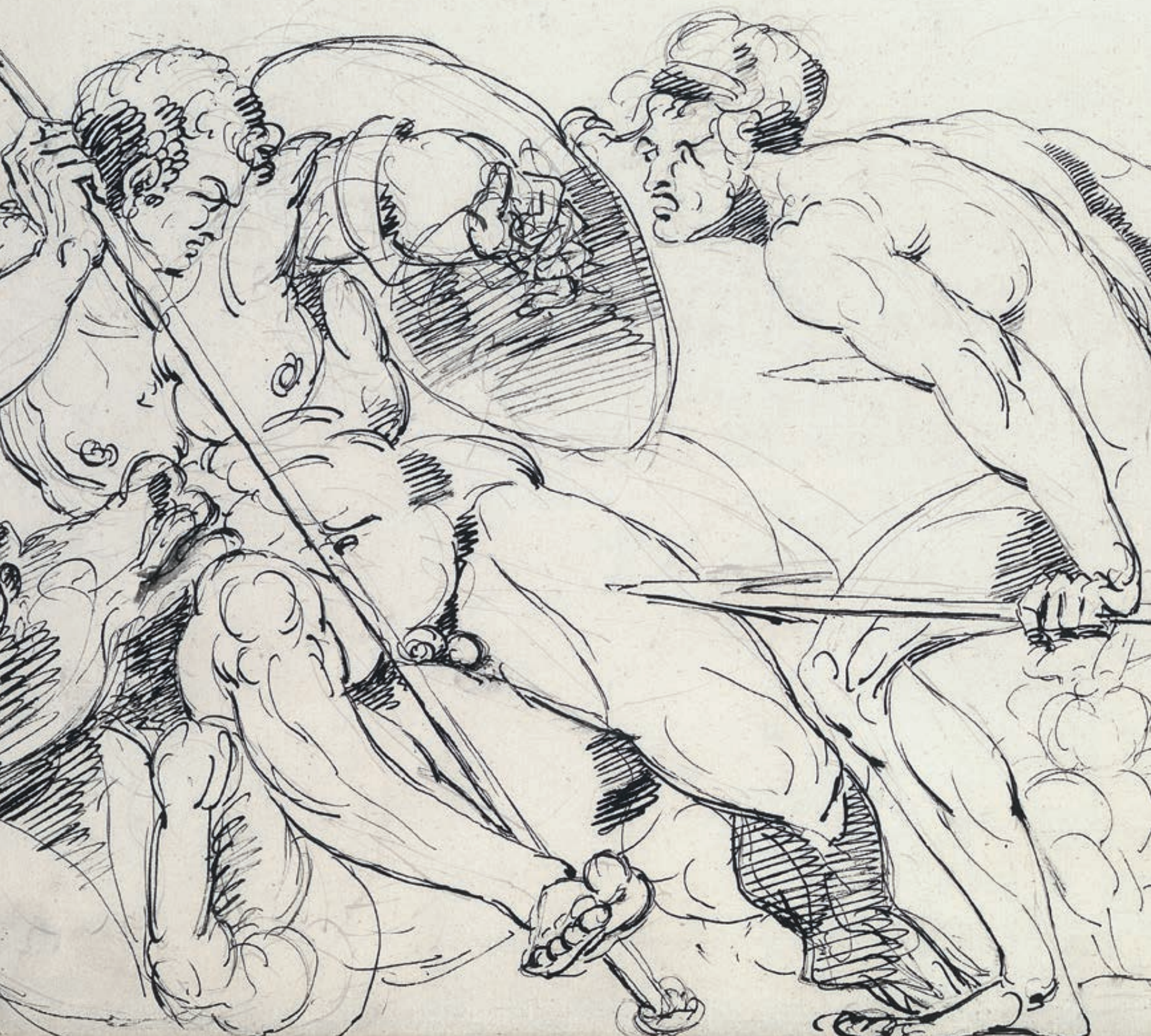


Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd

RECENT ACQUISITIONS



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RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd

2019 / 2020



PREFACE

This year's catalogue underlines, we believe, the breadth of our tastes: from Angelica Kauffman to Laura Knight, taking in Batoni, Bartolini, Burne-Jones and Brockhurst on the way.

In it we present a number of significant discoveries for the first time, including Bartolini's magnificent ad vivum terracruda bust of Lord Byron made in 1822. A rare work by James Durno who worked in Rome is represented by what is probably his masterpiece *Priam returning to Troy with the body of Hector*, commissioned by Frederick Hervey, 4th Earl of Bristol (the Earl Bishop) in 1787. A little-known work by Kauffman, *Abraham drives Hagar and Ishmael into the Desert*, commissioned by one of her very few female patrons is discussed at length for the first time. Its loan has been promised to the forthcoming Angelica Kauffman exhibition at the Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, (30 January – 24 May 2020) and at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, (25 June – 20 September 2020). New works by Samuel Palmer, Rossetti and a previously unknown sheet from the Master of the Giants album all underscore our determination to uncover fresh material.

Gainsborough has always been central to our activities. 2019 saw the publication of Hugh Belsey's monumental two volume catalogue of Thomas Gainsborough's portraits and fancy pictures, to which Jonny contributed the section on copies after old masters. Our catalogue includes one of Gainsborough's greatest landscape drawings of the 1770s as well as his touching and monumental painting of two cows which we recently sold to the Dordrechts Museum and which will be seen in their major exhibition *In het licht van Cuyp: Aelbert Cuyp & Gainsborough – Constable – Turner* which opens in September 2020.

We are excited to present Laura Knight's stupendous masterwork, the 1928 water-colour of *Charivari*, the most complex of all her circus pictures, showing the Grand Parade at Bertram Mills' circus at Olympia (an annual event still fondly remembered by the elder of our two directors). As always, we would like to thank all those who make this catalogue possible, particularly Cressida St Aubyn, who has co-ordinated the whole process with her characteristic efficiency and good humour.

LOWELL LIBSON JONNY YARKER

ABRAHAM DRIVING OUT HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

Oil on canvas
50½ × 40½ inches; 1285 × 1030 mm
Signed and dated on the wall on the left:
'Angelica Kauffman. Pinxit Roma. 1792'
In its original carved Roman frame

COLLECTIONS

Marchesa Polissena Turinetti di Priero, commissioned from the artist for 150 Zecchini, paid for on 12th June 1793;
Turinetti di Priero family, Turin, by descent;
Filippo Giordano delle Lanze, purchased from the above before 1968;
Private collection, Italy until 2019

LITERATURE

Lady Victoria Manners and G. C. Williamson, *Angelica Kauffman RA. Her Life and Works*, London, 1924, p.162;
V. Natale, *Roma Torino Parigi, 1770–1830*, exh. cat., Turin, 1993, pp.28–29;
Francesco Mazzocca, in *L'ideale classico, arte in Italia tra Neoclassicismo e Romanticismo*, 2002, pp.529 and 557;
Laura Facchin, *Bartolomeo Cavalleri agente dell'aristocrazia sabauda a Roma*, in 'Rivista della Biblioteca di Storia e Cultura del Piemonte Giuseppe Grosso', VII, 2004, pp.9–43;
Laura Facchin, 'L'attività per una clientele cosmopolita: Angelica Kauffman a Roma', *Arte e Storia*, XXXV, 2007, pp.282–297, reproduced in black and white p.228;
Laura Facchin, 'Angelica Kauffmann: Tracce per i rapporti tra la pittrice svizzera e l'ambiente fiorentino nella seconda metà del XVIII sec.', in *Arte e Storia*, XLVIII, 2010, pp.198–211

EXHIBITED

To be included in the forthcoming Angelica Kauffman exhibition at Düsseldorf, Kunstpalast 30 January – 24 May 2020 and London, Royal Academy of Arts, 25 June – 20 September 2020.

'For the Marchesa de Prie of Turin a picture; height 5 spans 9½ width 4 spans 7½ with figures of 3½ spans representing Abraham telling Hagar to leave with Ishmael, the son paid for on 12th June. 1793. 150 Zecchini.'

Antonio Zucchi, *Angelica Kauffman's Memorandum Book*¹

This important history painting by Angelica Kauffman was commissioned in 1792 by the Turinese aristocrat Polissena Turinetti di Priero, it is therefore a rare example of Kauffman's work commissioned by a female patron. Largely unknown in modern scholarship, the painting is a compelling essay in Kauffman's mature neo-classical style and unusual in showing Kauffman tackling a Biblical subject. Preserved in exceptional condition, the painting offers valuable evidence for Kauffman's sophisticated patronage within Europe.

By 1792 Kauffman was one of the leading painters in Europe, she had achieved considerable success in Britain, exhibiting extensively at the Royal Academy of which she was a founder member. Kauffman had been born in Chur, Switzerland, the only child of the Austrian painter Johann Joseph Kauffman. In 1742 Kauffman's father moved his family to Italy where, her early biographers record that she rapidly distinguished herself as a prodigy of both music and art.² Kauffman decided to pursue a career as a painter and undertook a formal Grand Tour of Italy in 1759 before settling in Rome in 1763. There she was introduced into a circle of British neo-classical painters including Gavin Hamilton, Nathaniel Dance and Benjamin West. These contacts undoubtedly

influenced her aspiration to create history paintings of classical, mythological and religious subjects, a rare ambition for a female artist. Encouraged by her contacts with Anglo-Saxon painters, Kauffman travelled to London in 1766 where she met and was befriended by Joshua Reynolds who became instrumental in promoting her career. In London she established a profitable and celebrated portrait practice working for a fashionable clientele and providing decorative panels for neo-classical interiors. But, as Wendy Wassyng Roworth has observed: 'Kauffman was not able to achieve fully her high aspiration to produce large-scale history paintings.'³

In 1782 Kauffman returned to Rome after marrying the Italian decorative painter Antonio Zucchi, who yielded his own career to manage his spouse's finances. Economics partly motivated their move, Meng's recent death and Batoni's slowing career were to position Kauffman as Rome's dominant portraitist, decisively secured by the 1783 commission to paint the Neapolitan royal family. Moreover, the explosion of the Grand Tour among the nobility of northern and eastern Europe opened vast new markets for the multilingual painter. Kauffman and Zucchi occupied grand quarters on via Sistina, formerly the studio of Mengs, at the top of the Spanish Steps. Kauffman therefore cast herself as the prime heir to the classicising tradition of Roman painting. But most importantly the return to Rome situated Kauffman at the creative centre of Europe in close proximity to the greatest collections of antiquities and old master paintings as well as a thriving, international community of painters. Re-established in Rome she could





Angelica Kauffman, *Christ and the Samaritan woman at the well*
 Oil on canvas
 48½ × 62 inches · 1235 × 1585 mm · 1796
 Neue Pinakothek, Munich
 © bpk / Bayerische
 Staatsgemäldesammlungen

finally execute the ambitious historical compositions that she had been contemplating since the 1760s. With this in mind, Kauffman not only assembled an important collection of antiquities and modern paintings in her studio, but organised her well-known weekly *conversazioni*. These semi-public events brought together the cosmopolitan literary and artistic figures of late Settecento Rome, something that impacted on the expanding erudition of Kauffman's late work.⁴ Kauffman's return to Italy was celebrated in verse by Ippolito Pindemonte in his epistle *Alla Signora Angelica Kauffmann dipintrice celeberrima a Roma*, which he published under the name Polidete Melpomenio. The poem describes how Minerva led Kauffman back to Rome to be a history painter.



The present canvas was painted in Rome in 1792. In her studio-book, kept by Zucchi, the present painting is described as: 'For the Marchesa de Prieo of Turin a picture; height 5 spans 9½ width 4 spans 7½ with figures of 3½ spans representing Abraham telling Hagar to leave with Ishmael, the son paid for on 12th June. 1793. 150 Zecchini.'

Polissena Turinetti di Priero was married to Giovanni Antonio Francesco Turinetti di Priero, a cultured Turinese aristocrat.⁵ Turinetti di Priero was an early patron of the great Italian dramatist Vittorio Alfieri, a major collector of prints and supporter of numerous artists. She ordered the canvas from Kauffman in 1793 relying upon her agent in Rome, the Piedmontese architect Bartolomeo Cavalleri to co-ordinate the commission. We know that Polissena was an active patron and promoter of Kauffman's works. In July 1793, shortly after the completion of the present painting, she acquired a plaster copy of Angelica Kauffman's bust by the Irish sculptor Christopher Hewetson through Bartolomeo Cavalleri and even asked Cavalleri to consult Kauffman on the best way to pack and transport works of art back to Turin.⁶ It is significant to note that her correspondence proves that it was Polissena Turinetti di Priero who was actively engaged in commissioning Kauffman's work, not her husband or agent.

Polissena Turinetti di Priero was an outspoken critic of the French influence on the government of Savoy and she lived in exile in Florence from 1794. By this date, Florence had become a centre for exiles from across the Italian peninsula, particularly for French citizens who left Rome following the murder of the French

diplomat, Nicolas de Basseville in 1793. Amongst the cultured circle of artists and writers who made it their home was Princess Louise of Stolberg-Gedern, the widow of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, her lover Alfieri and the painter François-Xavier Fabre.⁷ Kauffman we know was close to this circle completing a portrait of the poet Fortunata Sulgher Fantastici in 1792. Polissena Turinetti di Priero's correspondence proves her to have been an unusually active participant in the intellectual world of the city suggesting that her patronage of Kauffman included a strong influence on the iconography of this painting.

The story of Hagar and Ishmael is one that would have immediately appealed to a female exile. Although at the date of commission Polissena was still based in Turin, following the turbulence of the French Revolution, the stability of Savoy must have felt in jeopardy. The Biblical story, told in the Book of Genesis relates that Abraham's wife, Sarah, jealous of Hagar, persuaded Abraham to cast her and Ishmael out into the desert after the teenage Ishmael was caught mocking Sarah's son, Isaac. Kauffman casts Hagar as the heroine of a carefully composed visual tragedy. Playing with the convention of depictions of Hercules between Vice and Virtue, Kauffman places the repentant Ishmael at the centre of the picture clinging to Abraham, who is shown in profile, holding his son's hand and pointing out into



Angelica Kauffman, *A double-sided sheet of studies for 'The expulsion of Hagar'*

Brown ink over black chalk
5 7/8 x 7 1/8 inches - 148 x 180 mm - 1792
Private collection



the wilderness, whilst being led away by the noble Hagar. Behind Abraham, cast into shadow, Kauffman includes Sarah and Isaac. Kauffman shows Hagar resignedly leaving for the wilderness of Beersheba clutching a vessel filled with water, her face cast up to heaven in anticipation of her eventual deliverance. Kauffman's canvas is a rare celebration of a Biblical heroine entering exile.

A Biblical subject gave Kauffman an unusual opportunity to explore certain formal conventions established by earlier painters. The costumes, style and approach to the composition recall Kauffman's interest in a specific lineage of Roman painting from Raphael, through Guido Reni to Anton Raphael Mengs. As such the finished painting is an unusually ambitious historical work by Kauffman. Kauffman never outlined a theoretical position in print. However, the artist's biographer de Rossi, described the artist as 'la Pittrice delle Grazie'. In eighteenth-century terms, grace embodied the reason, erudition, judgment, and balance of her painting, aspects reinforced by her rational, learned, and virtuous personality.⁸ What makes *Abraham driving Hagar and Ishmael into the Desert* so remarkable is that it shows Kauffman reaching beyond her standard vocabulary of gracefulness to produce an image of Biblical grandeur.

NOTES

1. Lady Victoria Manners and G. C. Williamson, *Angelica Kauffman RA. Her Life and Works*, London, 1924, p.162.
2. Giovanni Gherardo De Rossi, *Vita di Angelica Kauffmann Pittrice*, Florence, 1810, pp.16–17.
3. Wendy Wassyng Roworth, 'Between 'Old Tiber' and 'Envious Thames': The Angelica Kauffman Connection', in eds. David Marshall, Susan Russell and Karin Wolfe, *Roma Britannica: Art Patronage and Cultural Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, London, 2011, p.294.
4. 'Wendy Wassyng Roworth, 'The Residence of the Arts': Angelica Kauffman's place in Rome', in eds. Paula Findlen, Wendy Wassyng Roworth and Catherine M. Sama, *Italy's Eighteenth Century*, Stanford, 2009, pp.151–171.
5. Alberto Turinetti di Priero, *La prigioniera di Fenestrelle. Note su Giovanni Antonio e Polissena Turinetti del Priero*, in 'Studi piemontesi', XXIX, no.2, 2000, pp.597–61.
6. Laura Facchin, *Bartolomeo Cavalleri agente dell'aristocrazia sabauda a Roma*, in 'Rivista della Biblioteca di Storia e Cultura del Piemonte Giuseppe Grosso', VII, 2004, pp.9–43.
7. M. D'Azeglio, *I miei ricordi*, XI, Florence, 1883, pp.50,51,54.
8. Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi writing in *Memorie per le belle Arti*, April 1785, p.LIV.

PORTRAIT OF PHILIP STANHOPE

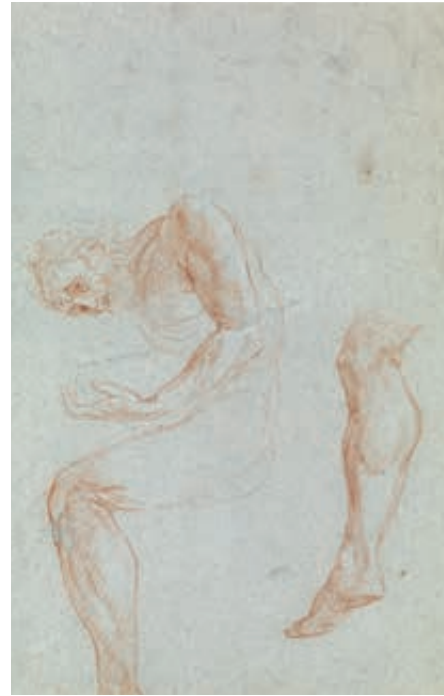
Oil on canvas
38 × 28½ inches · 965 × 724 mm
Painted c.1750

COLLECTIONS

Marcelle Nicolle, attaché honoraire au musée du Louvre;
Trotti et Cie, Paris;
Hermann Heilbuth (1861–1945) Copenhagen 1920–1921;
Nanna Rasmussen lothe, (d.1957), Lake Forest, Illinois;
Lothe sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, 19 April 1958, lot 311 (as French School, eighteenth century, portrait of a nobleman);
Julius H Weitzner, by 1960;
David Daniels, acquired from the above 1963;
Daniels sale, Sotheby's, New York, 10 November 1993, lot 37;
Jonathan Kagan, New York;
Kagan sale, Sotheby's, New York, 22 May 1997, lot 95;
Private collection to 2019

LITERATURE

Karl Madsen, *Catalogue of a Collection of Paintings*, Copenhagen, 1920, p.136, no.79 (as by François-Hubert Drouais);
Ernst Emmerling, *Pompeo Batoni: Sein Leben und Werk*, Darmstadt, 1932, pp.108–9, no.62 (c.1768);
Harald Olsen, *Italian Paintings and Sculpture in Denmark*, Copenhagen, 1961, p.39;
Anthony M Clark & Edgar Peters Bowron (ed.) *Pompeo Batoni: A Complete Catalogue of His Works with an Introductory Text*, London, 1985, p.251, no.151, pl. 143;
Sergio Benedetti, 'Pier Leone Ghezzi, il giovane Reynolds e i primi 'milordi' di Pompeo Batoni', in ed. Liliana Barroero, *Intorno a Batoni*, Lucca, 2009, pp.40–48;
Edgar Peters Bowron, *Pompeo Batoni, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, 2016, vol.1, pp.166–168, no.143.



EXHIBITED

Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, on loan, 1920–21, (lent by Hermann Heilbuth);
Storrs, The William Benton Museum of Art, *The Academy of Europe: Rome in the 18th Century*, 1973, no.79 (as c.1748);
Colnaghi, New York, *Pompeo Batoni (1708–1787): A Loan Exhibition of Paintings*, 1982, no.12.

Accompanied by Batoni's drapery study for the portrait.

above: Pompeo Batoni
Anchises for Aeneas's flight from Troy (recto)
Studies for the costume for the portrait Philip Stanhope (verso)

Red chalk on blue paper
15½ × 10½ inches · 391 × 265 mm · c.1750
Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd

This characteristic, beautifully painted portrait by Pompeo Batoni depicts Philip Stanhope the recipient of perhaps the most famous set of letters written in the eighteenth century, sent by his father Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield and published as *Letters to His son on the Art of Becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman*. Stanhope was recorded in Rome between December 1749 and March 1750, where he was staying on Strada Paolina by Easter 1750 with his tutor, Walter Harte. The present portrait has been thought to depict a Danish sitter on the basis of a mis-reading of its twentieth-century provenance, but more recently, Sergio Benedetti identified the sitter on the basis of a caricature by Pier Leone Ghezzi. The caricature, in the collection of the Istituto Italiano per la Grafica in Rome, shows Stanhope in profile, his





Pier Leone Ghezzi
Caricature of Philip Stanhope
Pen and ink, extensively inscribed by the artist · 1750
Rome, Istituto Italiano per la Grafica

exaggerated physiognomy corresponding closely with the features of the sitter in Batoni's portrait. Both show a high forehead, prominent nose and lips and both are shown wearing their own hair in the style of a fashionable wig.¹ A contemporary observed of Stanhope in Venice that his 'face is pleasing, his countenance sensible, and his look clever. His figure is at present rather too square; but if he shoots up, which he has matter and years for, he will then be a good size.'²

The portrait is undoubtedly of an English sitter. As Bowron has noted, he: 'is dressed in the English fashion and his costume is similar to those worn by several of Batoni's British sitters and, like them he also wears a black silk ribbon around his neck in a style called a solitaire.' As Bowron further observes: 'Batoni's various uses of the length of black silk known as a solitaire, worn as a fashionable accoutrement of well-dressed men from about 1730, reveal his dexterity in manipulating the details of sitters' dress in order to supply each with a unique, fresh image that makes every portrait individual.'³ In the present portrait the black silk ribbon is neatly tucked into the sitter's waistcoat. The pose is one of studied ease: the right hand shown holding a book and the left gesturing in a way that suggests the sitter is engaged in informed discussion. The dress is formal, but not elaborate and the landscape setting subtly points to the schedule of the Grand Tour with the inclusion of a circular building, possibly the sixth-century church of San Teodoro, situated at the foot of the Palatine Hill. As Bowron and Kerber have observed, writing about Batoni's portraits of the 1750s, the: 'distinction of these early portraits of Irish and English sitters is their

delicate handling, liquid touch, and sensitive rendering of the textures of the sitters' dress, in particular garments edged with fur, which Batoni used to great effect.'⁴ In the present portrait the rich blue velvet jacket is accented with the fringe of white fur, which is exquisitely rendered.

Bowron commends the 'sensitive drawn portrait' and Batoni's handling of the costume in particular, associating it with a number of similarly treated portraits made around 1750.⁵ The pose and costume are recorded on the verso of an autograph drawing by Batoni showing studies of the figure of Anchises in red chalk relating to his great painting of *Aeneas's Flight from Troy* painted in 1748 and now in Lucca.⁶ Clark accepted the black chalk study on the verso as autograph, but Bowron has suggested that it is not by Batoni, but by another hand who had access to Batoni's studio.⁷ The drawing is a rapid notation of the pose of the sitter in our portrait, showing the careful arrangement of the ribbons of the solitaire, the hang of the blue coat and loose arrangement of the hands. But it seems unlikely to have been made as a ricordo after the completed portrait as the black chalk study differs in crucial details from the finished portrait: the size and arrangements of the sleeves, the precise line of the coat, and the presence of a button on the outside of the left cuff. The strengthened line under the right arm and edge of the coat suggests that the drawing was made whilst the portrait was in progress. The hesitancy of certain lines and the strength of others look like an artist deliberating over the arrangement of costume, rather than copying a completed composition. This is one of only a handful of drawings made in Batoni's studio that relate

specifically to a known portrait and has accompanied the portrait since the middle of the twentieth century.

Stanhope certainly had his portrait painted in Rome. In a letter dated 11 January 1750, Lord Chesterfield enthuses about the news from Rome noting that Stanhope's tutor, Walter Harte had written to tell him: 'two things that give me great satisfaction: one is that there are very few English at Rome; the other is that you frequent the best foreign companies.' He goes on to add: 'I long for your picture, which Mr Harte tells me is now drawing. I want to see your countenance, your air, and even your dress; the better they all three are, the better I am not wise enough to despise any one of them. Your dress, at least, is in your own power.'⁸ Draw in this sense certainly meant paint. In 1750 there were few portraitists patronised by British patrons in Rome and Batoni was certainly the most successful and prominent. No other portrait of Stanhope is known.

Chesterfield had requested Stanhope's portrait when he and Harte were in Venice. Stipulating that: 'I would have you drawn exactly as you are, and in no whimsical dress: and I lay more stress upon the likeness of the picture, than upon the taste and skill of the painter.'⁹ Whilst Chesterfield had asked for a miniature from Venice, he was more likely to demand a painted portrait from Rome.¹⁰ The portrait arrived with Chesterfield in London and he enthused to Stanhope: 'I have received your picture, which I have long waited for with impatience: I wanted to see your countenance from whence I am very apt, as I believe most people are, to form some general opinion of the mind. If the painter has taken you



as well as he has done Mr Harte (for his picture is by far the most like I ever saw in my life), I draw good conclusions from your countenance, which has both spirit and finesse to it. In bulk you are pretty well increased since I saw you; if your height has not increased in proportion, I desire that you will make hast to, complete it. Seriously, I believe that your exercises at Paris

Pompeo Batoni, Robert Clements, later 1st Earl of Leitrim, (1732–1804)
Oil on canvas
39¾ × 29¾ inches · 1010 × 756 mm · c.1753–54
Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College,
Hanover, New Hampshire

will make you shoot up to a good size; your legs, by all accounts, seem to promise it. Dancing excepted, the wholesome part is the best part of those academical exercises.'¹¹ The letter is interesting for the mention of two portraits, one of Stanhope and the other of Walter Harte and for Chesterfield's specific commendation of the portraits' verisimilitude. This was a feature of Batoni's portraiture that was much praised at this date by British sitters.

As Bowron and Kerber note: 'Batoni's skill in capturing an accurate physiognomic likeness was a critical element of his eminence in the field of portraiture. No contemporary portrait painter in Rome could draw more incisively than Batoni, and his skill as a draughtsman meant that few painters could equal his ability to delineate the features of a face. Batoni "values himself for making a striking likeness of everyone he paints" wrote John Thorpe, and accurate likenesses were demanded by Batoni's clients.'¹²

There is evidence that Walter Harte certainly knew Batoni and had some experience of his painting and prices, he wrote to the traveller Thomas Steavens, whom he and Stanhope had met and befriended in Venice, from Rome on 7 January 1750: 'here you wd oblige me with your Picture; for there are two very good Painters, but Pompeo's price is exorbitant, & therefore I don't desire you sh.d ever employ him on my score. For a Busto length without hands, he only asks 20 sequins. Nor is he a good draughtsman, tho a lovely colourist.'¹³ This implies that Harte had intimate knowledge of Batoni's working practice and gives strength to the hypothesis that he had already sat for his portrait. The second painter Harte refers to is presumably Anton Raphael Mengs, there is no evidence that either he or Stanhope sat to Mengs.

Stanhope and Harte had a conventional Grand Tour, overseen at arms-length by Chesterfield, whose letters offered a running commentary on what they should see, do and how they should behave. They undertook a tour of antiquities and were apparently accepted in patrician Roman society. Stanhope evidently encountered Pier Leone Ghezzi who made the satirical profile study now in the Istituto Italiano per la Grafica in Rome.

In Rome Stanhope met and fell in love with Eugenia Peters, they were married in secret in Dresden, Stanhope keen to keep his marriage from his father. In the end Stanhope never lived up to the expectations placed on him by Chesterfield, unable (by temperament or choice) to acquire the graces that his father had tried so hard to impart. He did not rise as expected in the Diplomatic Services, preferring instead an unpretentious domestic life. Often in ill health, he died of dropsy in St Gervais, France on 16 November 1768, aged just 36, he is buried at Vaucluse. It is suggestive that the earliest provenance of the present painting is French.

When Lord Chesterfield died in 1773, his will caused much gossip: while providing for the two grandsons – £100 annuity each, plus £10,000 – he left Eugenia Stanhope nothing. Faced with the problem of supporting herself, she sold Chesterfield's letters to the publisher J. Dodsley for fifteen hundred guineas. Chesterfield had never intended them for publication and the result was a storm of controversy due to their perceived immorality, which ensured continual reprints, making it one of the most enduring books of the eighteenth century.

NOTES

1. See Sergio Benedetti, 'Pier Leone Ghezzi, il giovane Reynolds e I primi 'milordi' di Pompeo Batoni', in ed. Liliana Barroero, *Intorno a Batoni*, Lucca, 2009, pp.46–48.
2. Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters to his son by the Earl of Chesterfield, of the fine art of becoming a man of the world and a gentleman*, New York, 1937, p.251.
3. Edgar Peters Bowron, *Pompeo Batoni, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, 2016, vol.I, p.226.
4. Edgar Peters Bowron and Peter Björn Kerber, *Pompeo Batoni: Prince of Painters in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, New Haven and London, 2007, pp.52–53.
5. Edgar Peters Bowron, *Pompeo Batoni, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, 2016, vol.I, p.167.
6. Edgar Peters Bowron, *Pompeo Batoni, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, 2016, vol.I, pp.130–131.
7. Anthony M Clark & Edgar Peters Bowron (ed.) *Pompeo Batoni: A Complete Catalogue of His Works with an Introductory Text*, London, 1985, cat.no. D142, p.384; Edgar Peters Bowron, *Pompeo Batoni, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, 2016, vol.II, cat. no.D129, p.665.
8. Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters to his son by the Earl of Chesterfield, of the fine art of becoming a man of the world and a gentleman*, New York, 1937, p.283.
9. Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters to his son by the Earl of Chesterfield, of the fine art of becoming a man of the world and a gentleman*, New York, 1937, p.223.
10. Stanhope and Harte were looked after by Sir James Gray who was the British Resident, although Gray sat to Rosalba Carriera, there is no evidence that either Stanhope or Harte sat to Rosalba in Venice.
11. Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters to his son by the Earl of Chesterfield, of the fine art of becoming a man of the world and a gentleman*, New York, 1937, p.321.
12. Edgar Peters Bowron and Peter Björn Kerber, *Pompeo Batoni: Prince of Painters in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, New Haven and London, 2007, p.37.
13. Quoted in Sergio Benedetti, 'Pier Leone Ghezzi, il giovane Reynolds e I primi 'milordi' di Pompeo Batoni', in ed. Liliana Barroero, *Intorno a Batoni*, Lucca, 2009, p.48, n.31.

THE HEAD OF A POINTER

Red and white chalk
 5¾ × 6½ inches · 133 × 174 mm
 Inscribed: 'No. 43 Collezione Santo Varni'
 c. 1750

COLLECTIONS
 Santo Varni (1807–1885) (L. 3531);
 Private collection to 2019.



Pompeo Batoni, *Joseph Damer, later Viscount Milton and 1st Earl of Dorchester* (1718–1798)

Oil on canvas
 38 × 28 inches · 965 × 711 mm · c.1750
 Private collection

This charming red chalk study of a dog was made by Batoni in around 1750 shortly after he began making portraits of visiting British travellers in Rome. The incisive, ad vivum drawing of a pointer can be related to at least two portraits of British sitters. As such, the sheet points to an undervalued aspect of Batoni's graphic output and an important element of his studio practice.

Batoni was born in Lucca, he settled in Rome in 1727 where he studied under Imperiali and was elected to the Accademia di San Luca in 1741. He became the outstanding portrait painter in Rome, and more than two hundred British travellers sat to him between 1740 and 1784. Batoni developed a distinctive mode for depicting British sitters, often showing them posed with an attribute which pointed to the learning inherent in undertaking the Grand Tour: an antique bust, map, engraving or book. These props were regularly repeated, suggesting that they either formed part of the studio, or that Batoni retained drawings that he could use to help assemble portraits. Batoni's sitters also regularly posed with dogs. There is evidence that British travellers regularly acquired pets on their travels, Horace Walpole, for example, bought his Roman spaniel Patapan in Florence, but the survival of the present drawing suggests that Batoni also had a stock of life studies of animals which he could deploy in his finished portraits. The lively red chalk drawing of a pointer was used as the model for the dog in the portrait of *Joseph Damer, 1st Earl of Dorchester* painted in around 1750.¹ In the portrait Batoni shows Damer in a rural setting, holding a gun with a still life of game, adding the pointer to suggest that Damer is resting from a day's sport.

This finely modelled study is a rare survival from Batoni's oeuvre. As Bowron and Kerber have noted: 'that so few of Batoni's drawings are known today – only about four hundred drawings by his hand. Dating throughout his long career, survive – suggests that many more remain unaccounted for', previously unrecorded, this drawing is therefore a significant addition giving valuable evidence for the way Batoni constructed his portraits.² This sheet was in the collection of the nineteenth-century Genoese sculptor Santo Varni, whose inscription is visible on the bottom right.



NOTES

1. Edgar Peters Bowron, *Pompeo Batoni, A complete catalogue of his paintings*, 2016, vol. I, pp.140–150, cat. no.127.
2. Edgar Peters Bowron and Peter Björn Kerber, *Pompeo Batoni: Prince of Painters in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, New Haven and London, 2007, p.162.

A PORTRAIT STUDY

Black, white and sanguine chalk on grey paper
394 × 298 mm; 15½ × 11¾ inches
With the artist's studio stamp (lower right) also
Inscribed by M.H.Bloxham on the mount
'Sir Godfrey Kneller/ Portrait sketch. Sarah
Duchess of Marlborough'
Drawn c.1660

COLLECTIONS

Sir Peter Lely (L. 2092);
Lely studio sale, 16–24 April 1688;
Matthew Holbeche Bloxam (1805–1888);
Rugby School, given by the above c.1880;
Rugby School sale, Christie's, 4 December
2018, lot.73

EXHIBITED

London, National Portrait Gallery, *Sir Peter Lely
1618–80, 1978–9, no.63*

This sheet is an exceptionally rare full-figure study by Peter Lely, executed in black and white chalks on buff-coloured paper, it is unusually complete and ambitious. The drawing shows Lely exploring a pose that he deployed successfully in a number of ambitious portraits made shortly after the Restoration including of *Anne Digby, Countess of Sunderland* one of the 'Windsor Beauties', the series of eleven portraits commissioned or at least assembled by Anne Hyde, Duchess of York from around 1662. This incisive drawing offers important evidence for the way Lely worked, particularly his use of preliminary studies in his portrait practice. As with many of Lely's working drawings the sheet was evidently in his studio when he died, when Lely's collection stamp was applied to it by his executor Roger North.

Lely was born in Soest, Westphalia,

he was trained in Haarlem and came to Britain in about 1643. As a talented and ambitious young artist it is possible that he arrived in England with the specific intention of succeeding Van Dyck, who had died two years previously, as the King's Painter. According to the engraver and antiquarian George Vertue, Lely spent his first few years in England working for the successful portrait painter and picture dealer George Geldorp, pursuing what an early commentator, Bainbrigg Buckeridge, called: 'the Natural Bent of his Genius, in Landscips and Painted with small Figures, as likewise Historical Compositions.'¹ Buckeridge continues, stating that Lely soon found: 'the practice of *Face-Painting* more encourag'd here' and therefore 'turn'd his study that way, wherein, in a short time, he succeeded so well that he surpass'd all his Contemporaries in Europe.'² By the Restoration Lely had achieved a maturity and distinction that marked him out from his contemporaries, combining something of Van Dyck's grace with his own more robust manner. His appointment in 1661 as Principal Painter, and his naturalisation in the following year, Lely was recognised as the chief artist in England.

We know quite a lot about Lely's studio practice, thanks to a number of contemporary accounts and it is clear that drawing was central to his production of painted portraits. Lely seems to have made quick chalk sketches to catch a sitter's likeness at a first sitting. In 1673 the painter William Gandy made observations about Lely's methods, noting that he first: 'slightly chalks out the body', then laid in the face, and, 'the person sitting in his intended posture', he next sketched in the hands and

clothes adding: 'He does all this by the life presently whilst the person stays so you have a picture in an instant.'³ This process is confirmed by another account from a contemporary. In the 1670s Lely's friends the painter Mary Beale and her husband Charles, a patent clerk, art dealer and colour-man, commissioned a number of portraits from him, including one of the future Archbishop of Canterbury, John Tillotson. During the initial sitting with Tillotson, Beale observed Lely make a drawing: 'first in chalk rudely & afterwards in colours and rubbed upon that a little colour very thin in places for the shadows, and laid a touch of light upon the heightening of the forehead.'⁴ This 'rude' study was evidently designed to serve as a guide to Lely himself, at the same time acting as important material for use in his busy and productive studio.

These rapid, full-figure studies are rare. The present sheet shows Lely working out the pose of a seated woman precisely in the manner described by Gandy and Beale. Lely appears to have captured in black chalk the disposition of the figure, the fall of the dress and drapery before working on the delicately arranged arms and hands with touches of white chalk, finally adding touches of sanguine to articulate the shadows and animate the features and hair. Lely evidently worked out the figure on the page in the first instance, perhaps adding the head as an after-thought, resulting in the curiously truncated format of the portrait. This is perhaps explained by Lely's desire to capture the sitter's hands and the arrangement of the costume, rather than the sitter's features which he could better record during a sitting for the portrait itself. Lely seems to have used complex life studies such as this as





Peter Lely, *Studies of Hands*
Chalk on paper
15 × 10½ inches · 382 × 268 mm · c.1660
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

the basis for several portraits. Oliver Millar identified this sheet as forming the basis for Lely's portraits of the courtier *Anne Digby, Countess of Sunderland* versions of which are at Hampton Court and Althorp and *Lady Elizabeth Carey* in the collection of the Earl of Roden.⁵ In each of these portraits Lely follows the pose worked out in the present drawing, merely altering elaborations of costume and jewellery.

The evidence suggests that Lely used drawings at every stage of the portraiture process. He probably showed prospective sitters drawings with various poses worked out to help them choose how they wished to be depicted; he made compositional sketches, such as that of Tillotson described

by Beale, and then made studies as the painting progressed to work out costumes, poses and gestures. It is the latter group of studies which survive in greater numbers, suggesting that they were far more central to Lely's practice. Beale describes Lely making a drawing whilst he was painting a portrait Beale had commissioned of his son, also called Charles, in 1672. Beale noted that after: 'Mr Lely dead coloured my son Charles picture... he took a drawing upon paper after an Indian gown which he had put on his back, in order to the finishing of the Drapery of it.'⁶ We can therefore infer that sheets such as ours had a practical purpose. Draperies constituted areas of secondary importance in the finished portrait, Lely would have reserved the valuable time he had with the sitter to concentrate on the face and expression. The drawings he therefore made during a sitting could be worked up on the canvas by assistants, or at the very least in the absence of the sitter.

Scholars have been slow to appreciate these process drawings, made during the execution of a portrait. Lely was famed for having stock poses, in his accounts, Lely's executor, Roger North, added a number to Lely's unfinished portraits, suggesting that each number corresponded to an established pose: 'Whole length postures no.8 & 1', and 'Sr. Ralph Verney ½ 49', for example.⁷ Lely's reliance on formulaic poses, on studio assistance and on replicating his own compositions has resulted in a degree of critical neglect. As Oliver Miller observed: 'Lely's reputation has suffered because it has made to rest so often on portraits in which he himself had no part and because among the portraits he did paint there is not sufficient variety in scale, in layout or in

the relationship between the sitter and the spectator.'⁸ But the versatility and subtlety of Lely's portraiture is instantly visible in a life study such as this. This intimate drawing communicates Lely's virtuosity and creativity, injecting life into a conventionally arranged subject.

NOTES

1. Bainbrigg Buckeridge, *An Essay Towards an English School of Painters*, London, 1706, p.455.
2. Bainbrigg Buckeridge, *An Essay Towards an English School of Painters*, London, 1706, p.456.
3. London, British Library, Add. MS 22950.f.3.
4. G. Vertue, eds. L. Cust and A. Hind, 'The Notebooks of George Vertue', *The Walpole Society*, London, 1929–47, IV, p.172.
5. Oliver Millar, *Sir Peter Lely*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 1978, p.74.
6. G. Vertue, eds. L. Cust and A. Hind, 'The Notebooks of George Vertue', *The Walpole Society*, London, 1929–47, IV, p.172.
7. Eds. Catharine MacLeod and Julia Alexander, *Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 2001, p.55.
8. Oliver Millar, *Sir Peter Lely*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 1978, p.27.

A STUDY OF KING LEAR (recto) · A STUDY OF A WOMAN (verso)

The recto: Black chalk

The verso: a pen, brown ink and pencil drawing numbered 'No. 158' in pen and ink at the top centre of the sheet by the Rev. John Romney with the black ink stamp of the collector Alfred de Pass in the lower left corner
11¾ × 17¾ inches · 298 × 450 mm
c. 1773

COLLECTIONS

George Romney;
Rev. John Romney, the artist's son (1757–1832)
Whitstock Hall, Ulverton;
John Romney, Whitstock Hall, (1817–75) son of the above;
Lawrence Romney, Whitstock Hall, brother of the above;
Elizabeth Romney, Whitstock Hall, aunt of the above (d.1893);
Romney sale, Christie's 24–25 May 1894 (unknown part lot);
Alfred de Pass (1861–1952) [L.108a], purchased at the above sale;
Royal Institution of Cornwall (Royal Cornwall Museum) Truro, by gift from the above, no.45 in the de Pass album;
Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro sale, Christie's 22 February, 1966, lot 38 (part) described one side only "A Prostrate Woman";
Alistair Matthews, purchased at the above sale; Sotheby's, lot 343, 16 October, 1986;
Christopher Powney;
H.M.J. Watson, Hamilton, Ontario, purchased from the above;
By descent to 2019

This large, grandly worked head study in black chalk was made by George Romney during his time spent studying in Italy. A rare and important drawing, this double-sided sheet belongs to a group Romney made in Rome and almost certainly represents the head of King Lear, on the verso is a characteristically fluid ink study of a prostrate woman. From the beginning of his career Romney entertained ambitions of becoming a successful history painter, producing a treatment of *King Lear in the Tempest tearing off his Robes* in around 1762, a painting which he entered into a lottery to enable him to move to London. Throughout his professional career Romney continually returned to favourite subjects from Shakespeare, repeatedly making bold compositional studies. Large-scale treatment of heads such as this are far rarer and suggest Romney's renewed commitment to becoming a historical painter whilst he was studying in Italy. As such, this sheet offers an important opportunity to consider the role drawing played in Romney's development as an artist.

On moving to London, Romney's twin goals were material success and artistic fame. As Alex Kidson has described, Romney set out to succeed as an history painter, devoting most of his first year in London to labouring on two unwieldy canvases, *The Death of Rizzio*, which he destroyed and *The Death of General Wolfe*, which remains untraced. The latter work—the first treatment in British art of the subject—achieved considerable notoriety when, in an atmosphere of political intrigue, the Society of Arts first awarded it and then withdrew its second prize for history painting. Kidson characterised the

episode as a failure, pushing Romney down the more commercially lucrative route of portraiture.

In March 1773 Romney travelled to Rome in the company of the painter Ozias Humphry. In Italy he spent a great deal of time studying the works of Raphael, both the frescos of the Vatican *Stanza* and Raphael's great altarpiece the *Transfiguration*. On their arrival in Rome, Humphry and Romney found that the Welsh painter William Parry 'had a scaffold and other conveniences erected' before the *Transfiguration* in San Pietro in Montorio. Romney took advantage of the scaffolding to make copies of sections of the painting, John Romney noting: 'while employed in this laborious undertaking, the monks, at their stated periods of worship, used to come and prostrate themselves at the altar immediately under him, without interrupting him any respect, or being themselves interrupted.'

As Nancy Pressly identified in 1979 Romney made a sequence of large black chalk studies of heads which relate to his study of Raphael.¹ Pressly published a head at the Yale Center for British Art which she related to one of the pursuing Angels in Raphael's *Expulsion of Heliiodorus* from the Stanza di Eliodoro, noting that Romney intended it as a preparatory treatment of the head of Edgar from King Lear. Another sheet, now in the Folger Shakespeare Library, has been identified as a study for Lear and loosely based on one of the Apostles from the lower half of the *Transfiguration*. To these we can add the present boldly worked black chalk head which derives from Romney's intense study of the lower half of the



recto



verso



Transfiguration and shows him working on the expressive possibilities of a further treatment of a subject from Lear. It is telling that all three head studies are in black chalk on the same rough textured, Roman paper and all three relate to the story of King Lear, suggesting Romney was seriously contemplating another treatment of the subject.

In Rome Romney had considerable contact with other artists, above all Henry Fuseli, who in kindling his future energies as an imaginative draughtsman provided perhaps the most profound and lasting influence of the entire trip. Fuseli, who was a remarkably inventive iconographer was then engaged in designing interior frescos in the manner of the Sistine chapel devoted to the plays of Shakespeare, would undoubtedly have encouraged Romney to use the materials he gathered from his study of early masters in his conception of new history paintings. This large-scale head study is therefore rare evidence of Romney's

determination to pursue history painting whilst studying in Italy made shortly before he began his sequence of large-scale historical cartoons now in Liverpool.

On his return to Britain, Romney continued to experiment with compositions derived from King Lear, making drawings of *Lear Awakened by Cordelia* and variations of *King Lear in the Tempest*, but he seems never to have painted another treatment of the subject. Romney's historical drawings increasingly became separate to his work as a painter, a leisure activity, rather than strictly preparatory for finished paintings. This sheet belonged to Romney's son, John, who numbered it prominently on the verso '158', it seems likely to have been included in the sale of his daughter Elizabeth's drawings, where it was acquired by the South African collector Alfred de Pass where it was no.45 in the album of drawings he assembled.

George Romney, *King Lear Awake*
Pen and ink and wash
13¼ × 18⅝ inches · 337 × 459 mm · mid 1770s
© The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

George Romney
The head of King Lear
Black chalk
13¼ × 18⅝ inches · 337 × 459 mm · 1773–5
Used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC, Call #: Art flat b5 no.6

NOTE

1. Nancy Pressly, *The Fuseli Circle in Rome: Early Romantic Art of the 1770s*, Exh. cat., New Haven (Yale Center for British Art), 1979, pp.119–120.

BARDOLPH

Pen and ink
17 × 13⁷/₈ inches · 432 × 352 mm, oval
Drawn in 1774

COLLECTIONS
Presumably Jane Mortimer wife of the artist, her sale, Christie's 25 March 1808, lot.21; Gilbert Benthall (1880–1961); William Drummond; Private collection to 2018

LITERATURE
Gilbert Benthall, *John Hamilton Mortimer ARA Drawings and Engraved Works, with a Revised Account of his Life*, typescript MS, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, p.196; John Sunderland, 'John Hamilton Mortimer: His Life and Works', *The Walpole Society*, 1986, vol.52, cat.no. 96.5a, pp.162–163 (as location unknown).

EXHIBITED
London, Society of Artists, 1775, no 179.

ENGRAVED
Etched and published by J. H. Mortimer, 20 May 1775. Inscribed: 'BARDOLPH./My Lord do you see these meteors? Do you behold/ these exhalations?/ Henry the IV Act the II Scene the 9.'

This grandly worked drawing was made by John Hamilton Mortimer in preparation for his celebrated series of engravings depicting twelve characters from Shakespeare which were exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1775. This was the major graphic project of Mortimer's life; he enlisted the celebrated actor David Garrick to manage the subscription and dedicated the plates to the new President of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds. The engravings themselves represented a major shift in the visual treatment of Shakespeare: rather than showing dramatic scenes from plays, Mortimer created evocative heads that capture the characters and in one case, the *Poet* from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the personification of imagery in the text, rather than an actual member of the cast. Enormously popular following their publication in 1776, the prints were reissued by Thomas Falser in 1812 and 1816, but only six of the original drawings were identified by John Sunderland, making the rediscovery of the present sheet hugely significant. Preserved in outstanding condition, this drawing offers remarkable evidence for the process Mortimer used to make his etchings as well as underlining his spectacularly assured draughtsmanship.

Mortimer's twelve drawings were exhibited together at the Society of Artists in 1775 and represent the last great artistic project of his life. Articled initially to the portrait painter Thomas Hudson, Mortimer left his apprenticeship early to work with the radical history painter and portraitist Robert Edge Pine. Trained as a portraitist, Mortimer had ambitions to pursue history painting. In 1759 the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce



John Hamilton Mortimer
Bardolph, "Henry IV", Part II, Act II, Scene IX
Engraving · 16 × 13⁷/₈ inches · 406 × 345 mm · 1775
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund

began to offer premiums for English (and later British) history painting. Mortimer won second prize in 1763 and in 1764 he won the first prize for *St Paul Preaching to the Ancient Britons* now in the Guildhall, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Mortimer continued to explore subjects from British history, completing a remarkable sequence of proto-romantic machines which he exhibited at the Society of Artists, an organisation to which he was devoted. Mortimer was active in setting up the Society's academy of drawing and painting in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, in 1769. He was made vice-president in 1770 and president in 1774–5.

In the early 1770s Mortimer turned to more disturbing subject matter, such as scenes of witchcraft, monsters, and, in particular, banditti or bandit scenes,



which came to be considered his speciality. Influenced by the etchings of the seventeenth-century artist Salvator Rosa, Mortimer's banditti subjects, often in narrative series, were frequently drawn and etched, either by himself or by engravers such as Robert Blyth, the drawings being exhibited as finished works at the Society of Artists. His most successful graphic project were the twelve drawings he made of heads from Shakespeare and the etchings he published after the drawings.

Thanks to surviving correspondence that Mortimer was keen to etch and publish in a limited edition the drawings himself. For this he enlisted the help of David Garrick. In a letter to Mrs Montagu of 27 March 1775, Garrick wrote:

*'the next favour I had to solicit was Your name, which I more Glory in than if Possesd. & to be added to ye. most noble list I have got for a very ingenious Man who has undertaken 6 Etchings from the principal Characters of Shakespeare. I have sent you a Sample of the work, which I must beg you to return to day or tomorrow – without your permission I have plac'd you at the head of my List, & Everybody agrees to the propriety of such a Leader. Should you meet with any choice Spirits, whose names may be easily got, they will not discredit themselves, & do great Service to a most ingenious man.'*¹

This places Mortimer's project importantly at the heart of a major reassessment of Shakespeare's works around 1770. Elizabeth Montagu had published *An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear* in 1769. This work was the result of several years of study of both drama and criticism. Full of nationalistic pride, the *Essay* defended Shakespeare against the attacks of foreign critics such as Voltaire, comparing



John Hamilton Mortimer, *Literary Characters Assembled around the Medallion of Shakespeare*

Pen and black ink
8¼ × 11¼ inches · 210 × 286 mm · 1776
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

him with classical Greek and more modern French dramatists, none of whom had all of his virtues. Another particular target was Samuel Johnson, whose *Preface to Shakespeare* had appeared in 1765. Montagu argued that 'he should have said more or have said nothing' in concentrating on the historical context in which the plays were written and their subsequent treatment by editors and critics, he had failed to engage with the texts of Shakespeare's plays and to use them to argue for Shakespeare's superiority as a dramatist. The *Essay* sought to remedy what Montagu argued was Johnson's neglect of Shakespeare's 'dramatic genius'. Mortimer had already fired a number of salvos in this debate, in 1765 Mortimer had drawn the frontispiece for Evan Lloyd's satirical poem *The Reviewers' Cave* which specifically attacked both Samuel Johnson and William

Warburton's edition of Shakespeare. In 1776 Mortimer produced a drawing of *Literary Characters Assembled around the Medallion of Shakespeare* for John Kenyon which again satirised Johnson.

It was in their conception, as John Sunderland observed, that Mortimer's Shakespearean Heads are a quite original contribution to the illustration of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century, being distant from both book illustrations of the period and from theatrical conversation pieces.² The drawings do not show contemporary actors en role in Shakespeare's plays, but Mortimer's own conception of the character derived from the text of the play. Thus, this penetrating drawing depicts the character of Bardolph, a soldier and thief who appears as a member of Falstaff's retinue in *Henry IV* parts I and II, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry V*, famed for his bulbous, red nose. Shakespeare consistently cites Bardolph's physiognomic excesses as evidence of his ferocity, dissolution and questionable moral stance. Prince Hal draws attention to his 'blush'd extempore' adding that his has 'fire and sword on [his] side', Bardolph himself points out that his face compares with 'meteors ... [and] exhalations'. Falstaff in several sustained passages continues the fire-related allusions christening Bardolph 'the Knight of the Burning Lamp', whilst another character describes him as an 'arrant malmsey-nose knave'. Mortimer attempts to capture the complexity of Bardolph's character, presenting him as a part dissolute, drink sozzled member of Falstaff's retinue and brave, loyal soldier.

Mortimer's delicate but taut draughtsmanship emphasises Bardolph's bulbous nose, whilst showing Bardolph's dextrous

hand clasping his pike. Rendered with a mass of fine lines and hatched shading the drawing very deliberately anticipates the etched lines of the print. The technique is particularly bold and demonstrates Mortimer's awareness of the drawings of seventeenth-century Italian painters such as Guercino and Salvator Rosa. The grotesque quality of Bardolph's features particularly recall the brown ink and wash caricatures by Guercino, several of which were published by Arthur Pond in the 1740s. Guercino was master of using the profile format, derived from antiquity, to add to the comic effect of his grotesque heads, something Mortimer captures in his depiction of Bardolph. Whilst the drawing appears close to the etching, there are a number of significant differences which raises the interesting question of the relationship between the exhibited sheets and the finished plates. The sheet is preserved in exceptional condition and unusually survives on an eighteenth-century mount.

NOTES

1. Ed. David Little and George M. Kahr, *The Letters of David Garrick*, Oxford, 1963, letter no.900.
2. John Sunderland, 'John Hamilton Mortimer: His Life and Works', *The Walpole Society*, 1986, vol.52, pp.76–82.



John Hamilton Mortimer
Poor Tom from King Lear

Pen and ink
13¼ × 10¾ inches · 336 × 273 mm · c.1775
© Victoria & Albert Museum, London,
Dyce collection

A BATTLE SCENE: POSSIBLY THE DEATH OF KING RICHARD III
FROM THE MASTER OF THE GIANTS ALBUM

Pencil and ink on paper
14 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 22 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches · 359 × 562 mm
Drawn 1779

COLLECTIONS
Roland, Browse and Delbanco, London, 1949;
Private collection, USA to 2019

This drawing is a previously unpublished sheet from an album made in Rome in the late 1770s. The album has stimulated periodic debate amongst scholars over the last forty years but the majority of sheets are now securely attributed to James Jefferys. This fluidly worked sheet depicts a particularly dynamic battle scene, the pen work characteristic of Jefferys' handling of figures in motion. In its bold linearity, outstanding state of preservation and remarkably immediate composition, this drawing encapsulates Jefferys' work and a peculiarly fertile moment of European art which saw the neoclassicism of Mengs metamorphose into the restless harbinger of William Blake's romanticism.

This drawing was part of an album of drawings initially attributed to an unknown hand who was dramatically christened by Roland, Browse and Delbanco 'The Master of the Giants' on account of the colossal, heroic figures with attenuated limbs which characterise the majority of the sheets. Comprising some twenty large sheets and a similar number of smaller sheets, they were first exhibited in London in 1949. Clearly made in Rome and demonstrating a close interest in sculpture as well as Italian printmaking, they were identified as having emanated from the international circle of artists who worked close to the Swiss painter Henry Fuseli. It was Nancy Pressly who first noted the similarity of some of the works formerly contained in the Roland, Browse and Delbanco album with the surviving documented drawings of the British history painter, James Jefferys.¹

Born in Maidstone, the son of a portraitist and coach builder, James Jefferys was

apprenticed to the celebrated London engraver William Woollett in 1771 and attended classes at the Royal Academy Schools between 1772 and 1775. At Woollett's studio he met the historical painter, draftsman, and print maker John Hamilton Mortimer, who would become an important role model. Jefferys exhibited historical drawings at the Royal Academy and the Society of Arts and in 1774 was awarded the Society's gold palette for his drawing, *Deluge*. The following year, Jefferys won one of the first travelling scholarships awarded by the Society of Dilettanti, which enabled him to study in Rome for three years. Soon after Jefferys' arrival in Rome, on 7 October 1775, the painter and art dealer Alexander Day mentioned in a letter to Ozias Humphry that he had seen a drawing by the young artist, which 'had infinite merit.' Jefferys' name appears sporadically in the standard Grand Tour sources, for example, he was listed as an 'Old London Acquaintance' by Thomas Jones, who met him in the Caffè degli Inglese in November 1776. As William Pressly has pointed out 'Jefferys' mental state may well have been precarious.'² In 1779 Elizabeth Banks, wife of the sculptor, Thomas Banks recorded an anecdote of Jefferys' extreme behaviour. Jefferys and the Swedish sculptor Johan Tobias Sergel had been in competition for the same woman, Jefferys followed her and confronted her in the street: 'having a brace of Pistols in his pocket, he gave her one, & after some altercation, told her she must kill him, or he would her.'³

Jefferys' surviving Roman drawings show a similar volatility. Whilst highly indebted to Henry Fuseli, the sheets from the Roland,





Browse and Delbanco album are, as William Pressly has noted: 'extreme in their distortions, going beyond even Fuseli's boldest work.'⁴ Fuseli had arrived in Rome in 1770 and shortly afterwards he began to produce highly inventive interpretations of literary subjects, particularly Shakespearean. Along with the sculptors Sergel and Banks, Fuseli found in the prescribed diet of Michelangelo and the antique, not classical harmony but vast, swollen heroic bodies engaged in violent actions, ingredients he recast to form a distinctive visual language.

As with so many of Fuseli's boldest drawings, the present sheet shows grand, muscular figures in violent action. The taunt physique of the figure on the far left, with its rippling torso captures the dramatically overblown qualities of late Roman sculpture that Fuseli so admired. As with so many of Fuseli's drawings, the literary source of the sheet is not immediately apparent. Although all the figures are naked, it may well be a depiction of a Shakespearean subject. William Pressly has identified many of the subjects depicted in

the Roland, Browse and Delbanco album as being Shakespearean in origin.⁵ The prominent horse's head in the bottom left of the drawing points to a depiction of the death of King Richard III from the last act of Shakespeare's play. In the midst of the Battle of Bosworth King Richard is deserted by Lord Stanley, his horse is killed from under him (prompting the famous declaration 'a horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!') and at the same moment fatally challenged by the Duke of Richmond, later Henry VII. Jefferys depicts Richard as the classic anti-hero, a convention that was repeated in the works of Fuseli, Nicolai Abildgaard and William Blake, all of whom depicted scenes from Shakespeare's play.

Master of the Giants, *Apollo and Daphne*

Pen and black ink with grey washes and graphite
Verso: pen and brown ink on medium, slightly textured, cream laid paper
4 7/8 x 21 inches · 359 x 533 mm · 1779
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

James Jefferys

A fallen warrior lying against a dead horse

Pen and grey wash over pencil
19 3/4 x 30 1/4 inches · 501 x 768 mm · 1779
Maidstone Museum & Bentlif Art Gallery
(MNEMG 2006.11.12)

NOTES

1. Nancy L Pressly, 'James Jefferys and the 'Master of the Giants'', *Burlington Magazine*, vol.119, no.889, April 1977, p.280, 282-285.
2. William L. Pressly, *The Artist as Original Genius: Shakespeare's 'Fine Frenzy' in late eighteenth-century British art*, Delaware, 2007, p.112.
3. Elizabeth Banks to Ozias Humphry, March 18 1779, quoted in: William L. Pressly, *The Artist as Original Genius: Shakespeare's 'Fine Frenzy' in late eighteenth-century British art*, Delaware, 2007, p.112.
4. William L. Pressly, *The Artist as Original Genius: Shakespeare's 'Fine Frenzy' in late eighteenth-century British art*, Delaware, 2007, p.112.
5. William L. Pressly, *The Artist as Original Genius: Shakespeare's 'Fine Frenzy' in late eighteenth-century British art*, Delaware, 2007, p.112.



ANTONY'S ORATION OVER THE DEAD CAESAR

Pencil, ink and wash
 8¾ × 13¼ inches · 222 × 337 mm
 Signed and inscribed: 'J. Flaxman Anthony's
 Oration /Death of Jul: Caesar'

COLLECTIONS
 Christopher Powney, London;
 H.M.J. Watson, Hamilton, Canada, acquired
 from the above in 1981;
 By descent to 2019

EXHIBITED
 London, Heim Gallery, *John Flaxman*, 10 March
 – 9 April, 1976, cat. no.40, repr.;
 London, Royal Academy of Arts Exhibition, *John
 Flaxman*, 1979, cat. no.6, repr.

This impressive drawing was made by
 John Flaxman early in his career and can be
 associated with a model of a bas-relief he
 exhibited of the same subject at the Royal
 Academy in 1781. Beautifully executed in
 ink and wash, this is a rare preparatory
 study showing Flaxman working out the
 composition for a sculptural relief, made



John Flaxman
A Self-portrait at the Age of 24
 Pen and ink, with pale pink tinting on face and hands
 with a mount of pen and ink and grey wash
 7¾ × 7¾ inches · 183 × 182 mm · 1779
 UCL Art Museum, University College London

before he developed his characteristic linear
 drawing style.

Flaxman was the son of a professional
 sculptor and he received his earliest educa-
 tion in his father's Covent Garden shop and
 studio. Flaxman's early prodigious talents
 as a draughtsman attracted the attention
 of two of his father's professional contacts,
 George Romney and Josiah Wedgwood,
 both of whom became important support-
 ers. In 1767 Flaxman received his first
 commission, for six black chalk drawings
 of subjects from classical literature, in the
 same year he began regularly to exhibit
 wax plaster models at the Society of Artists
 in London. When this drawing was first
 published in Christopher Powney's ground-
 breaking Flaxman exhibition in 1976, it was
 associated with Flaxman's 1768 exhibit at
 the Society of Artists: 'the death of Julius
 Caesar; a bas-relieve'. But it seems unlikely
 that the present drawing was made by
 the thirteen-year old Flaxman. As David
 Bindman first identified, the kneeling figure
 in the right foreground of the composition
 is a self-portrait. Flaxman's fixed expression
 and features show him closer in age to the
 powerful self-portrait drawing in the collec-
 tion of University College London which
 he made in 1779 at the age of 24 than in his
 early teens.

If we accept a date of around 1780
 for the present sheet, we can associate
 the composition with another exhibited
 bas-relief, one Flaxman showed at the Royal
 Academy in 1781.¹ By this date Flaxman had
 begun to work for the Wedgwood pottery
 factory as a designer, becoming arguably
 the most famous and skilful of all the
 artists employed by the potter. Flaxman's
 flowing, delicate lines, especially suited to

the decorative reliefs on vases and plaques,
 also appeared in wax and terracotta reliefs.
 Flaxman's most famous moulded relief in
 white jasperware, was given by Wedgwood
 to the British Museum and highly praised
 by Sir William Hamilton: 'I never saw a
 bas relief executed in the true and simple
 antique style half so well.'

The present sheet shows Flaxman work-
 ing out the composition for a bas-relief. The
 subject-matter, Antony's Oration over the
 body of Julius Caesar, was antique in origin,
 but most familiar to a British audience from
 Shakespeare. The subject was particularly
 susceptible to treatment as a bas-relief,
 with a frieze of figures arranged around
 the body of Caesar. Flaxman has placed the
 dead Caesar at the centre of the composi-
 tion, Antony behind, scroll in hand, whilst
 the Roman populace are ranged across
 the foreground. The drawing shows much
 evidence of Flaxman's working method, he
 changed the positions of hands, feet and
 poses suggesting the composition went
 through a complex gestation. The inclu-
 sion of Flaxman's bold and characterful
 self-portrait adds to the idea that this was a
 drawing of some significance to the young
 artist. The number of repositioned figures
 and level of experimentation throughout
 this sheet, is particularly rare in Flaxman's
 work raising the possibility that this is a rare
 and important survival for a sheet relating
 to a sculpture. The relief itself does not seem
 to survive.

NOTE

1. 'Death of Julius Caesar'; a bas-relief, no.476, see
 Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts:
 A Complete Dictionary of Contributors*, London,
 1905, vol.III, p.123.



PRIAM RETURNING TO TROY WITH THE BODY OF HECTOR

Oil on canvas
44⁷/₈ × 46¹/₂ inches · 1140 × 1180 mm
Painted between 1787 and 1791

COLLECTIONS
Commissioned in Rome by Frederick Hervey,
4th Earl of Bristol in 1787;
Delivered to the Earl of Bristol before 1795;
Private collection, Florence until 2019

'Durno some time since exhibited his large picture of Priam returning to Troy with the body of Hector, we think it the best thing he has done.'

Charles Grignon to George Cumberland¹

This impressive painting is the most ambitious historical canvas made by the British artist James Durno in Rome, commissioned by perhaps the most lavish Grand Tour patron of the eighteenth century, Frederick Hervey, Bishop of Derry and 4th Earl of Bristol. As such, *Priam Returning to Troy with the Body of Hector* offers important evidence of an artist tackling an Homeric subject-matter in the generation after Gavin Hamilton and represents a major work in the development of British neo-classicism.

Durno was born in London in 1755 to a Scottish father, the proprietor of a brewery at Kensington Gravel Pits. According to the archives of San Giovanni in Laterano in Rome, he was twenty-two in 1777. He was trained by Benjamin West, for whom he also worked as a copyist, and entered the Royal Academy Schools on 28 February 1769. Durno competed for the prizes offered for large-scale history paintings by the Society of Arts, winning 30 guineas for his picture *Margaret of Anjou with the Prince in the Wood Assailed by Robbers* in 1770 and 100 guineas for his picture *Isaac, a Tyrant of Cyprus, and his Daughter, Brought Prisoners before Richard the First* in 1771. Between 1767 and 1773 he exhibited one portrait and a number of historical subject pictures at the Society of Artists. At the beginning of the 1770s Durno worked with John Hamilton Mortimer, Francis Wheatley, and Thomas Jones as part of the team that provided decorations for Lord

Melbourne at Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire.

Durno left England for Italy in January 1774. Between 1777 and 1778 he was living with the sculptor Thomas Banks and his wife by the piazza Mignanelli at the top of the Spanish Steps; Elizabeth Banks noted that Durno helped nurse her husband during a severe illness in 1778.² Durno was at the heart of the resident British community in Rome, he knew Thomas Jones well who noted in his *Memoir* that the pair: 'smoked a pipe and drank a flask of wine on the top of the Antonine Column' in Piazza Colonna in May 1778.³ Durno pursued the usual activities of a visiting artist, he studied after the antique, copied old masters, producing a full-size replica of Raphael's *Transfiguration* and sought patronage from British travellers.

Frederick Harvey, Bishop of Derry and 4th Earl of Bristol, during the course of his six visits to Italy, established himself as one of the most extravagant and eccentric patrons of the eighteenth century. Secure in the large income derived from his Irish diocese, and after the death of his brother in 1779, from his ancestral estates, Hervey purchased and commissioned paintings and sculpture from artists on a prodigious scale. In 1779, the British dealer Thomas Jenkins wrote from Rome to a correspondent in London: 'the Bishop of Derry Gleans Rome of its Precious monuments, & as one of his adopted Countrymen lately told him, his Collection will Surprize all the World, there never having been Such things Sent into Ireland before, or Since; chi è Contento, Gode.' The Earl Bishop commissioned several works from Durno and by February 1781 James Irvine was informing George Cumberland in London: 'Durno has finished two pictures for the Bishop of Derry, one



James Durno, *Agrippina and her children mourning Germanicus*

Pen and black ink
12³/₄ × 15¹/₄ inches · 328 × 386 mm
Signed: *Durno invt: et del* ^a c.1772
© The Trustees of the British Museum







Domenico Cunego after Gavin Hamilton
Andromache Bewailing the Death of Hector

Engraving
15⁷/₈ × 24¹/₈ inches · 403 × 613 mm · 1764
Yale Center for British Art; New Haven

the Mourning of the dead body of Hector.⁴ Irvine added that Durno had 'shut himself up for several months at a picture of Alexander saving his father at the Battle of Marathon ... The figures are large as life and finely grouped. He returns to England the beginning of summer & intends exhibiting the picture.'⁵

Durno in fact remained in Italy and established a highly successful practice as a history painter. In February 1783 Durno was 'about a great work to be painted in a hall in Genoa,' having entered the competition for the decoration of the Doge's Palace in that city. He was to win a prize for his design (Liguria Triumphans) but the competition was won by Domenico Tiepolo.⁶ In the November of the same year he was completing a depiction of *The Murder of Virginia by her own Father* which according to the sculptor Vincenzo Pacetti he wished to present to Prince Marcantonio Borghese, then in the midst of his redecoration of Villa Borghese.⁷ A British traveller saw the *Virginia* in March 1784 and noted that it had 'a surprising show of Fire & Animation to

the distracted Parent.'⁸ It is worth pointing out that Durno's studio was very much a Grand Tour attraction and that by the mid-1780s he was producing a large number of historical canvases, completing a pair of Shakespearean canvases for Canova's great patron, John Campbell, 1st Lord Cawdor.

The Earl Bishop continued to commission works from him. In 1786 Durno made a replica of Cawdor's Shakespearean pictures, Jacob More, the Earl Bishop's Roman agent reporting: 'As good as the first one which Durno has got', adding: 'The Imogen is not yet finish'd and the Hector taking leave of Andromache not yet begun but the cloath prepar'd'. In May the following year More informed Lord Bristol that Durno: 'is making studdies for the Large Picture of Priam for Your Lordship. I have received the falstaff and the Picture from Cymbeline the other picture from Hector not being suficiently dry must be sent by the next opportunity'. This is the first mention of the present painting: 'the Large Picture of Priam' being *Priam Returning to Troy with the Body of Hector*.

James Durno
The Merry Wives of Windsor (Act IV, Scene 2)

Oil on canvas
62¹/₂ × 86 inches · 1585 × 2182 mm · 1788
© Sir John Soane's Museum, London



In May 1791 the sculptor Christopher Hewetson reported to George Cumberland that 'Durno has finished his great picture for Ld. Bristol.'⁹ Durno evidently placed it on exhibition in his rooms by the Quartiere dei Avignonesi, close to Piazza Barberini, as Charles Grignion reported to Cumberland: 'Durno some time since exhibited his large picture of Priam returning to Troy with the body of Hector, we think it the best thing he has done.'

Durno's highly charged canvas captures the moment King Priam returns to Troy with the body of his son Hector. Taken from the end of the Iliad, the strongly frieze-like composition shows the bowed King Priam seated on a chariot, contemplating the corpse of his son, whilst Hector's widow, Andromache is shown lying prostrate across his body and his mother Hecuba is shown arm outstretched leaning over them. On the left of the composition, Durno has included Hector's brother, Paris, dressed in Phrygian costume. In the background, behind the chariot, Durno has included Helen, who, despite having been abducted by Paris, also mourned Hector, according to Homer because of his kindness. Following Homer's account, Durno shows a multitude of Trojans mourning their dead prince.

Richly painted and dramatically modelled, Durno's painting shows awareness of earlier Homeric works, particularly Gavin Hamilton's sequence of depictions of the Iliad which had been published in popular engravings by Domenico Cunego. Durno's composition is indebted to Hamilton's *Andromache Bewailing the Death of Hector*, the frieze-like arrangement of Hector's body on the funeral car, Andromache's prostrate pose and the highly sculptural arrangement of

mourning figures all recall Hamilton's painting. Although the more Baroque elements of Hamilton's composition, such as the drapery in the background have been stripped out, rendering Durno's image more severely classical, suggesting both the influence of Roman sarcophagi and the relief-sculpture of his contemporaries, particularly Thomas Banks. Several studies relating to the painting survive in an album of Durno's drawings in Berlin, including a profile study of the head of the seated woman holding a child.

Durno's classical paintings have never before been seriously considered. From the documentary evidence it is clear that he designed a tight Homeric cycle for the Earl Bishop. Although not painted in sequential order, Durno and the Earl Bishop (or More), are likely to have discussed the programme: beginning with *Hector's Farewell to Andromache*, followed by *Priam Returning to Troy with the Body of Hector* and culminating with *Andromache Bewailing the Death of Hector*. This is an unusual trio of episodes and seems to concentrate less on the epic of the Trojan wars, than the human consequence of the conflict in the life of Hector and Andromache, unusually Achilles is absent from the sequence.

The painting was apparently still in Rome in 1794 when Archibald Skirving commented that Durno was 'like to have a misunderstanding with Lord B[ristol] on account of his refusing to exhibit his picture of Priam' in London. It is likely that Durno's painting remained part of the Earl Bishop's extensive property in Rome, some of which was auctioned off by the Roman authorities in 1804.¹⁰ The later history of the painting is unknown and it is published here for the first time.

NOTES

1. London, British Library, BM Add MSS.36497. f.69, Rome 16 November 1791.
2. Writing to Ozias Humphry, Elizabeth Banks notes: 'Mr Durno relieves me sometimes for half a night, & sometimes a whole one, more I cannot expect, nor permit of, as he has his studies to attend, & his time here draws near a Conclusion, he has been a *friend in Need* and a *friend indeed*.' See Ed. C. F. Bell, *Annals of Thomas Banks: Sculptor, Royal Academician*, Cambridge, 19338, p.37.
3. Ed. P. Oppé, 'Memoirs of Thomas Jones, Penkerrig, Radnorshire, 1803', *The Walpole Society*, vol.32, 1946-8, p.53.
4. London, British Library, BM Add MSS.36493. f.128.
5. London, British Library, BM Add MSS.36493. f.128
6. A series of drawings for the composition survive in an album of Durno's designs preserved in Berlin, see Peter Dreyer, 'James Durno. Beiträge zu seiner Zeichenkunst und zu seinen Entwürfen für die Ausmalung der Sala Grande im Palazzo Ducale in Genua von 1783', in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, vol.15, 1973, pp.38-57. Durno's preparatory drawing is listed in the posthumous inventory of his studio: 'altro disegno modern del quadro di Piramo [sic] che riporta il corpo di Ettore, del Quadro dipinto del defunto Sig. re Durno', Rome, Archivio di Stato di Roma, 6371, fol.205 r.
7. 'Sono stato a vedere un Quadro di M.r Durnó che desidera venderlo al Signor Principe Borghese, quale rappresenta il fatto di Virginia uccisa dal padre.' Ed. Angela Cipriani, *Roma 1771-1819: I Giornali di Venicenzo Pacetti*, Rome, 2011, p.29.
8. Quoted in Ed. John Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800*, New Haven and London, pp.323-4.
9. London, British Library, BM Add MSS.36496 f.333.
10. Nicola Figgis, 'The Roman Property of Frederick Hervey, 4th Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry', *The Walpole Society*, vol.55, 1989/1990, pp.77-103.

MR QUICK AS VELLUM IN ADDISON'S 'THE DRUMMER'

Oil on canvas
14½ × 11 inches · 368 × 279 mm
Painted in 1792

COLLECTIONS
Virginia Cherrill, Countess of Jersey
(1908–1996);
Maurice Braunfel (as by Zoffany);
Private collection, New York to 2019

ENGRAVED
Engraved by John Thornthwaite and
published by John Bell in *Bell's British
Theatre*, London, December 3, 1792.



John Thornthwaite after Samuel De Wilde
Mr Quick as Vellum

Engraving
5½ × 3½ inches · 138 × 89 mm
Published John Bell, 3rd December 1792
Lettered: 'Act III / The Drummer / Scene II'; and below
with title, line from the play, and production detail, 'De
Wilde pinxt / Thornthwaite Sculp / London, Printed for
J. Bell, British Library, Strand, Decr. 3 1792'.
© The Trustees of the British Museum

This vivaciously executed portrait by Samuel de Wilde belongs to an important sequence he made of British actors depicted in their most famous theatrical roles, a genre that represented an important form of British art in the second half of the eighteenth century. John Quick was one of the most celebrated comic actors of his generation and is shown by de Wilde in the role of Vellum, the steward of Sir George Truman, from Joseph Addison's popular comedy, *The Drummer*.

De Wilde's career in theatrical portraiture began with the publication by John Bell of the second issue of the *British Theatre* in January 1791. Each number of the *British Theatre* consisted of a play accompanied by a vignette and a full-length portrait of a leading actor or actress of the day as one of the characters. Bell chose De Wilde as the portraitist and puffed him in his newspaper, *The Oracle*, on 8 April 1791 with the statement: 'Zoffany has hitherto been considered as the most celebrated Painter of small whole lengths, but comparison now gives DE WILDE a place as his superior.'¹ He provided his protégé with a studio in the 'British Library', his bookshop on the Strand, and invited potential subscribers to visit the artist at work. De Wilde was extremely productive, painting no fewer than thirty-six character portraits in 1791 and thirty-three in 1792. The portraits show actors in costume with props, set against a theatrical backdrop. De Wilde's portrait of John Quick as Vellum is a particularly fine example, showing him seated, hands clasped across his middle, his wig pushed back on his head. The engraved plate is accompanied by the line: 'Mrs Abigail – I have a Trifle about me which I would make a present of.' This is a scene that comes in the third act, when Vellum tries to woo Abigail with the gift of a

silver thimble. De Wilde apparently captured Quick's trademark pose: he is shown with his wig similarly askew in Zoffany's theatrical depiction of *A Scene from Speculation* painted in 1796 and now in the Garrick Club, London.

Quick, says William Hazlitt, made 'an excellent, self-important, busy, strutting, money-getting citizen; or crusty old guardian, in a brown suit and a bob wig.'² He was widely praised for his performances as old men: '[t]here was a peculiarity in his voice which rendered his old characters exceedingly whimsical.'³ His squat figure seemed perfect for many of the parts he played: 'The person of Mr Quick', wrote Gilliland, 'is happily formed for a comedian; with features beaming with good humour, he has eyes particularly expressive of mirth, and a facetiousness of disposition.'⁴ De Wilde portrayed Quick twice in 1791 as Tony Lumpkin in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* and as Don Lewis in Colley Cibber's *Love makes a Man*. In 1796 De Wilde depicted Quick as Tony Allspice in Morton's *The Way to get Married*, a painting now in the Yale Center for British Art and finally in 1805 as Old Doiley in Cowley's *Who's the Dupe*.

Preserved in exceptional condition, this portrait executed in de Wilde's characteristic small format demonstrates his ability to capture the character of his theatrical sitters. It is also a rare example of de Wilde's work outside an institutional collection and offers an important example of British theatrical portraiture in the eighteenth century.

NOTES

1. Ian Mayes, 'John Bell, The British Theatre and Samuel de Wilde', *Apollo*, vol.113, 1981, p.101.
2. *The London Magazine*, January 1820.
3. Richard Jenkins, *Memoirs of the Bristol stage*, Bristol, 1826, vol.II, p.91.
4. Thomas Gilliland, *The dramatic mirror, containing the history of the stage from the earliest period, to the present time*, London, 1808, vol.II, p.926.



THOMAS SANDBY 1721–1798

A VIEW OF ST MARTIN'S COURT

Pen and ink and watercolour
7 × 7¾ inches · 178 × 187 mm
Drawn c.1765

COLLECTIONS
Private collection, UK, to 1993;
Leger Galleries;
Private collection, acquired from the above in
1994;
And by descent to 2019

EXHIBITED
London, Leger Galleries, British Landscape
Painting, 1994, no.14.

This remarkable watercolour by Thomas Sandby gives an unprecedented view of the heart of London's artistic quarter in the middle of the eighteenth century. Made from the back window of a house on the west side of St Martin's Lane, Sandby's view shows the complex mass of buildings running behind St Martin's Lane, many of them home to the workshops of prominent artists and craftsmen. Identifiable on the right of the image is the building occupied by the bookseller John Noble, Sandby has included his shop sign, a bust of Dryden, placed over his door and a trade sign advertising his circulating library. In the projecting bay-window to the right of the composition, a man can be seen at work giving an air of quiet industry to the composition.

Thomas Sandby was a Nottingham born architect and draughtsman, the elder brother of the landscape painter Paul Sandby, he was an acute observer of London producing a number of spectacular topographical views of city streets. In 1764 Thomas Sandby became steward to William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and also acted as deputy ranger of Windsor Great Park. Despite being based at Windsor, Sandby remained active in the artistic world of London; he served on the committee of the newly formed Society of Artists in 1759, and in 1768 was a founder member of the Royal Academy, of which he was appointed the first professor of architecture. He would therefore have known the area around St Martin's Lane intimately.

This quiet view shows the sun illuminating a range of buildings – including Noble's bookshop and circulating library – on the western side of St Martin's Court. St Martin's Court was really two streets, one a dog-leg running from Castle Street (now Charing Cross Road) which then intersected an alley which ran all the way from St Martin's Lane through to Castle Street. John Noble's circulating library was one of only four in London at this date, when hard up, James Boswell recorded in his *Journal* that he 'recollected that I had left a guinea of security at Noble's circulating Library. I went & told him that he should put confidence in me so got it back. This was a most welcome guest to my pocket & communicated spirit to my heart. But, alas, of short duration

Thomas Sandby, *View of Beaufort Buildings*

Pen and ink and watercolour
18 × 24 inches · 456 × 618 mm · mid 1770s
© The Trustees of the British Museum





was this state of opulence.¹ Fascinatingly John Noble is listed as the retailer of Joshua Kirby's *Dr Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective Made Easy* a book published in 1754 with a frontispiece by William Hogarth, which pre-empted a publication on perspective by Thomas Sandby himself. It has been suggested that it was the anticipated appearance of Kirby's book which partly explains Paul Sandby's vicious satirical attacks on Hogarth which were published in 1753.²

St Martin's Lane and its surrounding streets and courts housed an enormous number of studios and workshops, along with the eponymous academy which had been established in 1720. Situated in Russell's Meeting House, a former Presbyterian chapel in St Peter's Court, the St Martin's Lane Academy flourished from 1735 under Hogarth's leadership, offering a place for artists and craftsman to study from life models. Sandby's view shows a series of well-lit attics and top-lit room, suggesting a warren of creative activity. In the window on the right a man can, perhaps, be seen at work. This building, with the two bay windows, seems to be on the North Eastern corner of St Martin's Court and St Martin's Lane, at approximately no.89 St Martin's Lane. It is possible that this was the house occupied by the engraver John Pine until his death in 1756 and then by his son, the painter Robert Edge Pine. John Pine and Sandby had collaborated on a print of the East prospect of Nottingham published in 1751. The Pine's house was next door to Slaughter's the famous coffee house, which by this date played host to scientific meetings attended by amongst others Daniel Solander, Joseph Banks, John Hunter and Captain Cook.

Sandby's watercolour is somewhat different in character from his depiction of the arches of *The Piazza in Covent Garden* now in the British Museum. The loosely handled washes give this topographical view a more informal quality. The lack of detail in the handling of the foliage and the dramatic shadows suggest Sandby was making a personal record of a familiar view, rather than preparing a finished drawing to be engraved. As such, this beautifully preserved watercolour, offers a strikingly original view of a famous, but rarely depicted corner of eighteenth-century London.

NOTES

1. Ed. Frederick A. Pottle, *Boswell's London Journal 1762–1763*, New Haven and London, p.99.
2. Eds. John Bonehill and Stephen Daniels, *Paul Sandby: Picturing Britain*, exh. cat., London (Royal Academy), 2009, p.106.

A GIBBET ON THE RIVER THAMES

Watercolour with pen and ink
5¾ × 9⅙ inches · 145 × 230 mm
Drawn c.1790

COLLECTIONS
Pawsey and Payne by 1975;
Private collection to 2019

This remarkable drawing by Thomas Rowlandson offers stark evidence for the prominence of capital punishment in Georgian Britain. Rowlandson's watercolour shows four corpses exposed on one of the gibbets that lined the upper reaches of the Thames. Rowlandson has included spectators, both on the shore and in a small boat, underscoring the fact that criminal bodies formed an ever-present spectacle in eighteenth-century London. This watercolour is an exceptionally rare contemporary depiction of a gibbet, one of a small group that Rowlandson made towards the end of the century.

A further watercolour by Rowlandson depicting the same structure is inscribed 'Pirates hanging at the Isle of Dogs' confirming that the present work depicts a gibbet on the Thames.¹ The Admiralty Courts dealt with capital crimes committed at sea – murder, mutiny or piracy – most executions were carried out in London at Execution Dock, and the body then moved to be displayed in a gibbet. The account of Captain James Lowry's execution in 1752 mentions that his body was conveyed by boat from the scaffold at Execution Dock to Galleons Reach, north of Woolwich where he was to be hung in chains. The famous pirates John Gow and James Williams were displayed at Gray's and Blackwall.

Rowlandson's watercolour seems likely to show a stretch of the river east of

Greenwich where gibbets formed iconic landmarks. John Rocque's 1746 map of London shows gibbets along the river and William Hogarth, in his depiction of the *Idle Apprentice's departure from London to become a seaman*, shows a boat being rowed down Limehouse Reach with a hanged man on the Isle of Dogs visible in the background. A late-eighteenth-century Thames guidebook mentions three gibbets in Blackwall Reach 'upon which have been hung persons who have committed murders on the high seas.'² As Peter King has established bodies were exposed for an average of twenty years, the purpose to assert the authority and jurisdiction of the Admiralty Court to sailors as they left London. As King writes: 'Given that London was the key port of the empire in the eighteenth century and that huge numbers of sailors therefore passed up the Thames each year, the assembly of gibbets that they saw each time they visited the port gave substance and immediacy to the power of the Admiralty Court and the fiscal/military state whose interest it guarded.'³



Rowlandson's watercolour is clearly based on close observation of an actual gibbet, he reuses the structure in a watercolour now at the Yale Center for British Art which focuses on the crowd of spectators. For Rowlandson, as for many Londoners, the gibbets were not objects of criticism, but a site of macabre tourism, affording Rowlandson an opportunity to satirise the crowd. As such, our drawing is a rare and important depiction of one of eighteenth-century London's documented gibbets.

NOTES

1. See John Baskett and Dudley Snelgrove, *The Drawings of Thomas Rowlandson in the Paul Mellon Collection*, London, 1977, p.50, cat. no.189.
2. *Pocock's Gravesend Water Companion*, London, 1798, p.23.
3. Peter King, *Punishing the Criminal Corpse 1700–1840: Aggravated Forms of the Death Penalty in England*, London, 2017, pp.92–93.

Thomas Rowlandson, *Crowd by a Gibbet*
Watercolour with pen and brown ink, over pencil
6 × 8⅜ inches · 152 × 213 mm · c.1810
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection



A MOUNTAINOUS LANDSCAPE WITH A HERDSMAN AND HIS CATTLE

Black and white chalks and stump on white wove paper
 11 × 14½ inches · 280 × 368 mm
 Inscribed verso in the hand of William Esdaile: '1817 WE. Lamberts coll P45 N54/ Gainsborough'
 Drawn in the mid to late 1770s

COLLECTIONS

Charles Lambert (L.589) by 1817;
 William Esdaile (L.2617);
 Christie's, London, 16 March 1838, lot 822 (£1/2/ – to Cavendish);
 William Cavendish, 7th Duke of Devonshire, and by descent at Holker Hall, to 1994;
 Cavendish sale, Christie's, London, 8 November 1994, lot 10;
 Leger Galleries, London, 1995;
 Private collection acquired from the above;
 Lowell Libson Ltd, 2003;
 Private collection, USA, acquired from the above, to 2017

LITERATURE

John Hayes, 'Notes on British Art: The Holker Gainsboroughs', *Apollo*, LXXX, June 1964, Supplement, pp.2–3, repr. fig. 3;
 John Hayes, *The Drawings of Thomas Gainsborough*, London, 1970, pp.34 & 255, cat. no.636, repr. pl. 194;
 Leger Galleries, *British Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings*, 1995, pp.30–4;
 Lowell Libson, Hugh Belsey & Peter Bower, *Themes and Variations: Thomas Gainsborough, The Art of Landscape*, 2003, pp.11, 12, 21, 38–9, illustrated, p. 39, cat. no.4;
 Lowell Libson, *The First Five Years*, London, 2007, pp.26–7;
 Hugh Belsey, 'A Second Supplement to John Hayes' 'The Drawings of Thomas Gainsborough', *Master Drawings*, XLVI (4), Winter 2008, pp.431–32, illustrated, fig. 5.

EXHIBITED

London, Tate Gallery, *Thomas Gainsborough*, 1980–81, no.37, repr.;
 Washington DC, National Gallery of Art;

Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum; New Haven, Yale Center for British Art, *Gainsborough Drawings*, 1983, no. 71 repr.;
 London, Leger Galleries, *British Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings*, 1995;
 New York, Lowell Libson Ltd, *Themes and Variations: The Art of Landscape*, May 2003, no.4.

ENGRAVED

Thomas Rowlandson, in aquatint for *Imitations of Modern Drawings*, c.1784–8, where the image is seen in reverse.

This is one of the finest landscape drawings Thomas Gainsborough made during his maturity; it stands as one of the purest statements of his ideas about composition, technique and the status of drawing within his own art. Unusually amongst Gainsborough's landscape drawings the present sheet had a public life in Gainsborough's own lifetime having been printed in aquatint, in reverse, by Thomas Rowlandson in *Imitations of Modern Drawings*. Preserved in outstanding condition, the sheet has an unbroken provenance from the great eighteenth-century collector Charles Lambert and then in the collections of the banker and collector William Esdaile before being acquired by the dukes of Devonshire and remained in the Cavendish family at Holker Hall until sold in 1994.

Made when Gainsborough was at the height of his creative powers, this sheet offers an extraordinary summation of Gainsborough's approach to landscape drawing. Writing in his *Anecdotes of Painters* published in 1808, Edward Edwards made an important early assessment of Gainsborough's late landscape drawings: 'in his latter works, bold effect, great breadth of form, with little variety of parts, united by a

judicious management of light and shade, combine to produce a certain degree of solemnity. This solemnity, though striking, is not easily accounted for, when the simplicity of materials is considered, which seldom represent more than a stony bank, with a few trees, a pond, and some distant hills.'¹

The present sheet perfectly encapsulates these qualities: Gainsborough has simply used black chalk on wove paper to create a composition of 'stony bank', 'a few trees' and 'distant hills'. The sheet is part of a body of drawings Gainsborough made, which were highly prized by contemporary collectors, presumably precisely because they evoked an emotional response, characterised by Edwards as 'a certain degree of solemnity.'

The idealised composition is partly inspired by the work of Gaspard Dughet, whose landscapes would have been familiar to Gainsborough and his contemporaries both in the original and through the medium of engraving.² Dughet, known throughout the eighteenth century as Gaspard Poussin, offered Gainsborough a vocabulary of forms and most importantly compositional devices for his own works. Dughet's pictures frequently contained serpentine tracks, often with a flock of sheep or herd of cows with a solitary herdsman or shepherd, framed by trees, with groups of rustic buildings in the middle-distance and hills on the horizon. The present drawing is a precise distillation of these Gaspardesque features. It is not a direct copy, nor does it directly quote from Dughet's works, but it approximates the 'machinery' of his works.

Our drawing demonstrates Gainsborough's sophisticated refining of features learnt from Dughet. Gainsborough is consciously engaged in the action of imitation. To an eighteenth-century audience, this was not





Jean Baptiste Chatelain, after Gaspard Dughet,
Landscape with figure on track, 1741

Etching
11 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches · 301 × 387 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum

Thomas Gainsborough, *Mountain landscape with
classical buildings, shepherd and sheep*

Black chalk and stump and white chalk
11 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches · 282 × 374 mm · c.1785
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
Felton Bequest, 1951

a negative process, but an intellectual and creative activity that placed the artist on a level with the model he was imitating. In Johnson's words, imitation was: 'a method of translating looser than paraphrase, in which modern examples and illustrations are used for ancient, or domestick for foreign.' Comparing our drawing to a sequence of related sheets gives a sense of this visual process of imitation. A sheet Gainsborough gave to Richard French and now in Melbourne is tellingly inscribed: 'original chalk drawing by Gainsboro...after the style of Gaspar Poussin.'³ Here then is an undigested essay in Dughet's style. The drawing is close to the kind of composition that Dughet was famous for: a serpentine track is visible on the right, a solitary shepherd is seated in the middle-distance observing his flock in the valley below, beyond him is a complex of vaguely antique buildings and distant mountains. A sheet in the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester shows Gainsborough's elaboration of this model.

The antique buildings have been eliminated and the landscape is more discernibly British, but the winding track and a herd of cattle with their attendant herdsman have been introduced. This sheet, and its replica, form the framework for Gainsborough's final imitation. In our drawing the landscape takes on a distinctly British character completing the process of imitation described by Johnson, the translation of the foreign to 'domestick', the herdsman and his cattle still traverse the serpentine track, but in so doing they pass a distinctly British thatched cottage. In these three sheets it is possible to view Gainsborough's process of refinement, playing with Gaspardesque features to produce different iterations of the same composition. Varying the precise forms, fall of light and precise combination of the same group of features, Gainsborough produced four distinct drawings each 'after the style of Gaspar Poussin.'

Gainsborough was working in a market driven by a desire for old master drawings.





Thomas Gainsborough,
A herdsman and cattle on a mountain track

Black and white chalk and stump
10½ × 14 inches · 270 × 360 mm ·
c.1778
Private collection, UK, c/o Lowell
Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd



Thomas Gainsborough,
A Mountainous landscape with a herdsman and his cattle, c.1778

Black and white chalks and stump
on buff paper
10⅞ × 15 inches · 276 × 381 mm
Whitworth Art Gallery, University of
Manchester (D.50.1927)



Thomas Rowlandson,
after Thomas Gainsborough,
Landscape with a figure herding cattle along a road

Soft-ground etching and aquatint
10¼ × 14⅞ inches · 260 × 362 mm
c.1784–9
© The Trustees of the British
Museum

There is growing evidence that drawings such as this were viewed as sophisticated essays on earlier old master drawings and that they directly appealed to those collectors who also acquired earlier works. It is telling that the first two owners of the present drawing were both major connoisseurs and collectors of old master drawings. Charles Lambert owned a celebrated group of landscape drawings by Claude and William Esdaile was a considerable collector of landscape drawings by seventeenth-century Dutch draughtsman, including an important group of Rembrandt drawings.

It was not simply the formal elements of the composition that collectors appreciated, it was Gainsborough's technical virtuosity. Edwards again offered a subtle account of Gainsborough at work.

'A process rather capricious, truly deserving the epithet bestowed upon them by a witty lady, who called them moppings. Many of these were in black and white, which colours were applied in the following manner: a small bit of sponge tied to a bit of stick, served as a pencil for the shadows, and a small lump of whiting, held by a pair of tea-tongs was the instrument by which the high lights were applied; beside these there were others in black and white chalks, India ink... with these various materials he struck out a vast number of bold, free sketches of landscape and cattle, all of which have a most captivating effect to the eye of an artist, or connoisseur of real taste.'⁴

In the present sheet, Gainsborough created perhaps his boldest landscape with cattle using just black chalk on wove paper. Wove was a new method of paper manufacture it was first used in Britain for book printing in the 1770s and it provided a much

stronger paper than the traditional laid papers. The chain lines in laid paper show as ridges on the surface and demonstrate that the paper is of varying thickness and therefore inherently weaker. Gainsborough was amongst the first artists to realise the potential of wove 'unlined' paper and it enabled him to use stump as a basis for his design. Stump is black chalk that is then smudged with rolled up cardboard or a leather pad. The effect, though similar to grey wash, provides additional texture and more solid tones. In this drawing the basis is stump and then to add detail, Gainsborough has built up the forms with brief but precise dashes of black chalk. It is worth looking at two details to gauge the economy of drawing. The sky consists of just fifteen parallel lines of chalk, while the figure and cattle are finished with little more than five or six strokes of black chalk.

Many of Gainsborough's surviving drawings from this period all feature a similar group of components, rearranged to form new compositions. To achieve these 'free sketches' Gainsborough developed a visual short-hand, particularly in his handling of trees, figures and cattle; the latter often appearing in an almost abstract reduction of shapes and lines. This virtuosic simplicity contributes to the powerful aesthetic of the sheet. Contemporary theories of aesthetic were exploring the potential of both the accidental line and judicious obscurity. Gainsborough deliberately leaves elements of the composition undeveloped, almost unfinished. Edmund Burke writing in his 1757 *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime*, for example, specifically explained the appeal of certain types of landscape painting:

*'in painting a judicious obscurity in some things contributes to the effect of the picture; because the images in paintings are exactly similar to those in nature; and in nature dark, confused, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form grander passions than those have which are more clear and determined.'*⁵

In the present sheet, one might point to the mass of lines building up the wooded valley, or the lines of the path itself, which are consciously obscure. This obscurity in turn explains contemporary responses to Gainsborough's late landscape drawings, particularly the 'solemnity' of Edwards.

Our drawing has a most distinguished and complete provenance from Charles Lambert and William Esdaile. When J.T. Smith visited Esdaile's house at Clapham he recorded that he was particularly excited by the group of Gainsborough drawings many of which he had seen before 'in possession of the artist Colonel Hamilton, Mr Nassau, and Mr. Lambert'.⁶ It was purchased at the Esdaile sale by a member of the Cavendish family (possibly initially for the family collections at Chatsworth), in whose possession it remained until 1994. Until its sale in 1994 this striking black chalk drawing was one among a group of five sheets probably collected by William Cavendish for Holker Hall in Cumbria. He was later to become the 7th Duke of Devonshire. This is the finest drawing from the group. This remarkable drawing, in exceptional condition, has the strength of design modelled on an old master and the unerring certainty of line that shows Gainsborough at the height of his powers.

NOTES

1. Edward Edwards, *Anecdotes of Painting*, London, 1808, p.139.
2. The posthumous auction of Gainsborough's collection included four paintings attributed to Dughet and as has frequently been noted, his works, particularly his drawings, demonstrate both a compositional and technical debt to Dughet. For Gainsborough and Dughet, see: John Hayes, 'Gainsborough and the Gaspardesque', *The Burlington Magazine*, 112, May 1970, pp.308–311.
3. John Hayes, *The Landscape Paintings of Thomas Gainsborough*, London, 1982, II, cat. no.634.
4. Edward Edwards, *Anecdotes of Painting*, London, 1808, p.139.
5. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, London, 1757, p.62.
6. John Thomas Smith, *A Book for a Rainy Day*, London, 1845, pp.262–63.

TWO COWS IN A LANDSCAPE

Oil on canvas
25 × 30 inches · 635 × 762 mm
c.1780

COLLECTIONS

'The European Museum', 1798;
Francis Egerton, 3rd Duke of Bridgewater (1736–1803), acquired from the above for the Bridgewater Gallery in 1798;
George Granville Leveson-Gower, 2nd Marquess of Stafford and 1st Duke of Sutherland (1758–1833), nephew of the above, by descent;
Francis Leveson-Gower, 1st Earl of Ellesmere (1800–1857), second son of the above;
John Egerton, 5th Earl of Ellesmere and 6th Duke of Sutherland (1915–2000), by descent;
The Trustees of The Ellesmere 1939 Settlement, sale Christie's, 18 June 1976, lot 119;
Richard Green, London acquired from the above;
Private collection, Switzerland to 2018;
Sotheby's, London, 6th December 2018, lot 209;
Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd to 2019

LITERATURE

Morning Post, 22 March 1798;

W.Y. Ottley, *Engravings of the most noble Marquis of Stafford's collection of pictures*, London 1818, vol.III, p.142, no.5, reproduced from an engraving;

J.P. Neale, *View of Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen*, vol.IV, London 1821, unpaginated (recorded hanging in the New Alcove Room at Trentham Hall, Staffordshire);

J. Young, *A Catalogue of the Pictures, of the most noble the Marquess of Stafford, at Cleveland House*, London 1825, vol.II, p.184, no.257, reproduced in etching;

Mrs Jameson, *Companion to the most Celebrated Private Galleries of Art in London*, London 1844, p.161;

G.F. Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, 3 vols, London 1854, vol.II, p.53 (listed among the collection at Bridgewater House);

G.W. Fulcher, *Life of Thomas Gainsborough RA*, London 1856, p.207;

W. Armstrong, *Gainsborough & his place in English Art*, London 1898, p.205;

W. Armstrong, *Gainsborough & his place in English Art*, London 1904, p.286;

E. Waterhouse, *Gainsborough*, London 1958, cat. no.983;
J. Hayes, *The Landscape Paintings of Thomas Gainsborough*, 2 vols, London 1982, vol.II, pp.557–58, cat. no.175, reproduced p.558.

EXHIBITED

The European Museum, 1798;
London, British Institution, 1841, no.103.

ENGRAVED

I.H. Wright, published by Longman, 2 September 1816.

Aelbert Cuyp, *Young Herdsmen with Cows*

Oil on canvas
44½ × 52½ inches · 1121 × 1324 mm
Signed · 1655–60
© The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource/Scala, Florence

After Aelbert Cuyp, *Cows after Cuyp*

Etching
2¾ × 2¾ inches · 66 × 72 mm · c.1700
© The Trustees of the British Museum



This spectacular landscape was made by Gainsborough towards the end of his career and is one of his most sophisticated essays in imitation, adapting as it does, the work of Dutch seventeenth-century landscape painters such as Aelbert Cuyp. The composition is unusual in Gainsborough's work, two cows are seen close-to, parallel with the picture plane and obscuring the distant view, as such it occupies an important place in understanding Gainsborough's development as a landscape painter. There is evidence that contemporaries specifically understood the work's appeal, it was purchased a decade after Gainsborough's death from the European Museum by Francis Egerton, 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, one of the most considerable collectors of old master paintings of his generation. Gainsborough's self-conscious emulation of an earlier landscape tradition continued to be understood by commentators in the nineteenth century. The painting was seen by Gustav Waagen in 1854 who specifically noted: 'Gainsborough – Cows in a meadow. Of extreme lightness and picturesque beauty. In the forms of the cows we recognise the influence of Cuyp.'¹

Gainsborough had a lifelong interest in seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting. There is considerable evidence that he had access to Dutch art from the earliest moment in his career and that this offered a supplement to the young Gainsborough's formal training. Gainsborough formed an early relationship with a dealer in old master paintings, Pantou Betew and as a result took part in the associated practices of the dealer restoring and 'improving' Dutch paintings; the 1762 sale of John Oldfield's collection includes a 'Dutch Landscape, repaired by Mr Gainsborough' and a painting by 'Wijnants



Thomas Gainsborough
A cow and sheep in a clearing
 Black chalk heightened with white chalk on buff paper
 9½ × 13¾ inches · 241 × 346 mm · late 1770s
 Private collection c/o Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd

the figures by Mr Gainsborough'.² This evidently stimulated his activity as a painter producing landscape compositions heavily indebted to seventeenth-century models.³ These were the paintings that Gainsborough would later refer to as 'my first imitations of little Dutch Landscips'.⁴ Whilst no direct copies survive from this period, it is likely that Gainsborough made a large number of studies after the old master models he encountered. Gainsborough certainly had a store of designs which he could call on later in life; for example in an upright landscape of the 1750s, he quoted directly a group of four sheep and goats which came from an etching of 1655 by Carel Dujardin.⁵

Examples of elements of old master paintings being directly quoted by Gainsborough in his finished landscapes are rare, more often than not he simply

absorbed a style or motif into his current way of working. This precisely followed contemporary theories of imitation. Gainsborough's contemporary, Joshua Reynolds, formulated in the *Discourses* he delivered to the students of the Royal Academy, a theory of imitation of earlier masters which is highly suggestive when viewing Gainsborough's own work. Reynolds observed:
*[A] great part of every man's life must be employed in collecting materials for the exercise of genius. Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory.*⁶

Reynolds was clear of the source of these 'images', the 'great artists of the past'. John Hayes was the first to see Gainsborough's progression as a landscape painter in terms of the influence of a succession of old master painters. Hayes appreciated the importance of imitation to understanding the way Gainsborough conceptualised landscape. Whilst Hayes identified Rubens as the major influence on Gainsborough's landscape in the 1760s, by the 1780s he was looking more broadly at seventeenth-century models.

The present composition is almost unique amongst Gainsborough's surviving landscapes, showing, as it does two cows observed at close quarters. Cows had, of course, formed an important component of his landscapes, particularly his landscape drawings. Gainsborough shows cattle watering, grazing, being milked and herded; cattle quietly traverse his landscapes and sit ruminant on outcrops. But this work is unusual in showing cattle close-to, in profile. Clearly not drawn from life, Gainsborough's fluidly

painted animals show the memory of cattle rather than actual creatures, whilst the grouping of the composition points to his awareness of existing visual traditions, specifically the landscapes of Cuyp. In Cuyp's pastoral landscapes cows regularly dominate the foreground, shown in profile surveying views across the river Maas. Gainsborough evidently knew works by Cuyp and there is some evidence to suggest that it was Cuyp's adoption of an upright format in some of his landscapes that specifically stimulated Gainsborough to experiment in his own works.⁷

In the present landscape Gainsborough has assimilated the spirit of Cuyp's compositions into a wholly original conception, executed in his characteristic manner. Whilst the motif of cattle and courting couple have obvious visual precedents, the brooding composition, dark palette and obscured horizon feel a long way from Cuyp's light-filled landscapes. Throughout the painting Gainsborough has drawn with the brush, describing the forms of the cattle, landscape elements and the two seated figures with liquid paint. This is a technique that calls to mind Gainsborough's complex drawing practice.

Recent research has shown that Gainsborough owned a substantial collection of Dutch old master engravings which informed his work. Gainsborough owned unspecified engravings by Paulus Potter, which may have been one of the series of prints by Marcus de Bye made after Potter's drawings of cows in the 1660s and he probably owned a series of etchings after Cuyp's own cattle. The present painting may therefore be indebted less to a painted precedent than a print or drawing.

Preserved in spectacular condition, this freely worked, boldly graphic work is unusual amongst Gainsborough's surviving landscapes, showing his ability to create completely original images from the prosaic of motifs. The originality of the painting was recognised by its first recorded owner, the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, who put together one of the most outstanding collections of old master paintings ever formed.

NOTES

1. G.F. Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, 3 vols, London 1854, vol.11, p.53.
2. 'Gainsborough's Early Career: New Documents and Two Portraits', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.125, 1983, pp.212–16.
3. Susan Foister, *Young Gainsborough*, London, 1997, pp.3–12.
4. John Hayes, *The Letters of Thomas Gainsborough*, New Haven and London, 2001, p.174.
5. J. Hayes, *The Landscape Paintings of Thomas Gainsborough*, 2 vols, London 1982, vol. 11, pp.406–7. Carel Dujardin's painting is in the National Gallery, London (NG985) the etching is F W H, Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings and woodcuts c.1450–1700*, Amsterdam, 1949, v.33, 1.
6. ed. Robert Wark, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: Discourses on Art*, New Haven and London, 1975, p.27.
7. J. Hayes, *The Landscape Paintings of Thomas Gainsborough*, 2 vols, London 1982, vol.1, p.112.

HENRY THOMAS HAMILTON

Pencil with red and black chalk
8¼ × 6¼ inches · 210 × 158 mm, oval
On the original backing sheet
Drawn c.1804–5

COLLECTIONS

By family descent to 1989;
J. Howard, to 1997;
Spink-Leger Pictures, acquired from the above,
1997;
A.J. Beale, acquired from the above in 1997;
And by descent to 2019

LITERATURE

Kenneth Garlick, *Sir Thomas Lawrence: Portrait of an Age, 1790–1830*, New Haven and London, 1993, p.116.

EXHIBITED

London, National Portrait Gallery and New Haven, Yale Center for British Art, *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Power & Brilliance*, 2010–2011, no.20.



Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Mary Hamilton*
Pencil and red and black chalk
18 × 12¼ inches · 458 × 312 mm
Signed in monogram 'TL' and dated '1789'
© The Trustees of the British Museum

This beautifully drawn portrait was made by Thomas Lawrence when he was at the height of his powers as a portrait draughtsman. The sitter, Henry Thomas Hamilton, was the son of Lawrence's close friend and fellow Royal Academician, the painter William Hamilton and his wife Mary. Preserved in exceptional condition, this sensitive, exquisitely rendered portrait drawing demonstrates Lawrence's abilities at portraying children.

Lawrence's early biographer recorded that he spent some of the 'happiest days of his life' with the Hamiltons and that they 'used to draw a great deal from the antique statues at night, whilst Mrs Hamilton would read to them either poetry, history, or works of the imagination.' In 1789 Lawrence exhibited a spectacular portrait drawing of Mary Hamilton at the Royal Academy, recently acquired by the British Museum, London it is one of the most remarkable of Lawrence's early portrait drawings.

This portrait of Henry Thomas Hamilton was made when he was 10 or 11 and already showing talent as an artist.¹ As the inscription on a label on the reverse of the frame makes clear, Henry 'evinced an extraordinary degree of talent in Historical painting which profession he embraced.' In 1809 the diarist Joseph Farington reported that he had seen Mary Hamilton at the Royal Academy:

*'Her son a boy of 15 was with her. He indicates an inclination to drawing and she sd. Lawrence had expressed an intention of taking him to be an articulated pupil – but three months have passed and she has not heard from him. I told her I would speak to him, at which she expressed much pleasure.'*²

Lawrence was a notoriously lax teacher, and Farington's diaries are full of complaints

by his apprentices. However, Lawrence was generous with young artists and there is evidence that he provided Hamilton with some measure of guidance. In a letter to Hamilton dated 30 May 1809, Lawrence included a drawing of his palette with notes on mixing colours and the use of drying agents for paints.³ Hamilton was admitted a student of the Royal Academy in February 1811 and was given a ticket to study life drawing in December of that year. He subsequently exhibited two works at the Royal Academy in 1812 and 1813, although he died young at the age of 19.

The present drawing, finely worked and executed rapidly in black chalk and finished with touches of red and a small amount of white heightening shows Hamilton seated, looking to the right wearing elaborate, high collar and what looks like a medallion or locket around his neck. Cassandra Albison has suggested that it might be: 'a miniature in a locket around his neck. Perhaps the locket holds a portrait of his deceased father; Lawrence also owned one of these keepsakes.'⁴

NOTES

1. A series of drawings by the young Hamilton are preserved in the Denham Album, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
2. Ed. Kathryn Cave, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, New Haven and London, 1982, vol.IX, p.3489.
3. Cassandra Albison, Peter Funnell and Lucy Peltz, *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Power & Brilliance*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 2010, p.160.
4. Cassandra Albison, Peter Funnell and Lucy Peltz, *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Power & Brilliance*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 2010, p.158.



LORD BYRON

Dried raw clay (terracruda)
19 5/8 inches · 500 mm, excluding modern socle
1822

COLLECTIONS

Milan, private collection;
With Galleria Carlo Virgilio & Co to 2019

LITERATURE

Thomas Medwin, *Journal of the Conversations of Lord Byron. Noted During a Residence with his Lordship at Pisa, in the years 1821 and 1822*, London, 1824, pp.5–7;
Ed., Leslie Marchand, *Byron's Letters and Journals*, Cambridge, 1979, vol.9, p.122;
Ed. Richard Garnett, *The Journal of Edward Elleker Williams*, London, 1902, p.32;
Ed. E. A. Stürzl, Teresa Guiccioli, *La Vie de Lord Byron en Italie*, Salzburg, vol.6, pp.978–979.

By the end of March 1822 Lord Byron, the greatest living poet in Europe, had finished sitting to Lorenzo Bartolini for his bust, the result was this previously unpublished terracruda model. Preserved in spectacular condition, this forceful ad vivum study records Byron two years before his death at Missolonghi in 1824. The circumstances of this study are unusually well documented. Bartolini wrote to Byron in October 1821 asking him to sit for his portrait and permission to present Byron with the finished marble, sittings began on 3rd January 1822.¹ Byron himself reported to his publisher John Murray the circumstances of the work: 'Bartolini, the celebrated Sculptor, wrote to me to desire to make my bust: I consented on condition that he also took that of the Countess Guiccioli. He has taken both, I think it will be allowed that Her's is beautiful ... Of my own I can hardly speak, except that it is thought very like what I now am, which is different from what I was, of course, since you saw me. The sculptor is a famous one; and as it was done by his own particular request, will be done well, probably.'² Byron added: 'The busts which you enquire after have been paid for, but are not even begun. Bartoloini is famous for his delays, something like yourself.' Thomas Medwin watched the present model being sculpted and praised it for being 'an admirable likeness'.³ This rediscovered terracruda bust is therefore the most important, documented life study of Byron outside of a public institution.

Lorenzo Bartolini emerged from humble beginnings to become the most highly esteemed Italian sculptor and heir to Canova. Born to a family of blacksmiths, Bartolini was trained to manufacture decorative metal ornaments. In adolescence he travelled to Florence, and in 1797 made

his way to Paris where he entered the atelier of Jacques-Louis David. There he immersed himself in neo-classical painting, possibly introducing John Flaxman's Homeric illustrations (which he had discovered a few years earlier in Italy) to his friend and classmate, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. The two remained life-long friends and there are three extant portraits by Ingres of Bartolini. Bartolini, in turn, produced a bronze medallion of Ingres.

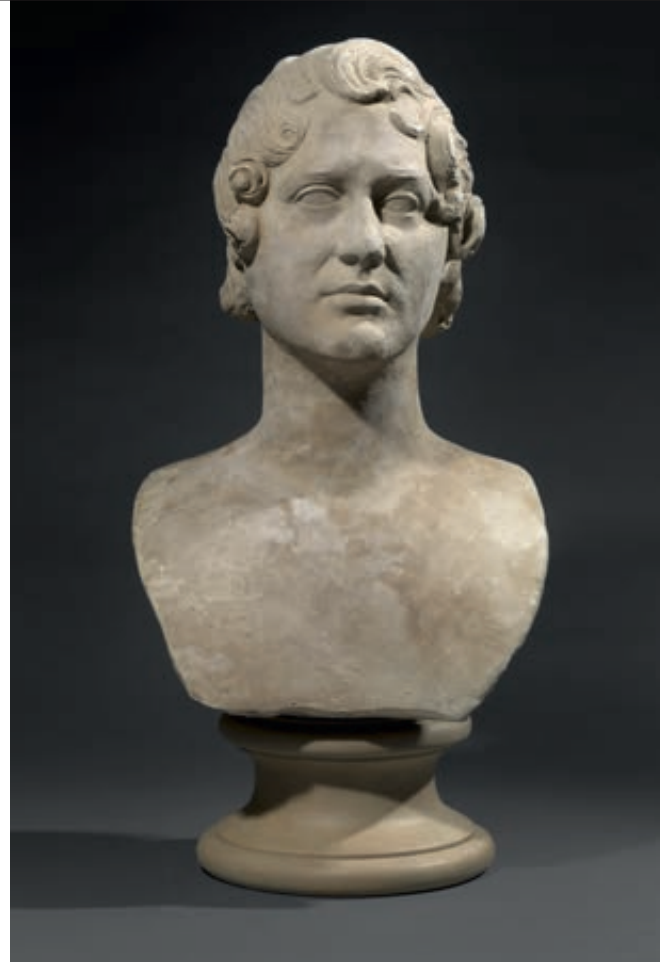
In 1801, the year Ingres won the Grand Prix de Rome in painting, Bartolini was awarded with the second prize for his relief of *Cleobis and Biton*. With this his career was launched and soon he was charged by Napoleon's powerful cultural minister, Vivant-Denon, with the execution of a bust of the emperor for the Vendôme Column as well as a relief of the battle of Austerlitz. Protected by Napoleon and his family, in 1807 Bartolini was appointed director of the Carrara Academy's school of sculpture. Bartolini was under the patronage of Delice Pasquale Baciocchi and his wife Elisa Bonaparte who were Prince and Princess of Lucca and Piombino. Here he executed the marble bust of Elisa Baciocchi; then, between 1808 and 1813, those of Lucien Bonaparte, Girolamo Bonaparte and of Napoleon. Finally, in 1813, Bartolini began a colossal sculpture of Napoleon for Elisa Bonaparte for her Palazzo in Lucca. Bartolini's studio was destroyed by an anti-French mob in 1813 when he joined Napoleon in exile on Elba.

On his return, Bartolini settled in Florence where he enjoyed the wide patronage of a foreign clientele. He was particularly fashionable amongst British travellers. In his *Diary of an Invalid* published





Lorenzo Bartolini, *Lord Byron*
 Plaster · 23¼ inches · 640 mm, high · 1822
 Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence
 Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities



in 1820, Henry Matthews noted: 'Bartolini is an excellent workman, and takes admirable likenesses ... it is now fashionable among the English to sit to him.'⁴ This seems to have been as a result of encouragement from the British Minister at Florence, Lord Burghersh (later Earl of Westmorland) who sat with his wife for busts. As John Kenworthy-Browne first noted, Bartolini's speed of execution – he completed a bust of the poet Thomas Moore in four sittings in 1819 – and his relatively inexpensive prices undoubtedly made him attractive to the largely transient British clientele in Florence.⁵

Bartolini travelled to Pisa where Byron was then resident when on 3 January 1822, Percy Bysshe Shelley's friend, Edward Williams 'call[ed] on Lord B., and [found] him sitting for his bust to Bartolini.' A week later he called and saw 'Bartolini at work – a fine bust.'⁶ During his stay in Pisa the artist met several of the Byron and Shelley circle: Mary Shelley noted in her journal on 13 January that she went 'to the opera in the evening with W[illiams] Pierino [Count Pietro Gamba, Teresa Guiccioli's brother] & Bartolini [sic].'⁷ These references are presumably to the present terracuda model, Bartolini's ad vivum study of Byron.

We have a description of the sittings given by Thomas Medwin in his *Journal of the Conversations of Lord Byron: noted during a residence with his Lordship at Pisa*, published in 1824:

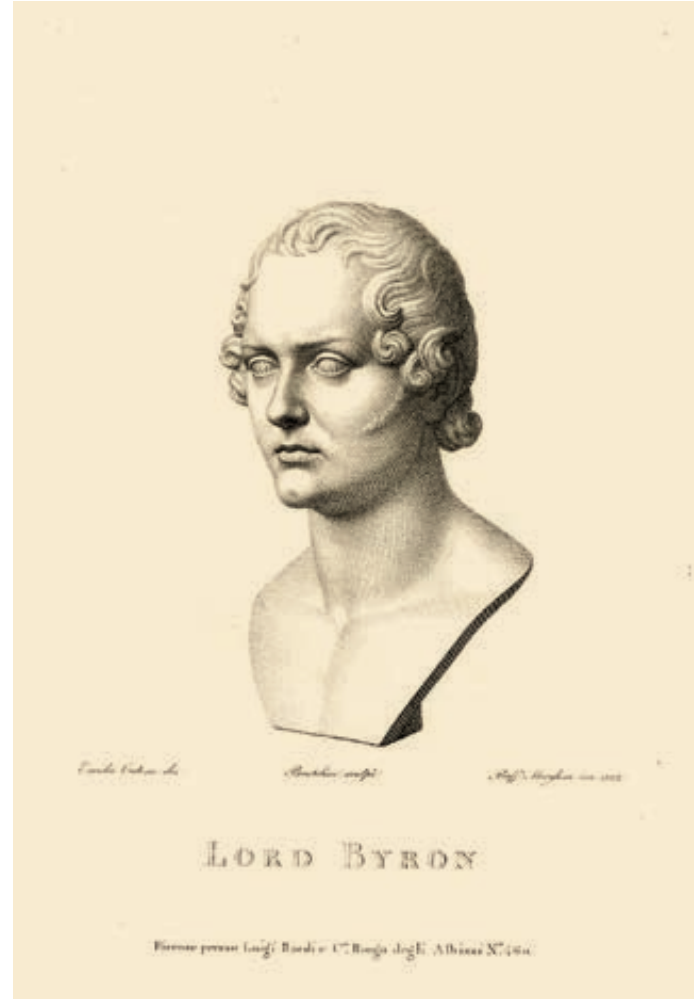
Lorenzo Bartolini, *Lord Byron*
 Marble · 23½ inches · 597 mm, high · 1822
 © National Portrait Gallery, London



'Being with him, day after day, some time afterwards, which he was sitting to Bertolini, the Florentine sculptor, for his bust, I had an opportunity of analyzing his features more critically, but found nothing to alter in my portrait. Bertolini's admirable likeness, at least was so in the clay model. I have not seen it since it was copied in marble, nor have I got a cast; he promised Bertolini should send me one. Lord Byron prided himself on his neck; and it must be confessed that his head was worthy of being placed on it. Bertolini destroyed his ébauches more than once before he could please himself. When he had finished, Lord Byron said, 'It is the last time I sit to sculptor or painter.'⁸

Thomas Medwin mentions the present 'clay model' and the fact that Bartolini struggled with the bust, destroying a number of 'ébauches', presumably studies in clay. In common with Williams, who calls it 'a fine bust', and Byron himself, who admitted that it was 'thought very like what I now am', Medwin praised the 'admirable likeness.' Bartolini's animated clay model shows Byron, with his head turned, as if in conversation. The refined features and carefully modelled hair all point to Bartolini's careful attempt to capture Byron naturalistically.

The process of turning the terracruda model into a finished marble required



Lorenzo Bartolini,
Contessa Teresa Gamba Guiccioli
Plaster · 26 inches · 660 mm, high · 1822
Prato, Museo di Palazzo Pretorio
Scala, Florence

Raphael Morghen, after Emidio Cardi,
after Lorenzo Bartolini, *Lord Byron*
Engraving
9¾ × 7¼ inches · 253 × 184 mm · 1822
Published by Luigi Bardi in Florence
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Bartolini to take a cast in gesso. The gesso survives as part of the Gipsoteca Bartoliniana which was acquired by the Italian state in 1883 and deposited in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in the Pitti Palace, Florence. Comparing the present model to the gesso reveals a number of subtle differences, particularly in the treatment of Byron's hair, the clay model also shows Byron to be somewhat fleshier in his face than in the surviving gesso. The circumstances of these alterations are described by Teresa Guiccioli:

'Celui de Lord Byron où ... l'artiste mit tout son âme car son admiration de Lord Byron était sans borne fut bien davantage manqué. Bartolini fit et refit le moule plusieurs fois – il fut près de se décourager – mais il ne fut vaincre le défaut qui était dans sa nature ... Dès que le moule fut terminé Bartolini le fit porter chez la C[omte]sse pour avoir son impression. = Elle resta pétrifiée – et affligée ... Bartolini tâcha [de] la rassurer lui disant que le moule ne pouvait pas lui rendre justice comme le marbre la lui rendrait, mais plus tard on vit au contraire que dans le moule les défauts étaient plutôt dissimulés, car ils ressortirent bien autrement dans le marbre.'

La C[omte]sse qui désirait extrêmement que l'artiste Italien pût rendre à la beauté de Lord Byron la justice dont aucun autre artiste n'avait été capable, et craignant que l'arrangement actuel de ses cheveux, qu'elle n'approuvait pas, pût nuire à la ressemblance elle écrivit à LB le priant de mettre ses cheveux pour un seul moment derrière l'oreille – 'que Bartolini pût voir in tutta l'estensione de[ll]a tua divina fisionomia che[...?] stata dalla pettinatura attuale.'⁹

Byron was apparently highly sensitive about his weight. Byron's friend, John Hobhouse, noted in Pisa: 'he is much changed – his face fatter, and the

expression of it injured.'¹⁰ It therefore seems likely that both Byron and Teresa Guiccioli encouraged Bartolini to make the changes to the mould ('Bartolini fit et refit le moule plusieurs fois'). This explains the slight differences between the present model and the surviving gesso in Florence. Bartolini continued to refine and alter the composition in the finished marble. In transposing the model to marble, Bartolini made several interventions, Byron's hair, for example, is made more modish, as Bartolini adds whiskers coming on to Byron's cheeks and subtly thins the face. The result was that the marble no longer successfully captured Byron's appearance.

Byron offered to make a present of both busts to his publisher John Murray as a compensation for the trouble he had had over the bust commissioned by John Hobhouse from Bertel Thorvaldsen. But in September 1822 Byron wrote to Murray about the marbles: 'The bust does not turn out a very good one – though it may be like for ought I know – as it exactly resembles a superannuated Jesuit. I shall therefore not send it as I intended ... I assure you Bartolini's is dreadful – though my mind misgives me that it is hideously like. If it is – I cannot be long for this world – for it overlooks seventy.'¹¹ Byron's dislike of the bust was echoed by others who saw the finished marble. Murray never received Byron's versions and they passed to his banker, Charles Barry and from his descendants to the South African Library at Cape Town. Byron's dissatisfaction with the final marble meant that Bartolini made relatively few copies in marble and few plaster casts. This terracruda model is therefore a remarkable rediscovery

and stands as one of the most important life studies to have been made of Byron to survive. As an unfired clay sketch it also offers unprecedented evidence of Bartolini's working method at the height of his career.

NOTES

1. For the circumstances of the commission see Annette Peach, 'Portraits of Byron', *The Walpole Society*, vol.LXII, 2000, pp.100–106.
2. Lord Byron to John Murray, March 1822. Ed., Leslie Marchand, *Byron's Letters and Journals*, Cambridge, 1979, vol.9, p.122.
3. Thomas Medwin, *Journal of the Conversations of Lord Byron. Noted During a Residence with his Lordship at Pisa, in the years 1821 and 1822*, London, 1824, p.6.
4. Henry Matthews, *Diary of an Invalid: Being the Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland and France*, London, 1820, p.59.
5. John Kenworthy-Browne, 'Sculptor and Revolutionary: British Portraits by Bartolini', *Country Life*, vol.163, Iss. 4222, June 8, 1978, pp.1655–1656.
6. Ed. Richard Garnett, *The Journal of Edward Elleker Williams*, London, 1902. p.32 and p.34.
7. Eds. Paula Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert, *The Journals of Mary Shelley*, Oxford, 1987, vol.1. p.389.
8. Thomas Medwin, *Journal of the Conversations of Lord Byron: noted during a residence with his Lordship at Pisa*, London, 1824, p.12.
9. Ed. E. A. Stürzl, Teresa Guiccioli, *La Vie de Lord Byron en Italie*, Salzburg, vol.6, pp.978–979.
10. John Hobhouse, *Recollections of a Long Life*, London, 1909, vol.3, p.2.
11. Ed., Leslie Marchand, *Byron's Letters and Journals*, Cambridge, 1979, vol.9, p.212.

AN EVENING LANDSCAPE

Pencil, watercolour and gouache
 8¼ × 17¾ inches · 210 × 440 mm
 Signed bottom left: 'S. Palmer'
 Painted c.1880

COLLECTIONS

Dr Samuel Henry Nazeby Harrington (1862–1937), Birkenhead;
 Sir Henry Nazeby Harrington (1891–1951), son of the above;
 By descent to 2018

This exquisitely finished, jewel-like watercolour was made in the last year of Samuel Palmer's life and demonstrates his enduring ability as a landscape painter. The subject-matter is a neat distillation of the themes that drove his work throughout his career. The panoramic format, richly worked in watercolour shows a peaceable, productive landscape at the close of day, in the foreground a gleaner and goat-herd return home along a limpid river, the sun has dipped behind a distant town illuminating the sky with a technicolour sunset. In the mid-ground Palmer includes a small group of cottages, a trail of smoke emanating from chimneystacks suggesting warmth and comfort. This carefully constructed landscape embodies many of the central themes that Palmer explored throughout his working life.

At the date Palmer painted this watercolour he was also in the midst of completing a sequence of watercolours that had been commissioned by the solicitor and collector Leonard Rowe Valpy. Valpy had invited Palmer to paint something that appealed to his 'inner sympathies', and Palmer responded that he had long considered making a series of illustrations to Milton's 'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso'. The project occupied Palmer for the last eighteen years

of his life and included three of his most enduring compositions: *The Prospect*, now in the Ashmolean, *The Bellman* and *The Lonely Tower*. This watercolour, whilst not specifically illustrating a Miltonic scene, belongs in spirit and style to this group. As with the Milton watercolours, Palmer has worked on thick London board, which was best suited to take the accumulated layers of pigment that Palmer applied to build up his compositions.

This watercolour neatly captures Palmer's 'inner sympathies', showing, as it does, a rural landscape at the close of day with a gleaner meeting a goat herd returning home. The landscape acts as a compendium of Palmer's familiar scenery, from the downland of Sussex on the left, to the wooded hill, reminiscent of Box Hill on the right and the glimpse of coast in the far distance, but most evocatively is the village in the foreground, a memory of Shoreham. Whilst apparently not illustrating a specific text, this watercolour plays with all the tropes of Palmer's Miltonic compositions: luminous lighting, dramatic vistas and lovingly described landscape. Like



Palmer's Miltonic works, the London board has been densely and boldly worked, with layer upon layer of pigment articulated in places by touches of scratching out.

This watercolour is apparently unpublished, although given its state of finish, it is likely to have been prepared by Palmer for exhibition. Lister records at least two exhibited works with titles that could be the present work. The first, 'River Banks at Even' was exhibited at the Old Watercolour Society in 1878 (no.238) and then at the Fine Art Society in 1881 (no.41), although this has been tentatively identified with the late watercolour in the British Museum entitled *Classical River Scene*. More likely it is a work entitled 'Landscape – Evening' which was shown at the Fine Art Society in 1881 (no.11) where it is recorded as belonging to the decorative painter R. Townroe.

Samuel Palmer, *A Pastoral Landscape*
 Watercolour with gouache and gum arabic
 9 × 13¾ inches · 229 × 353 mm
 Signed · 1878
 © The Trustees of the British Museum





A HEAD OF A KNIGHT FOR 'THE BRIAR WOOD'

White and black chalk on buff paper laid down on canvas
12 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 13 inches · 320 × 330 mm
Drawn c.1874

COLLECTIONS
Property of a Charitable Trust to 2019;
Bonhams, 20 February 2019, lot 70

Edward Coley Burne-Jones, *The Briar Wood*
Oil on canvas
49 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 90 inches · 1250 × 2310 mm · 1874–84
The Faringdon collection, Buscot Park

This unusual drawing was made by Edward Burne-Jones in 1874 whilst he was working on his great cycle of paintings entitled *The Briar Rose*. Showing the top of a man's head rendered in black chalk, picked out in white chalk, the carefully observed study points to the centrality of drawing to Burne-Jones's work as a painter and designer. Burne-Jones evidently considered this drawing had a life beyond its function as a preparatory study, stretching the sheet of buff paper on a fine canvas support. Preserved in excellent condition, this striking drawing underscores Burne-Jones's originality as a designer.

As his contemporaries recognised, drawing was crucial to Burne-Jones's creative life. The painter and theatre designer Walford Graham Robertson noted:

*'He was pre-eminently a draughtsman, to draw was his natural mode of expression – line flowed from him almost without volition. If he were merely playing with a pencil, the result was never a scribble, but a thing of beauty however slight, a perfect design.'*¹

As a result, every major commission generated a constellation of drawn studies. Burne-Jones was restless and inventive in his choice of media, particularly experimenting with his choice of papers. On visiting Edward Burne-Jones's house, *The Grange*, in Fulham in 1869 Charles Eliot Norton observed the profusion of drawings, noting: *'there are literally hundreds of these and other such drawings, all full of exquisite feeling and grace, all picturesquely and poetically conceived. There are three or four enormous volumes filled*





Edward Coley Burne-Jones,
detail from *The Briar Wood*
The Faringdon collection, Buscot Park

Edward Coley Burne-Jones, *The Prince enters the Wood* from the small *Briar Rose* series

Oil on panel
23³/₈ × 50 inches · 600 × 1275 mm · 1871–3
Museo de Arte de Ponce, The Luis A. Ferré Foundation,
Inc., Photo: akg-images / Pirozzi

with studies of every sort, – many of them worthy to go with the famous studies of the great masters.²

Based on the story of Sleeping Beauty, *The Briar Rose* consists of four panels on which Burne-Jones worked intermittently between 1874 and 1890. The title derives from the version of the fairy tale published by the brothers Grimm

All four scenes represent the same moment suspended in time: the prince enters a realm of arrested motion in which figures lie overcome by sleep. As the artist explained: 'I want it to stop with the princess asleep and to tell no more, to leave all the afterwards to the invention and imagination of people'. The canvases were successfully exhibited at the London art dealers Agnew's before being shown to a broader audience at Toynbee Hall in the East End, affirming the artist's belief in art for all. They were subsequently bought by the financier and MP, Alexander Henderson, and installed in the saloon of his country residence, Buscot Park in Oxfordshire. Ten smaller panels were added to link the paintings around the room. Morris provided verses that were lettered beneath the framework of the four paintings.

The present beautifully worked study depicts the head of a figure for the first of the sequence, *The Briar Wood*. The drawing corresponds to the sleeping figure of a knight in the final version of the subject seen on the right-hand side in the middle ground (see detail opposite). Burne-Jones evidently made the present sensitive study from life, capturing the head of a sleeping-model on prepared paper that he subsequently laid down on canvas. This bold, almost abstract drawing communicates the strong sense of design that is present in the canvases. The first of the panels was accompanied by verses composed by William Morris:

*"The fateful slumber floats and flows
About the tangle of the rose;
But lo! the fated hand and heart
To rend the slumberous curse apart!"*

NOTES

1. Walford Graham Robertson, *Time Was*, London, 1931, p.84.
2. Ed. Sara Norton, *Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, Boston and New York, 1913, vol.I, p.346.



DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI 1828–1882

ELIZABETH SIDDAL HAVING HER HAIR COMBED

Brown ink on paper
6 × 4½ inches · 153 × 115 mm
Inscribed on the verso by William Michael Rossetti: 'By Gabriel – I think a watercolour was made of this c.1855'

COLLECTIONS
Dante Gabriel Rossetti;
William Michael Rossetti (1829–1919),
brother of the above, Euphrosyne (Effie) Ritchie
(1872–1911) a gift from the above;
R. M. Ritchie, grandson of the above, by
descent, to 2012;
Ritchie sale, Duke's, Dorchester 12 April 2012,
lot.160;
Private collection 2019

This powerful drawing was made by Rossetti in around 1855 and was given by his brother, William Michael Rossetti to the daughter of one of Rossetti's most important models, the Greek pre-Raphaelite artist Euphrosyne Spartali. Executed boldly in well-preserved dark ink, this small drawing captures Rossetti's enduring preoccupation with the representation of women's hair, particularly long hair being combed for dramatic display. Whilst the precise literary source of this drawing has not yet been identified, it is a motif which reappears in a number of Rossetti's greatest compositions including his grand watercolour *Morning Music* now in the Fitzwilliam Museum and his late depiction of *Desdemona's Death Song*

which was drawn in around 1880. Made early in Rossetti's career this drawing almost certainly represents a scene modelled by Elizabeth Siddal, the painter and muse, who dominated Rossetti's art at this date.

Rossetti was the second son of Gabriele Pasquale Giuseppe Rossetti a celebrated Italian scholar of Dante and Frances Mary Lavinia Polidori. A founding member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood he espoused a new aesthetic and new way of approaching art. In 1852 Rossetti took rooms in Chatham Place, Blackfriars Bridge and began to sell small drawings and watercolours to fellow artists and by 1853 he had his first notable commercial success, selling *The Annunciation* to the Belfast businessman Francis



Dante Gabriel Rossetti,
*Bonifazio's Mistress –
Compositional Study*
Pen and ink
7⅞ × 6⅞ inches · 193 × 170
mm · 1856
© Birmingham Museums &
Art Gallery



MacCraken for £50. Rossetti's personal standing further improved through his meeting with Ruskin who began to champion his works. At this date, Rossetti began to use a number of regular female sitters. The present drawing almost certainly depicts Elizabeth Siddal reading whilst she has her hair combed. Siddal, whose tall stature, dreamy, heavily lidded eyes and long copper-red hair became archetypal features of the ideal Pre-Raphaelite woman. Initially she modelled for a number of painters in Rossetti's circle, but was rapidly monopolised by Rossetti himself, who, in turn encouraged her aspirations as a painter and poet. During the 1850s Siddal, who became known as 'Guggums', 'the Sid' or 'the Dove', posed frequently for Rossetti's paintings. On seeing a draw full of studies of Siddal, Ford Madox Brown observed: 'Gabriel... drawing wonderful and lovely 'Guggums' one after another each one a fresh charm each one stamped with immortality. God knows how many, it is like a monomania with him.'

This heavily worked interior scene is characteristic of Rossetti in around 1855. A mass of hatched, pen lines give a claustrophobic quality to the composition. The densely worked quality is one that Rossetti was experimenting with at this date, filling almost every part of the sheet with pen lines. Rossetti has included a circular mirror on a dressing-table beyond the seated reading woman, the two figures visible in the reflection of the glass. Beyond Rossetti has shown a curtained bed, similar to those found in early Netherlandish paintings, suggesting that this drawing is a study for a historical or literary scene. Rossetti's brother, William Michael Rossetti suggested, in a note on the verso of the sheet, that this drawing was

made into a watercolour demands greater research, currently no such watercolour can be identified. It was William Michael Rossetti who was responsible for dispersing Rossetti's estate and the present drawing was given to Effie Ritchie in 1905. Effie was the daughter of the great Pre-Raphaelite model and painter Euphrosyne Spartali. Rossetti was fond of the young girl describing her as 'the divinely lovely Effie', she appears in rich Renaissance costume in an 1879 portrait entitled *La Pensierosa* by her mother. Jane Morris stated simply that 'Effie is beautiful.' The drawing remained in the Ritchie family until sold in 2012 and was consequently unknown to Surtees.



Dante Gabriel Rossetti
St Cecilia: a design for Moxon's Tennyson
Pen and ink · 5 × 4 inches · 127 × 102 mm
© Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery

Dante Gabriel Rossetti
Elizabeth Siddal seated at an easel
Sepia ink wash with pen and brush
6½ × 3¾ inches · 165 × 95 mm · c.1852
Nationalmuseum, Stockholm
Formerly with Lowell Libson Ltd



LES DEUX LANDAISES (EVENING)

Pencil on paper
14¼ × 11½ inches · 362 × 292 mm
Signed 'G.L. Brockhurst' (lower right)
Drawn c.1920

COLLECTIONS
The Fine Art Society, London, 1981;
Mr & Mrs Alan Fortunoff, acquired from the
above;
Private collection to 2019

LITERATURE
Stephen Wildman (et al), *A Dream of Fair Women: An Exhibition of the Work of Gerald Leslie Brockhurst, R.A. (1890–1978): Painter and Etcher*, exhibition catalogue, 1986, no.49.

EXHIBITED
London, The Fine Art Society, 1981;
Sheffield, Graves Art Gallery, Birmingham,
City Art Gallery and London, National Portrait
Gallery, *A Dream of Fair Women: An Exhibition
of the Work of Gerald Leslie Brockhurst R.A.
(1890–1978): Painter and Etcher*, 1986 – 87
1987, no.49:
London, The Fine Art Society, *Gerard Leslie
Brockhurst*, 2011, no.12

This spectacular drawing was made by Gerald Leslie Brockhurst in around 1920, it depicts his wife Anaïs seated whilst her sister, Marguerite Folin, stands dressing her hair; the drawing was turned into an etching by Brockhurst in 1923. Brockhurst variously called the print 'Les Deux Landaises', the two girls from Landes, a reference to the area of South-West France which was the native region of Anaïs and her sister and 'Evening'. The tender and intimate drawing demonstrates Brockhurst's virtuosic handling of graphite and his self-conscious interest in a long tradition of depicting women at their toilet. Rendered minutely in etching, the print points to Brockhurst's specific interest in Rembrandt, recalling, as it does, *The Great Jewish Bride*.

Brockhurst was born in Birmingham where, in 1901, he was registered at the Birmingham School of Art. He won a place at the Royal Academy Schools in 1907. At the Academy, among other awards, he won the

gold medal and travelling scholarship which enabled him to visit Paris and Italy where he became enthralled by the art of fifteenth-century Italian painters, specifically the work of Piero della Francesca. Their influence was to be central to the evolution of his own artistic development. On 5 December 1911, in Chelsea, he married his first wife, Anaïs Folin whose distinctive features provided the inspiration for many of his early portraits. During the 1920s Brockhurst established himself first as a printmaker of outstanding virtuosity and second as one of the most original and successful portrait painters of his generation. Brockhurst produced a sequence of eerily unsettling images of the greatest icons of the decade including the Duchess of Windsor, Merle Oberon and J. Paul Getty.

This intensely worked drawing of Anaïs and her sister was made in preparation for an etching published in 1923. Brockhurst's sheet shows him carefully building up the composition, deliberately densely drawing areas such as Anaïs's hair and the concentrated expression of her sister, leaving other areas, such as the table and contents of the room only lightly suggested. These decisions are reflected and developed in the finished etching where, for example, the blank table of the drawing is cast into gradated shadow in the finished print. Brockhurst's feathery touch and minutely layered hatching point to the enduring impact of studying fifteenth-century Italian art, in the present sheet the graphite is handled with the dexterity of metal point. This drawing belonged to the most considerable collectors of Brockhurst's works in the late twentieth century, Alan and Helene Fortunoff.



Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn
The Jewish Bride
Etching · 8¾ × 6¾ inches · 219 × 168 mm · 1635
© The Trustees of the British Museum



CHARIVARI – THE GRAND PARADE

Watercolour and gouache over pencil, on three pieces of paper laid down on board
40 × 50 inches · 1016 × 1270 mm
Signed 'Laura Knight' (lower right) and inscribed on the verso 'cartoon Charivari'
Drawn in 1928

COLLECTIONS

The artist's estate sale, Sotheby's, London, 7 May 1975, lot 312;
Sotheby's, London, 21 May 1986, lot 89;
Paisnel Gallery, London;
Private collection to 2019

LITERATURE

Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, New York, 1936, pp.307–308.

This monumental cartoon was made by Laura Knight in preparation for her most powerful depiction of a circus, entitled *Charivari*, or *The Grand Parade*, a painting which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1929. Knight had a life-long fascination with the culture of the professional circus. Throughout the 1920s she spent each winter at Olympia drawing the performers of Bertram Mills Circus; producing a remarkably intimate portrait of the community of performers she encountered. For Knight, the world of the circus embodied both the skill of highly trained professionals and the vulnerability of a marginalised community of largely itinerant workers. *Charivari* is a magnificent celebration of the world of the circus, of the individuals Knight met, observed and respected, their acts and animals, but more profoundly, the composition is a powerful rendering of the relationship between public and private experience, something at the heart of Knight's work as a professional, female painter working in London in the 1920s.

Shortly after the First World War Laura Knight moved to London with her husband, Harold, who established himself as a portrait painter. Through Barry Jackson, a wealthy impresario, Knight sought permission to work at Diaghilev's ballet company. Working behind the scenes, she produced a series of powerful depictions of the dancers off-stage. Knight immersed herself in the world of her subject, establishing herself as an acute observer of performers, and her images of ballet dancers often explored the liminal moment between performance and rest; showing figures dressing, stretching or waiting in the wings before dancing on stage. Scholars have found Knight's images of dancers to represent an important inversion of the conventional male gaze, foregrounding her gender in her choice of subject-matter.¹

Throughout the 1920s Knight received considerable critical success. Consequently, in 1927 she was elected an associate of the Royal Academy, she was only the second female, the first having been Annie Swynnerton. Knight's friend and supporter, Alfred Munnings, introduced her to Bertram Mills, who allowed her privileged access to his circus during its winter season at Olympia. Knight found in the disciplined world of the circus performer something analogous to her own work as a painter. Knight was enormously impressed by the community she encountered, writing in her 1936 autobiography *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*: 'Circus performers are the hardest-working, the cleanest-living people I have met, with a pride in their bodies, an ideal of attainment, and an infinite capacity for endurance.' Adding: 'The artist's spirit is there, from the acrobat at the top of the tent to the clown

who runs into the ring to fool, the one actor who creates his own character and part.'² At Olympia Knight encountered a number of renowned performers: Willy Schumann Mills' equestrian director, the Hungarian dwarf Zoltán Hirsch, known as Zoli, the celebrated clowns Joe Craston and the Whimsical Walker.

Knight produced a prodigious number of black chalk studies of performers, audience, animals and the architecture of Olympia. These she used to make the current cartoon. *Charivari* is a peculiarly claustrophobic composition; Knight has fitted over twenty identifiable circus performers and their animals into an impossibly crowded ring. The circumstances of the commission are carefully described by Knight in *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*:

'During one season I received a letter from Major Evelyn Atherley, who had read in the Press of my making studies at Olympia. He came to my studio, and it was arranged I should paint a picture for him. The first thing he asked for was a portrait – Whimsical Walker, standing astride, with the Major's Sealyham terrier 'Blinkers' sitting up between his legs. Then came an avalanche of requests: 'Can you put Joe Craston in? And Mr Schumann? And the wire-walker – that man who impersonates a girl? And some horses? And all the other clowns? And Power's elephants? And a portrait of myself?' Then swiftly changing his mind: 'No, I won't be in it myself; etc., etc. We were both excited. I said, 'Yes' to everything, and went home to tell Harold I had undertaken the commission. 'You are mad; it is not possible!' he said. But do it I would' It is the sort of commission that Breughel might have received, and I am going to have a shot at it!'

It is fortunate I had a mass of studies to work from; with an immense pack of them I went



down to Cornwall in the spring. In the loft over the carpenter's shop at Mousehole I set to work on my problem – to discover how to put twenty acts, all going on at the same time, in one ring, and to make it look reasonable.

I did a cartoon fifty by forty inches and brought it up to London for Major Atherley to see. He liked the idea, but would not have the skaters or the comedy horses I had included. Back I went to Cornwall again. It was now a jig-saw puzzle with some of the pieces missing. A new cartoon had to be made, everything carefully placed, even to a fraction of an inch, or some little dog or acrobat would be left out. The second cartoon met with his complete satisfaction; but late September came before I finished the picture, a complicated piece of work. The Major's joy in it was worth the trouble I had taken.³

The present spectacular sheet, measuring 40 x 50 inches is the second cartoon described by Knight, the design that met with Atherley's 'complete satisfaction'. The finished painting was completed and shown at the Royal Academy in 1929, it is now in the collection of Newport Museum and Art Gallery.

Following Atherley's own suggestion, Whimsical Walker the circus's principal clown is in the centre of the composition. Shown in his distinctive stance, legs akimbo, with Major Atherley's terrier Blinkers at

Laura Knight, *Charivari*

Oil on canvas
50 x 40 inches - 1021 x 1270 mm - 1928
Newport Museum and Art Gallery, South Wales /
Bridgeman Images

Laura Knight, *Major Atherley*

Watercolour
21 x 28 inches - 533 x 711 mm - c.1936
Courtesy of Kaye Mitchie Fine Art



Hamlin (photographer), *Whimsical Walker*

Photograph - 1928
Hulton Archive © Getty Images



his feet, Walker acts as the nucleus of the picture. Walker had trained with Pablo Fanque in the 1850s, toured America with Barnum & Bailey and in a celebrated career was responsible, amongst other things, for purchasing 'Jumbo' the elephant from the London Zoological Gardens in 1887 and taking him to America.⁴ Willy Schumann 'resplendent in his shiny top-hat and perfectly cut morning suit' is shown on the right, in profile, standing next to Joe Craston, a clown who appears in numerous studies by Knight. Knight was particularly fascinated by the circus animals and she includes one of Bertram Mills' famous Liberty horses, one of the Knapstropers with their distinctive spotty markings, two elephants and several performing dogs and seals. In the foreground is the dwarf

'Goliath' who Knight credits with giving the picture the title *Charivari*: 'when I showed him the photograph; he just christened it quite naturally, and his name for it could not be bettered.'⁵

The finished composition is quite unlike Knight's informal back-stage studies; it is a riotous, celebration of the thrill of the big top condensed into a single, flattened image. Knight makes no attempt to create a viable space, layering performers to create a densely worked design. This sense of horror vacui underscores Knight's interest in performance. Knight noted: 'I have often tried to analyse the circus appeal. It is the display of indomitable courage that one sees and admires, an admiration inherent in the human race. Gravitation is defied – the impossible is possible.' Knight thrilled

at the transformation of the individual into the performer. Rather than show the private world of the dressing room, *Charivari* is all about the public persona. David Peters Corbett has recently suggested that 'Knight's circus is the arena of the disjunction between the spectacle of performance and the objectification of the displayed body', *Charivari* specifically depicts: 'the body's transfiguration into entertainment, divorced from the expression of interior states and given over to a public role.'⁶ This is a fact underscored by Knight's decision to show the acrobats and trapeze artists as anonymous shapes, rather than individuals. In this way *Charivari* can be situated in a long-line of depictions of the circus from Degas to Picasso.

This cartoon is Knight's grandest and most ambitious work on paper. Although framed by Knight as an unorthodox commission, the image represents a powerful distillation of her long engagement with the visual world of the circus and ranks as one of her masterpieces. The present cartoon remained in Knight's possession until her death when it was included in her studio sale.

NOTES

1. See Rosie Broadley, *Laura Knight's Portraits*, exh. cat., London (National Portrait Gallery), 2013, p.46.
2. Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, New York, 1936, pp.299–300.
3. Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, New York, 1936, pp.307–308.
4. Whimsical Walker, *From Sawdust to Windsor Castle*, London, 1922, pp.48–55.
5. Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, New York, 1936, p.308.
6. David Peters Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art 1914–30*, Manchester, 1997, p.211.

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ISBN 978 1 9999783 3 4

Designed and typeset in Elena by Dalrymple
Photography by Rodney Todd-White & Son Ltd
Colour reproduction by Altagimage Ltd
Printed in Belgium by Albe De Coker

Cover: James Jefferys, from *The Master of the Giants* album,
detail of *A Battle Scene: possibly the Death of King Richard III*
(see page 34)

Frontispiece: Lorenzo Bartolini, *Lord Byron* (see page 66)

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