



# Acquisitions

## Prints and Drawings c. 1800

• ERIK HINTERDING, HUIGEN LEEFLANG,  
MANON VAN DER MULLEN AND MARIJN SCHAPELHOUMAN •

- I CHRISTOPHER NORTON (1738-1799)  
After Franciszek Smuglewicz (Warsaw 1745-1807 Vilnius)  
*Three Interiors of Etruscan Burial Chambers*, 1765-70  
Engraving, 222 x 470 mm, 317 x 475 mm, 318 x 475 mm; proof impressions
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In 1761 the Scottish architect and archaeologist James Byres visited the recently discovered Etruscan burial chambers in Tarquinia. Byres, who lived in Rome and moved in the circles of Giovanni Battista Piranesi and Johann Joachim Winckelmann, undertook the journey in the company of the talented young Polish artist Franciszek Smuglewicz, whom he commissioned to make drawings of the tombs. Smuglewicz recorded the impressive underground burial chambers between 1765 and 1767, particularly the frescos. At that time they were the earliest known examples of European painting (Knossos and Lascaux were not discovered until much later, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively).

The drawings were to form the basis of a lavishly illustrated publication about the spectacular discoveries in Tarquinia, which Byres wanted to issue in London after the example of Piranesi's seminal illustrations of ancient Rome and the excavations in Herculaneum. Between 1765 and 1770 Christopher Norton, a friend of Byres, engraved some fifty-seven copper plates based on Smuglewicz's drawings. The number of people who subscribed for the expensive publication was disappointing, however, the project was abandoned and the copper plates went missing. In 1805 Byres announced that all he had left in his possession were a few proof impressions.

Long after Byres's death, the plates surfaced in London and were published there in the standard

work *Hypogaea or Sepulchral Caverns of Tarquinia, the Capital of Antient Etruria* (1842) more than seventy years after they were made. The three recently acquired engravings did not come from this publication, but are unmistakably proof impressions made by Norton when he was working on the copper plates. This is evident from the burin tests in the margin and the high-contrast impressions on uncut sheets of paper, similar to the sheets on which Piranesi produced his prints. Norton's engravings differ technically and stylistically from Piranesi's sensational etchings, but as evocations of recently discovered mysterious sites from antiquity are equally effective. Smuglewicz's drawings and a number of other proof impressions of the engravings were part of the Polish royal collection and are now held at the University of Warsaw.

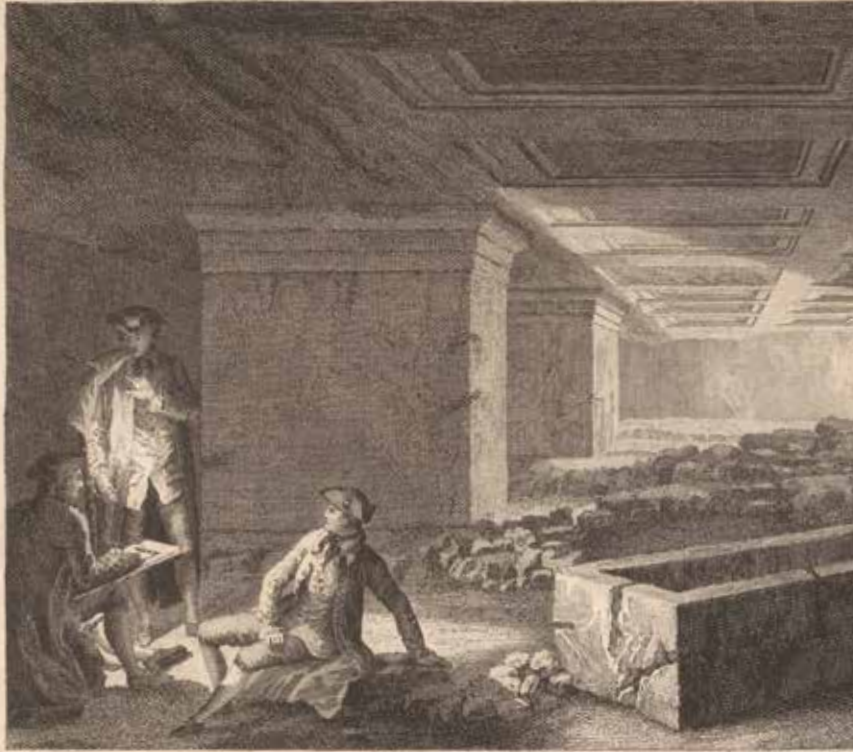
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LITERATURE:

Witold Dobrowolski, 'The Drawings of Etruscan Tombs by Franciszek Smuglewicz and his Cooperation with James Byres', *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 29 (1978), no. 1/2, pp. 97-119

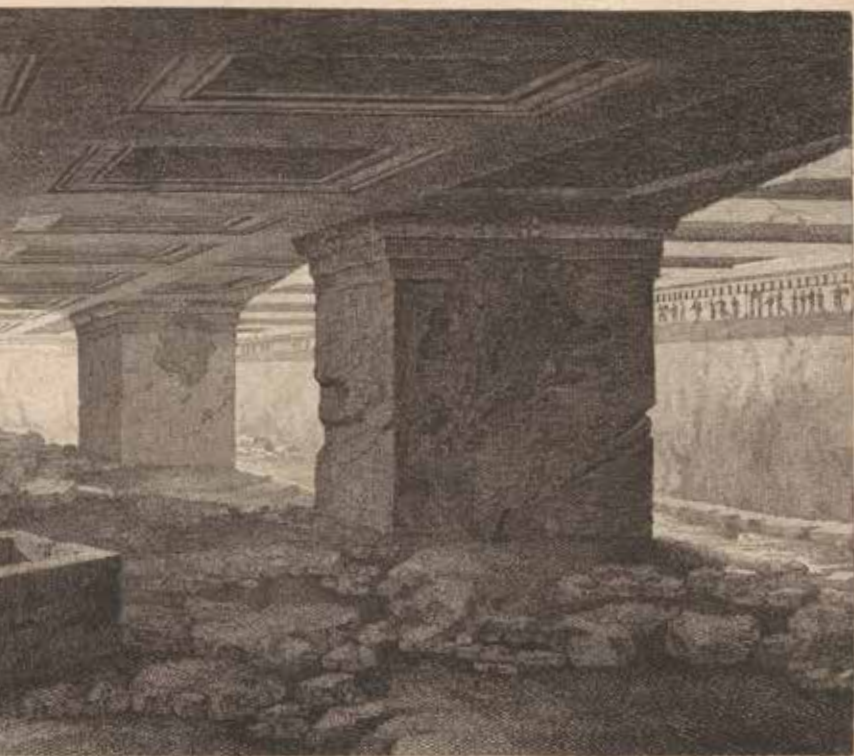
PROVENANCE:

Dealer Robert Schreuder Antiquair, Amsterdam; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2016  
(inv. nos. RP-P-2016-30-1 to 3).



Inv. no. RP-P-2016-30-1





## 2 LOUIS-JEAN DESPREZ (Auxerre 1743-1804 Stockholm)

*The Temple of Love*, c. 1777-84

Etching and aquatint, 316 x 460 mm

State 2(2)

Signed lower left: *després invenit et fecit*

This is a magnificently conceived ode to love. A monumental, elegant building rises up with trees on both sides, its arches supported on slender Corinthian columns. Behind it stands a round temple containing a pedestal on which Cupid is worshipped. In the foreground, extravagantly dressed couples sit at a banquet, flanked by *amorette* who take part in the conversation or help to serve the meal. The sounds of revelry are accompanied by an orchestra atop the colonnade, while *putti* hold up a canopy above the organ playing there. The clouds floating between the arches heighten the dream-like atmosphere, but the mood is even more powerfully set by the dazzling light emanating from Cupid on his pedestal, which washes over the entire scene and reduces the figures in the foreground to little more than silhouettes.

The symmetrical arrangement, the stage-like layout and the dramatic lighting give the composition an unmistakably theatrical character, and this is no accident. Aside from making prints, Louis-Jean Desprez had also trained as an architect and over the course of time acquired a thorough knowledge of classical monuments. He also built up a reputation as a very gifted designer of stage scenery. It was for this reason that in 1784, while he was working in Rome, King Gustav III of Sweden summoned him to Stockholm to provide the sets for the royal theatre. Desprez never left Sweden and in his time there made countless designs for scenery and costumes, and was also responsible for the decoration of court banquets and other important events.

It would therefore seem logical to place the undated *Temple of Love* in Desprez's Swedish period, but this is probably incorrect. The print appears to have been made before that time, and in two stages. In the first state the composition was executed as a line etching and aquatint was added in the second. Impressions of both states are extremely rare. Nils Wollin thought that the first state was a development of a drawing Desprez presented to the Académie Royale

d'Architecture in Paris in 1774. He assumed that the print was created in Italy between 1777 and 1784, when Desprez also depicted some Egyptian tombs in aquatint (see, for example, inv. no. RP-P-2009-12). The relationship to a pen-and-ink drawing by Desprez from the same period depicting a Priapic feast in a nearly identical composition, now in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, is unclear.

EH

## LITERATURE:

Nils G. Wollin, *Gravures originales de Desprez ou exécutées d'après ses dessins*, Malmö 1933, pp. 20-21, p. 56, no. 24Nils G. Wollin, *Desprez en Italie. Dessins topographique et d'architecture, décors de théâtre et compositions romantiques, exécutées 1777-1784*, Malmö 1935, pp. 14, 176Nicolaas Teeuwisse, *Ausgewählte Werke – Selected Works XII*, Berlin 2012, no. 20

## PROVENANCE:

Nicolaas Teeuwisse (OHG), Berlin; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2012

(inv. no. RP-P-2012-44).



3 LOUIS-JEAN DESPREZ (Auxerre 1743-1804 Stockholm) and  
FRANCESCO PIRANESI (Rome 1756-1810 Paris)

*View of the Palace of the Villa d'Este from the Fontano dell'Ovato*, 1783-84

Etching, watercolour and gouache, with engraved passe-partout edge, 478 x 694 mm

Autograph signature in pen and ink lower left: *Desprez*; inscribed in pen and ink lower centre:  
*Chateau D'est à tivoli*, corrected by Desprez to *Vila dest à tivoli* in pen and ink

In 1776 the French architect, art teacher and printmaker Louis-Jean Desprez won the Prix de Rome, which enabled him to stay in the Eternal City for some years. On his arrival, he began work as a draughtsman of antiquities for the de-luxe publication *Voyage Pittoresque, ou description des royaumes de Naples et de Sicile*, supervised by fellow Frenchman the Abbé de Saint-Non. This experience proved invaluable when, in 1781, he and Francesco Piranesi, the son of the great visionary, began making 'dessins coloriés' of ancient monuments and interesting places. In 1783 they published a prospectus describing the project in detail. It featured the large line etchings executed by Piranesi after drawings by Desprez, who then coloured the prints with watercolours and gouache. Perhaps this makes them drawings rather than etchings. They planned a total of forty-eight views of famous places in Rome, Naples, Pompeii, Tivoli and Frascati, nine of which had already been published at that time. Desprez and Piranesi were evidently using this project to take advantage of the increasing demand for Italian *vedute* by wealthy gentlemen in Rome on the Grand Tour.

The prospectus tells us that in 1783 this impressive *View of the Palace of the Villa d'Este* had yet to be published. It would have been executed before Desprez left for Stockholm in 1784 and was the tenth work in the series and the last that was actually completed. A preliminary drawing by Desprez is now in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm. It shows almost the same view of the palace, but whereas the print is swarming with figures there are no people to be seen in this sheet. Piranesi may have been working from another drawing.

The etching, with only a few known examples, is the rarest in the series. In a scene so elaborately coloured by hand one would expect the individual sheets to differ. This proves to be an understatement. Desprez not only played with the colouring, but with the hour of the day

as well. The long shadows in the impression in the British Museum in London, for example, point to a low evening sun, whereas the shadows in this print suggest a much earlier time of day. The colours are unprecedentedly fresh, with green and brownish-grey hues, alternating with telling yellow and red accents. The original soft green surround accentuates the lively spectacle in the palace garden.

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LITERATURE:

Nils G. Wollin, *Gravures originales de Desprez ou exécutées d'après ses dessins*, Malmö 1933, pp. 20-21, p. 115, no. 10

Nils G. Wollin, *Desprez en Italie. Dessins topographique et d'architecture, décors de théâtre et compositions romantiques, exécutées 1777-1784*, Malmö 1935, pp. 169, 190, 290

Magnus Olausson, 'Desprez et Piranesi fils: de l'original à la reproduction', in Régis Michel et al., *La Chimère de Monsieur Desprez*, exh. cat. Paris (Musée du Louvre) 1994, pp. 47-50

Nicolaas Teeuwisse, *Ausgewählte Werke – Selected Works xvii*, Berlin 2017, no. 35

PROVENANCE:

Nicolaas Teeuwisse (OHG), Berlin; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2017

(inv. no. RP-P-2017-6007).





## 4 JAMES BARRY (Cork 1741-1806 London)

*Job Reproved by his Friends*, 1777

Etching and aquatint, 567 x 735 mm

State 1(5)

Signed lower left: *James Barry Inv<sup>t</sup>*; inscribed lower centre: *Job reproved by his Friends.* | *Dedicated to Edmond Burk Esq<sup>re</sup> by his sincere friend & obliged humble serv<sup>t</sup> Jam<sup>s</sup> Barry* | *Published according to act of Parliament March 1.<sup>st</sup> 1777 by J. Barry*

Prints by James Barry, a painter as ambitious as he was idiosyncratic, are extremely rare and until recently were totally unrepresented in the Rijksmuseum's Print Room. Whereas other history painters active in England at the end of the eighteenth century had their paintings reproduced by top professional engravers like Valentine Green and John Raphael Smith, around 1776 Barry decided to start making prints himself. And, as one author pertinently phrased it: 'In a matter of twenty months, between December 1776 and 1st September 1778, Barry produced ten of the most original and striking prints of the eighteenth century ... Using some of the largest plate sizes then obtainable, copper became his canvas, acid his pencil and brush. These etchings are paintings in monochrome.' (Philips 2005, p. 142) Barry experimented with etching instead of adopting the graphic techniques common in England, such as stipple engraving, which required years of training. His use of the recently discovered aquatint technique, with which he created characteristic chiaroscuro contrasts and painterly tones, was innovative. Printed in sepia ink, his prints are reminiscent of gigantic washed drawings.

For Barry, prints were also a means of spreading his unconventional political and social ideas. His monumental *Job Reproved by his Friends* shows the Old Testament hero during the ordeals he was subjected to by Satan and God. In spite of the deaths of his cattle, servants and children, and his abject poverty and illness, Job continued to trust in God's mercy – to the despair of his wife and friends, who urged him to renounce his faith. It is this episode that Barry depicted, with the resigned Job sitting in the foreground in the midst of his nearest and dearest in a landscape ravaged by disaster and war in the background.

The etching is dedicated to Edmund Burke, politician, Barry's patron and author of

*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). In this influential treatise Job figures as the example of the noble suffering of mankind in a terrifying and violent world, subjected to the overpowering and horrifying omnipotence of God. Pressly, the author of the standard work on Barry's prints, maintained that Job was also the symbol of the suffering people of England who were being dragged into a disastrous war against the American pursuit of independence by the bad government of the king and the politicians. The man with the beard on the left, addressing the patient Job, could represent Edmund Burke, who was a champion of a peaceful solution to the American conflict. In Job's wife, who stands behind him and raises her hand to heaven accusingly, we can recognize the sharp features of another opponent of the English war policy, William Pitt the Elder.

It has until now gone unnoticed that to a significant extent Barry borrowed the composition of his huge *Job* from a small sixteenth-century German engraving of the same subject (fig.). There are only ten known impressions of Barry's etching, of which this one in the first state – probably acquired by the Prince of Liechtenstein soon after it was made – is the finest and best preserved.

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< HANS SEBALD BEHAM,  
*Job Reproved by  
 his Friends, 1547.*  
 Engraving,  
 70 x 106 mm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
 RP-P-H-OB-10.720;  
 on loan from the  
 City of Amsterdam.

## LITERATURE:

William L. Pressly, *The Life and Art of James Barry*,  
 New Haven/London 1981, pp. 78-82, pl. 58, pp. 151, 247,  
 no. 15, p. 269, no. 10 (state 1(5))  
 Tom Dunne (ed.), *James Barry 1741-1806: 'The Greatest  
 Historical Painter'*, exh. cat. Cork (Crawford Art Gallery)  
 2005, nos. PR 4, DR 2  
 Michael Phillips, 'James Barry. Artist-Printmaker', in  
 Dunne 2005, pp. 140-47  
 Catherine Bindman, 'A Genius of First Rank, Lost to  
 the World': *Prints by James Barry from the Collection of  
 William L. Pressly* (sale cat. C.G. Boerner), New York 2014,  
 no. 5

## PROVENANCE:

The Princes of Liechtenstein Collection; dealer  
 P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London, cat. Spring 1978,  
 no. 116; Ivan Nagel Collection, Berlin; sale, Berlin (Galerie  
 Gerda Bassenge), 29 November 2012 (*Drama und Vision...  
 Sammlung Ivan Nagel*), no. 5857, with another etching by  
 James Barry (*A Grecian Harvest Home*); purchased with  
 the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2012  
 (inv. no. RP-P-2013-3-1).

- 5 JAMES BARRY (Cork 1741-1806 London)  
*The Discovery of Adam and Eve*, c. 1792-95  
 Etching and aquatint, 575 x 422 mm  
 State 5(5)
- 

Around 1792 Barry started to produce an ambitious series of paintings based on *Paradise Lost* (1667), the epic poem in 10,000 verses by John Milton. The subject is Lucifer's rebellion against God, his temptation of mankind to original sin and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. Barry's friend and kindred spirit Edmund Burke not only featured the figure of Job in his treatise *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757; see previous acquisition), but Milton's Lucifer as well, while Adam and Eve often figure as examples of his concept of the Sublime, the power that intrigues, overwhelms and destroys us. Thanks in part to Burke's treatise, Milton's writings enjoyed unprecedented popularity among radical artists like James Barry, William Blake and Henry Fuseli. In 1790 the latter embarked on his 'Milton Gallery'; almost ten years later it contained forty paintings inspired by works by the admired poet. Barry, though, never completed his *Paradise Lost* cycle of paintings. What did survive are a number of drawings and three large etchings relating to it.

Barry's prints inspired by Milton's text are some of the most successful and sophisticated in his oeuvre. In *Paradise Lost* Satan tempts Eve to eat the forbidden fruit and then, in solidarity, Adam deliberately commits the same offence, making him a greater sinner than Eve. The two have sex for the first time and then, also for the first time, they are tormented by feelings of guilt and shame. Barry's etching shows the moment after the act when the couple are confronted by their Maker. Eve seems to want to hide and points accusingly at the serpent wriggling away. The full drama of the Fall of Man is contained in Adam's gesture, which can be interpreted as an accusation addressed to both Eve and God. The expressive, heroic nudes, inspired by Michelangelo's figure style, embody Barry's high ideals as the illustrator of Milton's texts.

In his early prints Barry made abundant use of aquatint for his chiaroscuro contrasts and printed them in brown ink (see previous acquisition). He built up his later etchings

with robust lines and hatching, similar to the handling in his drawings, and printed them in deep black ink. Until the discovery of this print there were five known examples, three of which are held in the British Museum.

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LITERATURE:

William L. Pressly, *The Life and Art of James Barry*, New Haven/London 1981, pp. 158, 165-69, 276-77, no. 27 (state 5(5))

Tom Dunne (ed.), *James Barry 1741-1806: 'The Greatest Historical Painter'*, exh. cat. Cork (Crawford Art Gallery) 2005, nos. PR 13, DR 11, 12

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Kent, probably since the nineteenth century; private collection, England; dealer C.G. Boerner, Düsseldorf/New York; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2016 (inv. no. RP-P-2016-5).





## 6 CHARLES MELCHIOR DESCOURTIS (Paris 1753-1820 Paris)

After Nicolas-Antoine Taunay (Paris 1753-1830 Paris)

*Foire de Village; Noce de Village; La Rixe and Le Tambourin*, c. 1785-90

Etching and wash manner, printed from five plates, approx. 75 x 385 mm (each); proofs before letter

For a long time, eighteenth-century French colour prints were among the most sought-after and most expensive. During the last century, the Rijksmuseum's Print Room amassed a representative collection of works by prominent artists in this field, including Jean-François Jeaninet, Gilles Demarteau and Charles Melchior Descourtis. Deccourtis's best-known sheets, four colourful prints after genre paintings by Nicolas-Antoine Taunay, were represented by an incomplete series of very mediocre impressions. The colour intensity and the nuances so typical of his etchings, however, are only seen at their best in the fine complete series of proofs before the addition of the lettering that was acquired recently.

Each impression was printed using five different plates: one for each colour. Descourtis did not invent this process – he learned it from the pioneer Jeaninet – but he did achieve the highest degree of perfection. He was so proud of his mastery of the technique that he produced a complete set of proofs with impressions from each individual plate of one of the prints in the present series, the *Noce de village*, in which we can see how a colour print is created step by step (Washington, National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection).

The whole process begins with a line etching with only the outlines of the composition. Impressions of this etching are laid wet on four copper plates and pulled through the press together. After the basic composition has thus been applied to the four plates, they are worked on one by one so that they can print the different areas of colour: one etching plate for the yellow, one for the red, one for the blue and a plate for the extra accents in carmine. The four plates are then printed one after the other precisely aligned (in register) on a sheet of paper. Some elements of the composition are built up from two or three colours, others, like the secondary colours green and brown, from four; only the sky and the light areas of the clothes and faces are printed in one colour. However, an impression from the four plates still only gives a vague, almost impres-

sionist effect. In order to introduce outlines and contrast, the line etching is reworked and shaded in aquatint. When this plate is printed in black ink over the colours, everything comes together as a convincing and sparkling entity.

Collectors' interest in the virtuoso perfection of French colour prints has clearly waned and prices have dropped accordingly. This presents opportunities to add to a collection of masterpieces that clearly warrant a second look.

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## LITERATURE:

Marcel Roux, *Inventaire du fond français. Graveurs du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 14 vols., coll. cat. Paris (Bibliothèque nationale de France) 1951, vol. 7, pp. 63-64, nos. 8 (state 1(3)), 10 (state 1(3)), 12 (state 1(2)), 13 (state 1(2))

Margaret Morgan Grasselli, *Colorful Impressions: The Printmaking Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France*, exh. cat. Washington (National Gallery of Art) 2003, no. 55  
 Nicolaas Teeuwisse, *Ausgewählte Werke – Selected Works xv*, Berlin 2015, no. 32

## PROVENANCE:

Nicolaas Teeuwisse (OHG), Berlin; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2015  
 (inv. nos. RP-P-2015-55-3-1 to 4).



Inv. no. RP-P-2015-55-3-1



Inv. no. RP-P-2015-55-3-2



Inv. no. RP-P-2015-55-3-3





< Inv. no. RP-P-2015-55-3-4

## 7 SALVATORE TRESCA (Palermo c. 1750-1815 Paris)

After Louis Lafitte (Paris 1770-1828 Paris)

*The Twelve Months in the Second Year of the Republican Calendar, 1793-94*

Stipple engraving, 348 x 268 mm (each); eleven proofs before letter and one hand-coloured proof impression (inv. no. RP-P-2017-6023-7) with inscriptions, lower left: *Lafitte del.*; lower centre: *GERMINAL | 21-22 Mars. Le Soleil entre au Signe du Belier c'est l'Epoque de l'Equinoxe du Printems. | Tout végète & s'anime au retour du Zéphirs. | La Nature à ses Lois ramene nos desirs; | Et l'Age le plus pûr apprend des Tourterelles. | Qu'il est doux de s'unir & de s'aimer comme elles. | A Paris chez l'Auteur, rue de Sorbonne N.º 389. | Déposé à la Bibliothèque Nationale.*; lower right: *Tresca Sculp.*

These twelve prints by Salvatore Tresca were made as illustrations for the Republican calendar, a replacement for the Gregorian calendar that was used from 1793 to 1806 and for a short period in 1871. The year was divided up differently and the months were given new names based on the French climate (for instance, *Pluviôse* for the month when it rains) or associated with agriculture and horticulture (such as *Germinal* for the month when seeds germinate). After the French Revolution, the Republicans wanted to turn their backs on the *ancien régime*. Imagery was consequently no longer dominated by religion and politics, but rather by nature as the symbol of the bright, harmonious future that the French people could look forward to under the new regime.

The months are depicted by frivolously-clad young women, some of whom appear to viewers as pin-ups *avant la lettre*. Their garments are inspired by the prevailing neo-classical fashion. As early as 1780 white gowns were frequently worn as tunics by *demi-mondaine* women in particular. Around 1794, when the prints were made, the fashion had become more revealing to provide a counterweight to Jacobin puritanism. Luxurious fabrics like muslin and plunging necklines generally left little to the imagination and illustrations were circulated in fashion magazines.

Around 1788 Palermo-born Tresca went to Paris, where he produced prints from designs by artists such as Louis-Léopold Boilly. Louis Lafitte supplied the twelve design drawings in black chalk (*pierre d'Italie*) for the present series. The catalogue of Tresca's estate sale tells us they remained in his possession until his death in 1815. It also lists 1,587 impressions of them; they included 254 uncoloured proofs, 1,066 uncoloured examples on vellum and 264 prints in colour, also on vellum.

Unlike other calendars and almanacs that were on public display and frequently consulted, this edition was probably intended for the more intimate privacy of the homes of well-to-do citizens. The series was ultimately issued repeatedly by various publishers and the patent was granted to the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Nowadays the prints are rare – in stark contrast to the numbers once printed.

Mvdm

## LITERATURE:

Charles Le Blanc, *Manuel de l'amateur d'estampes (...)*, 4 vols., Paris 1889, vol. 4, nos. 13-24

Matthew Shaw, *Time and the French Revolution: The Republican Calendar 1789-Year XIV*, Woodbridge/Rochester 2011, no. 6

Nicolaas Teeuwisse, *Ausgewählte Werke – Selected Works xvii*, Berlin 2017, no. 36

## PROVENANCE:

Nicolaas Teeuwisse (OHG), Berlin; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2017

(inv. nos. RP-P-2017-6023-1 to 12).











## 8 LUIGI SABATELLI (Florence 1772-1850 Milan) and pupils

After designs by Sabatelli, Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (Leiden 1606-1669 Amsterdam), Angelica Kaufmann (Chur 1741-1807 Rome) and one autograph etching by Bénigne Gagneraux (Dijon 1756-1795 Rome)

RACCOLTA DI SOGGETTI PITTORICI INVENTATI DA LUIGI SABBATELLI PITTORE FIORENTINO  
*Ed incisi ad aqua forte in parte dal medesimo, e parte da'suoi Scolari sotto la di lui direzione.*,  
 Rome 1804 (presso Pietro Paolo Montagnani-Mirabili)

Album with forty-three numbered etchings in various sizes, bound in a contemporary marbled binding with a leather spine and the title stamped in gold: *Sabatelli Soggetti Pittorici*

Some time ago the Rijksmuseum acquired two spectacular etchings by Luigi Sabatelli, one of the most important representatives of Italian Romantic Neoclassicism (inv. nos. RP-P-2005-213, RP-P-2006-86; *Bulletin* 2006). These prints, which the artist made in 1808 soon after his appointment as the professor of painting at the Accademia di Brera in Milan, were recently supplemented by an entire album of earlier work. As the title tells us, the binding with forty-three numbered etchings contains 'picturesque subjects' designed by the Florentine painter Luigi Sabatelli, some etched by him and some executed by pupils under his supervision. On the title page (see fig. on p. 415) there is a rather unconventional likeness of the young artist, who looks challengingly at the viewer.

Sabatelli came from a simple background and owed his training in Florence, Rome and Venice to the art-loving Marchese Pier Roberto Capponi. He developed his drawing skills at the private academy run by Domenico Corvi in Rome, where almost all the successful artists of his generation were trained. Young artists also met in the house of Felice Giani (see acquisitions nos. 11, 12), where sessions practising free, improvisational drawing were held under the name Accademia dei Pensieri. In his memoirs, Sabatelli relates how he became famous among the young artists in Rome with his pen-and-ink drawings of Greek, Roman and Old Testament subjects and themes borrowed from works by Homer and Dante, and that he made so many there that he could no longer remember them all.

We find the same subjects, drawn in Sabatelli's characteristic, impassioned hand, in the etchings in the album. The prints are mainly of heroic, masculine scenes, so it is surprising, after all kinds of Trojan and Herculean brawls, to come across an intimate domestic scene featuring four women sewing, entitled *Conversazione Familiare* (no. 24),

followed by an etching to a design by the revered female artist Angelica Kaufmann (no. 26). There are also two remarkable plates in which Sabatelli copied and combined various etchings by Rembrandt, among them a number of self-portraits and a portrait of Rembrandt's wife Saskia (nos. 27, 29). They are clearly exercises in which he was trying to get to grips with the great Dutch master's etching technique. For the rest, the prints by Sabatelli and his pupils are far removed from Rembrandt's subtle etching.

The Italian etchings, however, are outstanding in their depth of expression and drama and, not least, their impressive size – the largest print in the album, *The Battle of Marathon* (no. 42), is more than a metre wide. No less impressive are four illustrations of the *Inferno* from Dante's *Divine Comedy* (nos. 30 [see fig. on pp. 416-17] to 35). The hellish scenes witnessed by Dante and Virgil are illuminated with swiftly sketched devils and demons whose imagination and humour almost rival Jheronimus Bosch.

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RACCOLTA  
D I  
SOGGETTI PITTORICI  
I N V E N T A T I  
D A L U I G I S A B B A T E L L I  
P I T T O R E F I O R E N T I N O

Ed incisi ad acqua forte in parte dal medesimo,  
e parte da' suoi Scolari sotto la di lui direzione.



I N R O M A M D C C C I V .  
P R E S S O P I E T R O P A O L O M O N T A G N A N I - M I R A B I L I  
A l l ' I n s e g n a d i P a l l a d e a P a s q u i n o .

CON LICENZA DE SUPERIORI.

LITERATURE:

Luigi Sabbatelli, *Cenni biografici sul Cav. Prof. Luigi Sabbatelli, scritti da lui medesimo. Raccolti dal figlio Gaetano, pittore*, Milan 1900

Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi, 'Il Sabbatelli e Tomasso Puccini, e i temi sublimi', in Carlo Del Bravo and Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi, *Luigi Sabbatelli (1772-1850). Disegni e Incisioni*, exh. cat. Florence (Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi) 1978, pp. 13-20

Roberta J.M. Olson, 'An Early Drawing by Luigi Sabbatelli Rediscovered', *Master Drawings* 35 (1997), no. 3, pp. 289-92  
Stefano Sussino, 'Luigi Sabbatelli', in Edgar Peters Bowron and Joseph J. Rishel, *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*,

exh. cat. Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art)/ Houston (Museum of Fine Arts) 2000, pp. 551-53  
*Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 54 (2006), no. 4, pp. 477-80, nos. 6, 7 (on two etchings by Sabbatelli, acquired in 2005 and 2006: *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* and *Daniel's Vision*)  
David Franklin, 'Two New Drawings by Sabbatelli Father and Son', *Master Drawings* 47 (2009), no. 3, pp. 346-52

PROVENANCE:

Sale, Berlin (Galerie Gerda Bassenge), 23 December 2014, no. 5404; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2014  
(inv. no. RP-P-2015-53-8).





Etching no. 30 in the album



## 9 JEAN GODEFROY (London 1771-1839 Paris)

After François Gérard (Rome 1770-1837 Paris)

*Ossian Evoking the Ghosts on the Banks of the Lora with the Sound of his Harp*, c. 1804

Etching, stipple etching and engraving, 628 x 650 mm

Inscribed lower left: *Fran<sup>co</sup> Gerard pinx<sup>t</sup>*; inscribed lower centre: *OSSIAN | a Paris chez J. Godefroy. rue d'Argenteuil Butte des Moulins N<sup>o</sup> 211. | imprimé par Sampiore fils*; signed lower right: *John Godefroy sculp<sup>t</sup>*

In 1761, the Scottish poet James Macpherson claimed that he had discovered a series of epic poems by the Celtic bard Ossian. Not long afterwards he published his translation from the Gaelic under the title *The Works of Ossian*. The text, undoubtedly by Macpherson himself, conjures up a melancholy world of heroic battles, dying warriors, grieving women and lovers who meet accidental deaths, always in landscapes enshrouded in eternal mist. The poems soon became immensely popular and were published in nearly all European languages. Ossian was hailed as the Homer of the north and counted Goethe and American president Thomas Jefferson among his admirers. Countless artists drew inspiration from the stories, as did writers, poets and composers.

Napoleon was also a passionate follower of Ossian; he had a copy of the poems with him during his Egyptian campaign in 1798. Back in France he ordered two enormous paintings of subjects from Ossian's poems for his Château de Malmaison, one of them this iconic scene made by François-Pascal-Simon, Baron de Gérard (1801). It shows the old, blind poet sitting on a rock by the water while he plucks his harp with a heavy heart and sings the praises and the heroic deeds of his dead companions, his father Fingal, his son Oscar, his daughter-in-law Malvina and many others, who like ghosts look at him sadly from the mist that surrounds him.

The painting was soon reproduced in a spectacular print by Jean Godefroy (who made his name with it). The Frenchman was born in London and trained there as a printmaker under his fellow countryman Pierre Simon, but in 1799 he moved to Paris, where he emerged as one of the leading engravers of reproductive prints. Whereas his French colleagues preferred to depict historical scenes by engraving alone, Godefroy worked with a wide range of techniques, from etching, stipple etching and drypoint to

engraving. He even had his own theories about which technique could be best applied where. Engraving, for example, was an excellent way of depicting reality, but the ideal could be better rendered with a combination of lines and dots. This matchless print of Ossian is a superb example. The bard is executed in a typical regular engraving style, whereas the ethereal figures he conjured up are largely composed of countless dots, convincingly expressing the notion that they belong to a different world.

EH

## LITERATURE:

Andreas Andresen, *Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler oder Lexicon Kupferstecher, Maler-Radierer und Formschneider aller Länder und Schulen*, Leipzig 1870, no. 3

Werner Hoffmann et al., *Ossian und die Kunst um 1800*, exh. cat. Hamburg (Kunsthalle) 1974, nos. 83-84

Susanne Anderson-Riedel, *Creativity and Reproduction: Nineteenth-Century Engraving and the Academy*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, pp. 31-32

Emma Barker, 'Ghosts and Heroes: Girodet and the Ossian Mode in Post-Revolutionary French Art', in Satish Padiyar et al. (eds.), *Visual Culture and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars*, Oxford 2016, pp. 102-19

Nicolaas Teeuwisse, *Ausgewählte Werke – Selected Works xvii*, Berlin 2017, no. 56

## PROVENANCE:

Nicolaas Teeuwisse (OHG), Berlin; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2017

(inv. no. RP-P-2017-6015).



OSSIAN

10 JEAN-PIERRE NORBLIN DE LA GOURDAINE (Misy-sur-Yonne 1745-1830 Paris)  
 After Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (Leiden 1606-1669 Amsterdam)  
*John the Baptist Preaching*, 1808  
 Etching and drypoint, 507 x 650 mm  
 Signed lower right (above the dogs): *Rembrandt sc./ 1656*

Rembrandt's etchings were popular among eighteenth-century followers in part because of their unusual subjects and characteristic chiaroscuro. The French artist Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdaïne, for instance, owned prints by the Dutch master, which he touched up with a brush, as he did to works on paper by other seventeenth-century artists from the Low Countries.

In this case, however, he worked not from an etching by Rembrandt, but from his painting *John the Baptist Preaching* (1634-35; Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie). Around 1805 this canvas was in a French private collection, where Norblin may have seen it. A year earlier he had returned to Paris, having spent thirty years in Poland. The monochrome palette and chiaroscuro of Rembrandt's painting lent themselves well to an etching, which Hillemacher's catalogue of Norblin's oeuvre tells us remained unfinished. Although the compositions are similar, the transitions of the chiaroscuro passages in the print were executed more subtly than in the painting.

There are also evident similarities between this work and Rembrandt's *Christ Preaching*, better known as the *Hundred Guilder Print*. Norblin, like Rembrandt, experimented in his etchings with different sizes and types of paper, and with techniques like drypoint and surface tone. It is said that he sold few of these in his lifetime. After Norblin's death his sons repeatedly pulled impressions from the plates, so it is not easy to distinguish between autograph and posthumous examples. This is probably a print made by Norblin himself, in view of the refined way in which the plate tone was applied.

*John the Baptist Preaching* (1808), Norblin's first etching since 1789, was also to be his last. He made several states of this print after the painting as well as nine drawings of it (some dated 1805-06) and a study in oil on cardboard prior to the etching. This study, the same size as the print, was in the National Museum in

Warsaw until at least 1938, but it was looted during the Second World War. Its current whereabouts are unknown.

MvDM

LITERATURE:

Frédéric Hillemacher, *Catalogue des estampes qui composent l'oeuvre de Jean-Pierre Norblin ...*, Paris 1877, no. 5  
 Willibald Franke, *Das radirte Werk des Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdaïne ...*, Leipzig 1895, no. 8  
 Marie-Dominique de la Patellière, *Jean-Pierre Norblin ... témoin d'une société au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Liège 1984, no. 30  
 Uwe Westfehling et al., *Jean-Pierre Norblin. Ein Künstler des Revolutionszeitalters in Paris und Warschau. Zeichnungen und Druckgraphik*, Cologne 1989, no. 40

PROVENANCE:

Dealer Emanuel von Baeyer, London; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2015  
 (inv. no. RP-P-2015-96).





## II FELICE GIANI (San Sebastiano Curone 1758-1823 Rome)

*View in the Hills outside Bologna, with Two Artists Sketching*, 1810-11

Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over a slight sketch in graphite, 291 x 420 mm

Inscribed lower centre, in pen and brown ink: *Vista del bosco Marescalchi, fatta nel mese di Marzo*

There are very few landscapes in Felice Giani's extraordinarily large drawn oeuvre: by far the largest part of it consists of mythological scenes or subjects from classical antiquity and, to a lesser degree, biblical themes. During his many journeys Giani sporadically drew landscapes on the spot. These works can often be recognized by the inscription below the scene, which notes the location – and sometimes the date – of their creation. Here, the *bosco Marescalchi* almost certainly means the place in the hills to the southwest of Bologna, where in 1807 the pro-French politician Ferdinando Marescalchi had a country house built and a park laid out in English landscape style. A contract dating from January 1810 reveals that he enlisted Giani to decorate four rooms in the Palazzo Marescalchi, his mansion in Bologna. In 1811 the artist was commissioned to paint two more rooms. We know from Giani's notes that he and his assistants worked in Marescalchi's residence from April to December 1810. This was evidently followed by a break, after which the activities were resumed in 1811. Marescalchi made the last payment on 24 September 1811 (Ottani Cavini 1999, vol. 1, pp. 303-11). The inscription on Giani's drawing states that he made it *nel mese di Marzo* – in the month of March – but the year is not mentioned. This means that the work could date from either March 1810 or March 1811.

In Giani's time the hilly area to the southwest of Bologna was a popular place for walkers because of the beautiful panoramic views over the city it afforded. This also explains the presence of the two men in Giani's drawing: they are sketching the view of the city, just a small part of which we can see. Here Giani chose a rather bleak stretch of countryside, in sharp contrast to the mostly charming and lush landscapes he generally drew. One of the three trees has evidently been struck by lightning and neither of the other two looks particularly healthy. The choice of this anything but picturesque subject utterly lacking in joy from any viewpoint makes the drawing

one of the most impressive depictions of the landscape in Giani's oeuvre.

MS

## LITERATURE:

Anna Ottani Cavini, *Felice Giani 1758-1823 e la cultura di fine secolo*, 2 vols., Milan 1999

## PROVENANCE:

Unidentified collection mark JR (not in Lugt); dealer Emanuel von Baeyer, London; purchased with the support of Mr and Mrs Van Hulsen-Ognibeni/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2017

(inv. no. RP-T-2017-35).



View of the ... ..

12 FELICE GIANI (San Sebastiano Curone 1758-1823 Rome)

*King David's Sacrifice*, c. 1812

Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over a sketch in graphite, 489 x 673 mm

The drawing is of the final scene of the last, and particularly violent, chapter of the Second Book of Samuel. As in the first book, it recounts the adventures of the first kings of the people of Israel, Saul and David, and their relationship to an often unpredictable and vengeful God. In the last chapter the Lord brings things to a head by ordering David to take a census. Joab, the commander-in-chief of his army, who had to lead the operation, obeyed with reluctance: a census was regarded as an act of pride. When the task was accomplished after nine months and twenty days, David was terror-stricken and begged God for forgiveness. Repentance came too late: the king would be horribly punished. He was given three choices: seven years of famine throughout the land, David to be pursued by his enemies for three months or three days of pestilence in the land. He chose the third. For two days an Angel of the Lord wreaked death and destruction and seventy thousand people died. When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, God relented and ordered him to stop the slaughter. David built an altar to thank the Almighty at the place where the angel had called a halt to the massacre (2 Samuel 24:1-25). In a pose of total submissiveness the king kneels before the altar built from huge blocks of stone. The angel, who shortly before that was still spreading death throughout the land, bends over him, an olive branch in his right hand as a sign of God's reconciliation with David.

Since the nineteenth century this large, extraordinarily expressive drawing was part of a group of works by Giani and artists from his immediate circle, which remained together until 2002. The ensemble also contained two views in the park of the Villa Aldini in Montmorency, to the north of Paris. Giani worked there from 1812 – probably with one or more assistants – on the decoration of a number of rooms in the residence of Antonio Aldini, State Secretary of the Kingdom of Italy at the French court (Ottani Cavini 1999, vol. 2, pp. 531-35). *King David's Sacrifice* may have been made at that time.

The Old Testament subject is definitely uncommon – not only for Giani. It was very rarely depicted in this way. This suggests that the drawing was made at the express wish of a client. Be that as it may, in any case it seems to have been conceived as a one-off work of art: we know of no painting or fresco with this subject.

MS

LITERATURE:

Anna Ottani Cavini, *Felice Giani 1758-1823 e la cultura di fine secolo*, 2 vols., Milan 1999

PROVENANCE:

Private collection (as part of a portfolio of drawings), since the nineteenth century; sale, London (Christie's), 9 July 2002, no. 94; dealer W.M. Brady, New York; purchased with the support of Mr and Mrs Van Hulsen-Ogniben/Rijksmuseum Fonds, 2011 (inv. no. RP-T-2011-77).





## 13 DOMINIQUE VIVANT DENON (Chalon-sur-Saône 1747-1825 Paris)

*Les souvenirs de Vivant Denon évoqués par le Temps*, 1818

Lithograph, 438 x 525 mm; impression before the address of the publisher De Lasteyrie

Signed lower left: *D* 1818.

Dominique Vivant Denon studied law in Paris, where he discovered that his true passion was art and literature. He became a more than creditable draughtsman and etcher, but because he did not need to make a living from it, he was regarded as an amateur. He held all kinds of diplomatic posts, which frequently took him to faraway places. In 1798 he accompanied Napoleon on an expedition to Egypt, where he studied the archaeological monuments. In 1804, due in part to his outstanding eye for quality and obvious wide-ranging interests, Napoleon appointed him director of the Musée Napoléon, housed in the Louvre, where he brought together the best art from France and the other European territories that the French armies had conquered since 1795.

In 1809, he accompanied Napoleon on a visit to the Munich workshop of Aloïs Senefelder, who only ten years earlier had discovered how to print using stones. Denon made his first proofs with this new technique there, and back in Paris he officially recommended the use of lithography. In his drawings Denon was a tireless chronicler of his social life and the first lithographs he made after 1809 are directly linked to it. They show friends and acquaintances, often in a lively gathering and sometimes with Denon in their midst.

Denon was never afraid of portraying his own face, but in this large lithograph of 1818 he surpassed himself and introduced a completely new manifestation. Bringing a whole series of heads together in one composition was not uncommon at that time, with likenesses of artists too, who used this method to record their mutual association in friendship portraits (see, for example, inv. no. RP-P-2017-6074). Here, however, Denon depicted himself no fewer than sixteen times, at a variety of ages: upper left as a baby clutching his mother's breast, while he looks at the viewer cheekily with the same characteristic little grin as in the other self-portraits, in which he is shown getting older. They are assembled on a banner held by Father Time. Two *amoretti* appear to want to prevent

the memories of Denon from disappearing into eternity. The solitary man in the winter landscape lower left, identifiable without much difficulty as Denon, is a witty touch. He is shown in the bitter cold – surely a metaphor for the declining years of life – comforted by a third *amoretto*.

EH

## LITERATURE:

Frédéric Chappey et al., *De Géricault à Delacroix. Knecht et l'invention de la lithographie 1800-1830*, exh. cat. L'Isle-Adam (Musée d'art et d'histoire Louis Senlecq) 2007, pp. 18-19, no. 8

Marie-Anne Dupuy, *Les itinéraires de Vivant Denon dessinateur et illustrateur*, exh. cat. Chalon-sur-Saône (Musée Denon) 2007, no. 1

James Hall, *The Self-Portrait: A Cultural History*, London 2014, pp. 181-83

Jonathan Bober on Dominique Vivant Denon; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRGFC53bbDM> (consulted 28 July 2017)

## PROVENANCE:

Dealer Susan Schulman, New York; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2015

(inv. no. RP-P-2015-1-1).



## 14 JOHANN ANTON RAMBOUX (Trier 1790-1866 Cologne)

*Double Portrait of the Brothers Konrad and Franz Eberhard*, 1822

Lithograph, 318 x 344 mm

Inscribed upper left: *K:Eberhard, Scul. & Pic:| AE:LII.*; inscribed upper right: *F:Eberhard, Scul:| AE:LIII.*; signed lower left: *J.A. Ramboux. del. Monachij.*; inscribed lower right: *& Romae pinx MDCCCXXII. pp*

This print was a long-desired work, because it is one of the most iconic early German lithographs, only twenty impressions of which are known. The double portrait occupies a special place in the artist's oeuvre, which consists primarily of religious subjects and townscapes. Ramboux made few portraits and those he did make were almost exclusively of friends and colleagues. The portrait of the Eberhard brothers (Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum), which he had painted in Rome in 1822, immediately prior to his return to Germany, was the example for this lithograph. In Italy, where he had been living since 1816, he kept in close touch with a group of Nazarenes, the circle that also included Konrad and Franz Eberhard.

En route to his home in Trier, Ramboux probably spent a short time with Konrad Eberhard in Munich, where he created the lithograph at almost the same size as the painting as soon as he arrived. He worked on the stone himself instead of contracting it out, which gives the portraits an extra personal dimension. Ramboux then had the stone printed in a limited edition by the renowned Josef Selb. The lithographic technique was only twenty-five years old and printing from a large stone like this was a risky business. The condition of this early example is flawless. There are also impressions with *chine collé*, with a tone block and examples in brown, but these may date from around 1858, when the print was published by F. Gypens Kunstverlag in Munich.

Like many of his contemporaries, Ramboux was a great admirer of Albrecht Dürer and owned around five hundred of his works on paper. The influence of the German master and his Italian contemporaries is evident in the brothers' pronounced, almost sculpted features. The genre of the friendship portrait was popular among German Romantics. In this portrait in particular the simplicity they so admired is striking; there are no attributes, gestures or contact. The fact that they are shown shoulder

to shoulder and that Franz Eberhard is looking straight at his brother is sufficient to emphasize the close bond between them.

MvDM

## LITERATURE:

- Luitpold Düssel, *Die Incunabeln der deutschen Lithographie (1796-1821)*, Berlin 1925, no. 1  
 Rolf Arnim Winkler, *Die Frühzeit der deutschen Lithographie. Katalog der Bildrucke von 1796-1821*, Munich 1975, no. 648.2  
 Stephan Seeliger et al., *Unter Glas und Rahmen. Druckgraphik der Romantik aus den Beständen des Landesmuseum Mainz und aus Privatbesitz*, Mainz 1993, no. 10, pp. 33-34  
 Julia Batrum (ed.), *German Romantic Prints and Drawings from a Private Collection*, London 2011, no. 7  
 Hermann Mildenerberger et al., *Wahlverwandschaften. Eine englische Privatsammlung zur Kunst der Goethezeit*, Weimar 2013, no. 43

## PROVENANCE:

- Dealer Kunsthandlung Helmut H. Rumbler, Frankfurt am Main; purchased with the support of the F.G. Waller-Fonds, 2016

(inv. no. RP-P-2015-60).

