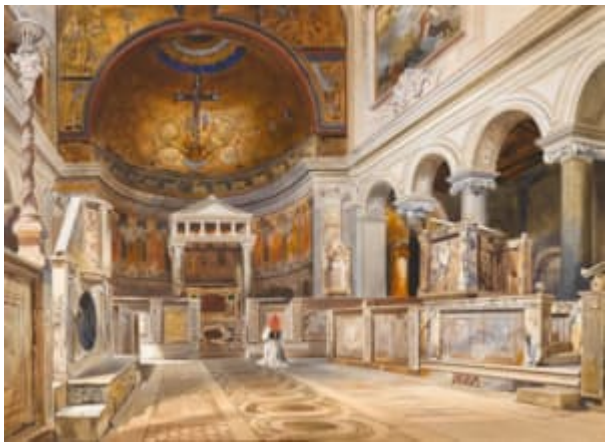
Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Thomas Hartley CROMEK (London 1809 - Wakefield 1873)

The Interior of the Church of San Clemente, Rome

Watercolour and pencil, heightened with touches of bodycolour and gum arabic.
375 x 514 mm. (14 3/4 x 20 1/4 in.)

The Basilica of San Clemente in Rome dates from the 12th century and was built over the remains of a fourth century church. The mosaics in the apse of the church, depicting Christ on the Cross surrounded by the Tree of Life, date from the middle of the 12th century. The interior of the church is little changed from Cromek's day.

Thomas Hartley Cromek's journal entry for the 12th of February 1845 notes: 'Interior of the Church of San Clemente for Mrs. Huskisson. She got the original study, as I was tired of copying it.'

Provenance:

Mrs. Huskisson, Rome, in 1845
Hubert George de Burgh-Canning, 2nd Marquess of Clanricarde
Bequeathed by him to his great-nephew, Henry Lascelles, 6th Earl of Harewood, Harewood House, Yorkshire
Thence by descent at Harewood House until 2012.

Exhibitions

Bath, Holburne Museum and Leeds, Harewood House, Thomas Hartley Cromek: A Classical Vision, 1999-2000.

Literature:

Tancred Borenius, Catalogue of the Pictures and Drawings at Harewood House and elsewhere in the Collection of the Earl of Harewood, K.G., G.C.V.O., D.S.O., Oxford, 1936, p.115, no.242; Leeds, Harewood House and Bath, Holburne Museum, Thomas Hartley Cromek: A Classical Vision, exhibition catalogue, 1999-2000, p.33.

Artist description:

Much of what is known today of Thomas Hartley Cromek's life and career is based on a journal he wrote, entitled Reminiscences at Home and Abroad, 1812-1855, which only came to light in the latter half of the 20th century. (The manuscript remains unpublished, and is in the possession of one of the artist's descendants.) The son of an engraver and editor, Cromek was educated in Wakefield in Yorkshire, later completing his studies in Leeds. He first travelled to Italy in 1830, accompanying his mother to Florence and Rome, where she had gone for her health.

He was to spend much of the next twenty years living and working in Italy, mainly in Florence and Rome. He met and befriended several English artists, including Clarkson Stanfield and John Frederick Lewis, and gave drawing lessons to several distinguished English visitors, including, in November 1837, Edward Lear. Cromek made two trips to Greece, in 1834 and 1845. In 1849 he was forced to leave Rome by the outbreak of the First Italian War of Independence, and he returned to England for good. Cromek seems to have produced almost no paintings after 1860, as his health gradually failed, and he died in relative obscurity in Yorkshire.