Bernhard FIEDLER (Berlin 1818 - Trieste 1904)

Landscape in Upper Egypt, with the Colossi of Memnon at Thebes

Oil on paper, laid down on panel.

Inscribed Fiedler / Theben / Uber-Ägypten / Memnonskolosse on the reverse of the panel.

121 x 394 mm. (4 3/4 x 15 1/2 in.)

Fiedler visited Egypt at least four times - in 1853, 1855, 1864-1865 and 1882 - and in 1878 he contributed illustrations for the Egyptologist Georg Ebers' book Aegypten in Wort und Bild. A number of paintings of Egyptian landscapes by Fiedler are known, including two views of The Ruins at Thebes and The Ruins of the Temple of the Sun at Baalbek in the collection of the Civico Museo Revoltella in Trieste. A View of Luxor was sold at auction in London in 1996, while several views in Cairo have also appeared on the art market in recent years.

Artist description:

Active as a painter, decorator and draughtsman, Bernhard Fiedler studied at the Kunstakademie in Berlin with the landscape painters Johann Gerst and Wilhelm Krause. The recipient of an Austrian travel grant in 1843, he journeyed extensively in Northern Italy and along the Dalmatian coast, recording his travels with paintings, drawings and watercolours. Fiedler was admitted to the Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice, and spent a considerable amount of time in Trieste, producing topographical drawings of the castles of the Friuli region for King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia and serving as drawing master to the Archduchess Charlotte. In 1853 he accompanied an Austrian delegation to Constantinople, where he presented a painting to the Sultan, and the following year was in Greece and Italy.

Later trips took the artist to Turkey, Egypt, Palestine and the Near East, and these travels resulted in a number of charming paintings of Orientalist views and genre subjects; works for which he is best known today. Fiedler visited Egypt at least four times - in 1853, 1855, 1864-1865 and 1882 - and painted numerous views of Cairo, Giza and such sites along the Nile as Luxor, Thebes and Aswan. (He also contributed illustrations for the German Egyptologist Georg Ebers's book Aegypten in Wort und Bild, published in 1879.) Among the artist's important commissions was the decoration of the castle of Miramare, on the Gulf of Trieste, built for the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian between 1856 and 1860. Paintings by Fiedler are today in museums in Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne, Vienna and Trieste, while a large alpine landscape, dated 1845, is in the Royal Collection at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.