

François NOBLESSE (Cahors 1652 - Paris 1730)

Saint Amond Preaching in a Wood, after Jacques Callot

Pen and brown ink, with framing lines in brown ink. Backed.
Signed -oblesse fecit. at the lower left.
203 x 291 mm. (8 x 11 1/2 in.) [sheet]

The present sheet is a faithful copy of an etching by Jacques Callot of c.1622-1625, which depicts Saint Amond, second bishop of Toul, preaching in a forest. (The forest, where the saint often retreated in penitence, can be identified as that at Saulxerotte, near Favières, south of Toul and a few kilometres southwest of Callot's native town of Nancy.) Callot's etching and Noblesse's drawing are of similar dimensions.

Artist description:

An accomplished pupil of Israël Silvestre, dessinateur et graveur du roi, François Noblesse was active primarily as a printmaker. Among his engraved works are a series of twelve views of sites in France and Italy, after drawings by Silvestre. Noblesse's draughtsmanship owes much to the refined pen manner of Silvestre, and also reveals the particular influence of the work of an artist of the previous generation, Jacques Callot.

Drawings by François Noblesse are rare. A landscape drawing in pen, with an 18th century attribution to the artist on the verso, is in the collection of the Château Borély in Marseille2; the composition of the Marseille drawing is, like the present sheet, derived in part from a drawing by Calot. A signed drawing by Noblesse - a view of the Forum in Rome, dated 1713 - appeared at auction in Paris in 1996, while an unsigned pen drawing, said to depict the port of Algiers, was sold at auction in London in the same year. A signed drawing of The Banks of The Seine with the Tour de Nestle appeared at auction in 19815, while three further signed landscapes in pen and ink were sold at auction in 1977. A signed pen and ink drawing of a Roman view, depicting The Ponte Rotto and the Tiber, with the Temple of Vesta and Santa Maria in Cosmedin Beyond, was with Stephen Ongpin Fine Art in 2007 and is today in a private French collection.