Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Joseph Michael GANDY (London 1771 - Plympton 1843)

Near New Haven, East Sussex

Watercolour, over an underdrawing in pencil.

Inscribed [?] 26 3 o/c / SW near New Haven at the upper left.

116 x 181 mm. (4 3/4 x 7 1/8 in.)

Many of Joseph Gandy's topographical drawings and watercolours serve as a form of diary and travelogue, a practice he had begun during his period of study in Italy between 1794 and 1797, when he went on sketching expeditions in the Campagna. According to the artist's annotation on the sheet, this watercolour was drawn at 3 o'clock in the afternoon near Newhaven, East Sussex. As the Gandy scholar Brian Lukacher notes, 'Gandy's drawings often bear notations indicating the time of day or night that the view was observed and rendered: a twilit landscape of the enclosed commons at Milton, a late afternoon stormy landscape rent by a flash of lightning, or unidentified nocturnes with distinctive atmospheric phenomena seen in the scarlet dyeing of early evening clouds or in the moon encircled by a hazy pink numbus. The science and poetry of meteorology is often the primary focus of these optically alert drawings.'

Provenance:

Acquired from the artist by Richard Westmacott and placed into an album
The album given to his daughter, Maria Poole, née Westmacott
Thence by descent until sold, London, Christie's, 20 November 2003, lot 7
Richard L. Feigen & Co., New York.

Exhibitions

New York, Richard L. Feigen & Co., Joseph Gandy: Visionary Views of England, 2004, no.69.

Artist description:

An architect by profession, Joseph Gandy was trained in the office of James Wyatt from 1786 onwards, before enrolling in the Royal Academy Schools in 1789. Following a period of three years spent in Rome, he returned to London where he was employed as a draughtsman by the architect Sir John Soane, for whom he began working in 1798. Although long regarded by scholars as merely an

employee of Soane, translating the latter's architectural designs into full-scale watercolours, it is now known that Gandy often produced drawings after his own inventions. (That he was certainly held in high regard by Soane is shown in the comments made by the architect in a lecture presented at the Royal Academy in 1813: 'A superior manner of Drawing is absolutely necessary, indeed it is impossible not to admire the beauties and almost magical effects in the architectural drawings of a Clérisseau, a Gandy, or a Turner.') Gandy maintained a modest architectural practice of his own, and regularly exhibited a remarkable series of large-scale architectural history watercolours and capriccios - grandiose subjects inspired by Ancient Greece and Rome – in the architecture section at the Royal Academy between 1789 and 1833. (He also showed fourteen works at the British Institution in 1820 and 1821). In 1803, Gandy was admitted as an Associate of the Royal Academy, largely on the strengths of his undoubted skills as an architectural draughtsman, and despite the fact at that time he had not received any commissions as a practicing architect. (Indeed, he achieved no further promotion within the Academy, and was never elected an Academician.) Gandy also produced a number of designs for stage sets, and contributed drawings to the antiquarian topographer John Britton's The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain, published between 1807 and 1826, and The Cathedral Antiquities of England, which appeared between 1814 and 1835.