Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Kasparus KARSEN (Amsterdam 1810 - Biebrich am Rhein 1896)

A View of the Church of Notre-Dame in Louviers, Normandy

Pen and brown ink, with brown and grey wash, with framing lines in pencil.

Signed K. Karssen on the verso, and inscribed K. Karssen on the former backing sheet.

Inscribed S. Germain / Argentan, in a modern hand, on the backing sheet.

200 x 241 mm. (7 7/8 x 9 1/2 in.)

Although many of Karsen's urban views are difficult to locate, and indeed many depict generic towns and cities, this church in this view may be identified as Notre-Dame de Louviers, in the town of Louviers in Normandy. Shown in this drawing is the south facade and porch of the church, built between 1496 and 1510, and regarded today as among the finest examples of the Flamboyant style of Late Gothic architecture in France.

The same view of the church was drawn by such English artists as John Sell Cotman and J. M. W. Turner in the 1820s.

Provenance:

Marinus van Regteren Altena, Amsterdam
By descent to Iohan Quirijn van Regteren Altena, Amsterdam (his posthumous sale stamp [Lugt 4617] stamped on the verso)
By descent to his wife, Augusta Louisa Wilhelmina van Regteren Altena, née van Royen, Amsterdam, until 2006
Thence by family descent.

Artist description:

A pupil of Hendrik Gerrit Ten Cate and Georg Peter Westenberg, Kaspar (or Kasparus) Karsen was one of the most important Dutch painters of townscapes and city views of the 19th century. He lived and worked in Amsterdam for most of his career, apart from a period spent in Haarlem between 1842 and 1844. He was admitted to the Academy in Amsterdam in 1836, and three years later joined the Dutch artist's society 'Arti et Amicitiae'. One of the finest painters of city scenes and river views of his day, Karsen was particularly skilled at rendering architecture. He travelled to Prague and throughout Germany, and incorporated elements from the cities and towns he visited abroad into what were sometimes imaginary compositions. Although he had some success as a painter, he seems to have constantly struggled financially – no doubt partly due to the need to support fifteen children from his three marriages - and was also apparently quite a somewhat temperamental and moody character. Among his pupils was Cornelis Springer, who assisted him on some of his mature works, as well as his son Eduard.

Drawings by Karsen are today in the Rijksprentenkabinet in Amsterdam (whose collections include a sketchbook by the artist), the Teyler Museum in Haarlem, the Rijksprentenkabinet in Leiden, the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, the Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen in Rotterdam, and elsewhere.