Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Josephus Augustus KNIP (Tilburg 1777 - Berlicum 1847)

A Figure Standing in the Ruins of a House

Gouache and watercolour.
691 x 515 mm. (27 1/4 x 20 1/4 in.) [sheet]

Similar gouache landscapes by Knip are in the collections of the Amsterdam Museum and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Other comparable large, finished watercolour and gouache drawings by Knip include The Ruins of Castle of Batenburg, near Nijmegen, in a private collection in Holland, and The Ruins of a Monastery recently on the art market in Germany, as well as a view of Gothic Ruins with Neapolitan Peasants which appeared at auction in Paris in 1993.

The present sheet once belonged to the Dutch historian and museum director Friedrich Gorissen (1912-1993).

Provenance:

Dr. Friedrich Gorissen, Cleves
His posthumous sale, Amsterdam, Sotheby's, 1 March 1994, lot 137 (sold for 3,200 guilders).

Artist description:

Josephus Augustus Knip was the son of the minor decorative painter Nicolaas Frederik Knip, and like three of his four siblings chose to take up art as a career, becoming the most successful member of this artistic dynasty. After studying at the drawing school in 's-Hertogenbosch as a youth, Knip worked with his father until the latter became blind in 1796, when he took over the responsibility of supporting the

family. In 1801 Knip left Brabant to travel to Paris, where he studied with Jacques-Louis David, Baron Gérard and Jean-Joseph Bidauld. While in Paris he received some commissions from the Dutch ambassador and also produced a number of landscape gouaches as finished works of art for sale. Knip spent nine years working in Paris, and in 1808 married the wealthy French bird painter Pauline Rifer de Courcelles, whose support allowed him to stop making his living from his gouaches. (Although the couple divorced in 1824, she continued to use his surname throughout her own successful career.)

After gaining a grant to study in Italy in 1808, Knip worked in Rome between 1809 and 1812, drawing numerous studies of ancient ruins, and in 1813 returned to Holland, bringing with him some 570 watercolours, oil sketches and drawings of landscapes and animal subjects. He settled first in ’s-Hertogenbosch and later in Amsterdam, and continued to be active as a landscape and animal painter. His penchant for Italianate views attracted little interest there, however, and in 1823 he moved back to Paris. A few years later he went suddenly blind in one eye, and returned for good to Holland, where he continued to work until he became completely blind in 1832. His best-known pupil was his daughter Henriëtte Ronner-Knip (1821-1909), who became very successful as an animal painter, particularly of cats, in the latter half of the 19th century.