

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Carl Ludwig FROMMEL (Birkenfeld 1789 - Ispringen 1863)

An Ancient Doorway at Tivoli

Watercolour and pencil.

Inscribed and dated Tivoli and 1814. on the margin of the old mount.

197 x 173 mm. (7 3/4 x 6 3/4 in.)

During his stay in Italy, Carl Ludwig Frommel often visited Tivoli, thirty kilometres northeast of Rome, and he drew and engraved several works situated there. A large drawing of a Landscape near Tivoli is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, while a drawing of Wooded Cliffs near Tivoli, dated 1815, is in the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Karlsruhe. Views of the 16th century Villa d'Este at Tivoli by the artist are also known.

The present sheet was formerly in the collection of the German architect and decorator Bernhard Himmelheber (1898-1966), which was comprised mainly of German and Italian drawings dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

Provenance:

Probably the estate of the artist
Bernhard Himmelheber, Karlsruhe
Thence by descent to a private collection, Germany.

Artist description:

The son of an architect, the German landscape painter and printmaker Carl (or Karl) Ludwig Frommel studied painting and engraving in Karlsruhe, the former under Phillip Jakob Becker and the latter with Christian Haldenwang. In 1809 he visited Paris, where he received a commission for twelve large landscape watercolours from the Empress Joséphine. He then spent five years in Italy, between 1812 and 1817, where he befriended some of the German Nazarene artists and established his reputation. After travelling through Sicily and Austria he returned to Karlsruhe, where at the age of twenty-eight he was appointed a professor of painting and engraving. In 1824 he visited London, where he learned the new technique of steel engraving, which he continued to practice on his return to Karlsruhe, setting up the first steel engraving studio in Germany. Between 1830 and 1858 Frommel served as the director of the Grand Ducal picture gallery in Karlsruhe. Regarded as one of the finest landscape artists of the period, Frommel was particularly admired for his views of Baden, many of which were published in albums, as well as his atmospheric depictions of sites in Italy and Greece. As a 19th century German encyclopaedia noted of the artist, 'His landscapes are sensitively rendered, full of grace and delicate fragrance...His engravings are distinguished by their characteristic conception and strong yet delicate execution.'

A large group of watercolours, drawings and prints by Frommel is today in the collection of the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Karlsruhe.