Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Augustin PAJOU (Paris 1730 - Paris 1809)

Study of a Sleeping Youth, Seen from Behind

Pen and brown ink and grey wash, with touches of watercolour.

Inscribed by the artist nature at the lower centre.

137 x 195 mm. (5 3/8 x 7 5/8 in.)

RECENTLY ACQUIRED BY THE STÄDELSCHES KUNSTINSTITUT, FRANKFURT.

Augustin Pajou was an exceptional draughtsman and produced highly refined drawings in red chalk for his sculptural works, as well as a number of finished composition drawings intended for collectors. In addition, during his period of study as a pensionnaireat the Académie de France in Rome between 1752 and 1756, he made numerous pen and ink drawings after Greek and Roman antiquities in both Rome and Naples, as well copies after works by Renaissance and Baroque masters. Two albums of such drawings by Pajou, numbering over 280 sheets, are in the collection of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, while a third is in the Princeton University Art Museum. These three albums, as well as another, also dating from the artist's Italian period, which was with the Galerie Cailleux in Paris in 1995, account for a large proportion of the artist's extant output as a draughtsman. While in Italy, Pajou also made a handful of drawings of scenes of everyday life, of which the present sheet is a particularly fine and charming example.

Exhibitions

London, The Matthiesen Gallery, French Master Drawings of the 18th Century, 1950, no.58 (lent by Oppé); London, Royal Academy of Arts, The Paul Oppé Collection, 1958, no.424 ('Lazzarone'); Paris, Galerie Paul Prouté, Catalogue Kauffman, 2008, no.15.

Literature:

London, The Matthiesen Gallery, French Master Drawings of the 18th Century, 1950, no.58

London, Royal Academy of Arts, The Paul Oppé Collection, 1958, no.424

Paris, Galerie Paul Prouté, Catalogue Kauffman, 2008, no.15.

Artist description:

Born into a family of sculptors in wood, Augustin Pajou entered the studio of the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne at the age of fourteen. He won the Prix de Rome in 1748, spending a few years at the Ecole des Elèves Protegés before taking up his place at the French Academy in Rome in 1752. Agrée at the Académie Royale in 1759 and reçu the following year, at the age of thirty, Pajou produced portrait busts, religious sculptures and funerary monuments, as well as small-scale terracotta statuettes and reliefs for collectors. Among his public commissions were decorative reliefs for the Palais-Royal in Paris and the Royal opera house at Versailles, as well as sculptures and reliefs for the Parisian church of Saint-Roch and the cathedral of Sainte-Croix in Orléans. A gifted teacher, he was appointed an assistant professor of sculpture at the Académie Royale in 1762 and a full professor in 1766. From 1744 Pajou earned a significant number of Royal commissions from the Comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi under Louis XVI. He was named garde des antiques du roi in 1777, but with the Revolution lost his lodgings at the Louvre. He spent the early 1790s in Montpellier and worked very little in the last decade or so of his life.