

CHIPART (Paris 1774 - Copenhagen(?) c.1825)

Fishermen by a Cascade in the Stables of the 'Villa of Maecenas' at Tivoli

Gouache.

A small made up area at the lower right corner.

Laid down on a 19th century mount.

Inscribed Chipard. del. Copenhague. at the lower left of the mount, and Malet af Cipart. at the lower right of the mount.

485 x 378 mm. (19 1/8 x 14 7/8 in.)

The present sheet depicts the ancient Roman ruins of the so-called Villa of Maecenas, built on a hilltop at Tivoli, had since the 16th century had been thought to be the residence of Maecenas, counselor to the Emperor Augustus. It was not until 1825 that the ruins were correctly identified as the remains of a Roman temple dedicated to Hercules, which was later used as a stables and storehouse, and also a convent. The picturesque quality of the subterranean ruins, through which courses an underground tributary of the river Aniene cascading down a small waterfall, led numerous artists – including Michelangelo, Piranesi, Palladio and Fragonard - to make drawings of the site, which in the 18th century was thought to be the ruins of the stables of the Villa of Maecenas.

This large gouache drawing was formerly in the collection of the Danish lawyer, administrator and art collector Benjamin Larsen Wolff (1790-1866).

Artist description:

Born in Paris in 1774, very little is known about the life and work of French artist Chipart, including his first name, and he remains a mysterious figure today. He seems to have worked outside France for most of his career, and was in particular active for several years as a scenographer, costume designer and painter of theatrical scenery at the Royal Danish Theatre in Copenhagen, between c.1794 and c.1825. Chipart also appears to have travelled through Russia, Sweden, England and Germany, where he is thought to have lived for some time in Hamburg. Three gouache landscape drawings by Chipart, one of which is dated 1801, are today in the collection of the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen, while another example, a Landscape with Ruins, is in the Nasjonalmuseet in Oslo.