

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Adrian ZINGG (St. Gallen 1734 - Leipzig 1816)

Fishermen on the River Zschopau by Kriebstein Castle, Saxony

Pen and brown ink and brown wash.

Signed Zingg. Del(?) at the lower left centre.

Inscribed Kröpstein beij Waldheim on the verso.

Further inscribed A. Zingg del. Coln de Fick and Kriepstein bei Waldheim on the old mount.

498 x 663 mm. (19 5/8 x 26 1/8 in.)

RECENTLY ACQUIRED BY THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES.

A friend and fellow artist, Daniel Chodowiecki, noted that Adrian Zingg's working method consisted of making landscape sketches en plein air, working in pencil in a sketchbook. Once back in the studio, he would work these sketches up with pen and wash or watercolour. Zingg's meticulously drawn landscapes are usually topographically accurate, although the homogeneity of his technique throughout his career makes the dating of individual drawings difficult.

As Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann has written of another of the artist's large landscape drawings, 'topographic exactness is combined with elements that anticipate Romantic conceptions of landscape. These include the emphasis on naturalistic details in the foreground, such as the large, boldly drawn plants and weeds, the contrasting areas of light, and the animated clouds... The technique Zingg developed for his landscape and city views, in which the pen strokes become increasingly delicate as they approach the background, adds to the overall effect of transposing compositional emphases from particular aspects of topography to more universally discoverable elements of nature.'

First constructed in the late 14th century and remodeled in the 15th and 17th centuries, Kriebstein Castle sits on a steep crag above the River Zschopau, near Waldheim in Saxony. The river flows

around the spur castle on three sides. Zingg produced a number of views of the castle, in the form of both drawings, watercolours and prints; one such example is a large pen and ink drawing in the Albertina in Vienna.

The present sheet belonged to the Danish collector Johan Christian Fick (1787-1864), an auctioneer and justice of the peace, who in 1825 founded the Kunstforeningen art society and exhibition space in Copenhagen. The drawing then passed into the collection of Fick's brother-in-law, the Danish lawyer Benjamin Wolff (1790-1866), with whose descendants it remained until 2018.

Artist description:

Born in Switzerland, Adrian Zingg received his early artistic training in Zurich and Bern. He had some success as a topographical artist of Swiss views before entering the Paris studio of Johann Georg Wille in 1759. He lived in Paris until 1766, producing prints after Dutch, Flemish and German artists that were much admired. In 1766, accompanied by his friend and fellow artist Anton Graff, he left Paris for Dresden, where he was to work for most of his career. Zingg established an engraver's workshop, and his prints after the work of earlier Netherlandish and French masters earned him a considerable reputation. Together with Graff, Zingg made several sketching tours throughout the province of Saxony, in particular the remote and mountainous Elbsandsteingebirge region which came to be known as the 'sächsische Schweiz', or the 'Saxon Switzerland'. A member of the Academies of Vienna and Berlin, Zingg was appointed a professor of landscape drawing at the Kunstakademie in Dresden in 1803, and among his students was the young Caspar David Friedrich. A substantial group of drawings by Adrian Zingg, numbering some seventy-five sheets, is today in the Kupferstichkabinett in Dresden.