

Friedrich Heinrich FUGER (Heilbronn 1751 - Vienna 1818)

Portrait of Angelica Kaufmann

Pen and grey ink and wash, over an underdrawing in pencil.

Inscribed Bildnis der Angelica Kaufman in pencil at the bottom and Heinrich friedrich füger / 1751-1818 and Füger in pencil on the verso.

199 x 138 mm. (7 7/8 x 5 3/8 in.)

Friedrich Heinrich Füger produced a large number of finished drawings, intended as designs for engravers or for book illustrations. Indeed, as one contemporary author noted of him, 'Füger draws frequently and takes orders for his drawings as well as his paintings, which is unusual for a painter.'

The present sheet, a portrait of Füger's contemporary, the well-known painter Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), is typical of the artist's refined draughtsmanship. With its thin washes and delicate strokes, it may be compared with a study of Two Young Women (The Gräfinen Tries) in the Albertina in Vienna.

Artist description:

Born in Germany, Friedrich Heinrich Füger established a successful career in Vienna, where he settled in 1774. He showed a talent as a portrait miniaturist at an early age, and two of his works were

exhibited in Dresden in 1769. He had already achieved a position of some renown at the Imperial court in Vienna when he won the Rome prize at the Akademie. In 1776 he travelled to Italy, where he participated in the decoration of the library of the Palazzo Reale at Caserta, near Naples. Soon after his return to Austria in 1783, Füger became the assistant director of the Akademie and, three years later, the head of design and painting at the Imperial porcelain manufactory. Appointed director of the Akademie in 1795, he rose to become the foremost neoclassical painter in Austria. A respected and fashionable portrait painter, Füger received numerous commissions from members of the Imperial Habsburg court and the Viennese aristocracy, as well as producing portraits of friends and contemporaries. The onset of an eye disease in 1798, however, forced him to abandon painting miniatures.