

**Circle of CLAUDE GELLÉE, called LORRAIN (Chamagne 1604/05 - Rome 1682)**

**Landscape with Two Figures Beneath a Tree on the Edge of a Lake**

Black chalk, pen and brown ink and brown wash, extensively heightened with white.

Laid down.

193 x 262 mm. (7 5/8 x 10 3/8 in.)

This atmospheric landscape sketch, although regarded as an original drawing by Claude for much of its history, is likely to be by an artist of the late 17th or early 18th century who was closely influenced by the master's particularly atmospheric manner of landscape draughtsmanship. The drawing has a long and distinguished provenance. It is first recorded, in the latter half of the 18th century, in the collection of the Earls Spencer at Althorp House in Northamptonshire, where it was regarded as a drawing by Claude Lorrain. At the Spencer sale in London in 1811, this drawing was described in the auction catalogue as a work by Claude: 'A landscape, a masterly and tasteful sketch, on blue paper – on the left rise two majestic trees with spreading branches, which are pencil-heightened, and shaded with Ind. ink and bistre; the right side is bounded by smaller trees; on the middle fore-ground, in front of a piece of water, appear two figures, a gentleman and lady sitting; the sky and water are heightened with pencil white'.

This landscape sketch later belonged to the 19th century French military officer Aimé-Charles-Horace His de la Salle (1795-1878), who assembled a fine collection of Italian, French, Dutch, Flemish and German drawings. His de la Salle bequeathed some 21 paintings and around 450 drawings to the Louvre, while presenting other works to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and the museums of Alençon, Dijon and Lyon.

The present sheet then entered the small but choice collection of prints and drawings assembled by Louis Galichon (1829-1893), the brother of the art historian, critic and fellow collector Emile Galichon, and was probably acquired at his posthumous sale by the Parisian solicitor Eugène Rodrigues (1853-1928). Along with Etienne Moreau-Nélaton, Walter Gay and other connoisseurs, Rodrigues was a founder member of the Société de Reproduction des Dessins de Maîtres in 1909. His large collection of drawings dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries, including numerous architectural and ornamental studies, was dispersed at several auctions in Paris in the 1920s.