

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Wilhelm Friedrich FREY (Karlsruhe 1826 - Mannheim 1911)

The Head of a Sleeping Tiger

Pastel on brown paper.

Signed and dated W. Frey / 1868 at the lower left.

474 x 627 mm. (18 5/8 x 24 5/8 in.)

Although he produced a number of portraits and genre subjects, Wilhelm Frey was active mainly as an animal painter, and produced a handful of paintings of tigers. A large painting of an Indian tiger in a cave, dated 1869, was on the art market in Germany in 2021, while a small, signed but undated oil sketch of the head of a tiger was recently on the Dutch art market.

Artist description:

Mainly active as painter of animals and pastoral landscapes, Wilhelm Frey studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich between 1848 and 1852, and was also influenced by the work of the animalier painters Friedrich Voltz and Robert Eberle, who were active in the city at that time. Possessed of a fine singing voice, he began a career as a professional singer, performing in theatres throughout Germany, while also establishing a separate career as a painter. In 1869 he settled near the mountain lake of Achensee in the Austrian Tyrol, and from the following year onwards exhibited his work regularly in Munich and Berlin. He travelled extensively around Germany, as well as making trips to Holland, the Swiss Alps, the Dolomites and the Baltic coast. In 1895 Frey was appointed the director of the Grand Ducal Picture Gallery in Mannheim, where he was also named professor at the local academy in 1906.