

# STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



**18th Century GERMAN SCHOOL**

**Design for a Fantastic Ewer**

Pen and brown ink and brown wash.

141 x 113 mm. (5 5/8 x 4 1/2 in.)

Datable somewhere between the late 1740s and the early 1760s, this design for a fanciful ewer, characterized by a shell-like form, may have been intended to have been engraved. Ornamental engravings were popular in Germany, particularly in and around Augsburg in the middle decades of the 18th century. Augsburg was a centre for goldsmith's work and such Rococo designs as the present sheet would have been typical of the so-called *Augsburger Geschmack*, or 'Augsburg taste', during the late Baroque and Rococo periods.

Similar studies of ewers and vases were also produced in France in the 18th century by such artists as Edme Bouchardon, Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain, Jean Lepautre and Jacques Saly, often while working in Rome as pensionnaires at the Académie de France. As one scholar has noted, '*Rococo decorative style, with its emphasis on asymmetrical forms and a fascination with shell-like motifs, was especially popular in France, South Germany and Austria. This genre pittoresque was applied to all kinds of architecture and decoration: panelling, furniture, porcelain, carved wood, table-silver etc. Its exuberance was particularly suitable for small objects and fitted in well with the newfashion for more intimate interiors.*'

The present sheet was one of a set of four pen and ink designs for rocaille decoration, all apparently by the same hand, that were mounted and sold together at auction in London in 1983.