

Sir Edwin Henry Landseer, R.A.



Two Persians with an Arabian

Reference: 10878

Dimensions:

Height: 14.50 cm / 5¾ in

Width: 12 cm / 4¾ in

Signed with initials l.r., pen and brown ink

14.5 x 12 cm.; 5 ½ x 4 ¾ inches

KAREN TAYLOR FINE ART

Provenance:

Mrs F.L. Evans;

With Colnaghi, 1951, catalogue no. 59

Duncan Beresford-Jones until 2000

The Shah of Persia presented a group of Arabian horses to the Prince Regent, commemorated in a painting of 1819 by H.B. Chalon (Tate Britain, TO2357). Landseer was also attracted to the subject and two versions of oils of an Arabian stallion with an Attendant in Persian dress are known, see Richard Ormond, Sir Edwin Landseer, 1982, p. 54.

The Shah sent an Ambassador, Mirza Abdul Hassan Shiraz, to London in 1819 to discuss with Lord Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary, aspects of the Anglo-Persian treaty concluded by Sir Gore Ouseley in Tehran in 1812, and more recently revised. That treaty had established an Anglo-Persian alliance against a possible Franco-Russian one and the Shah was hoping for positive assurances that England would protect Persia in the event of a Russian invasion.

The Ambassador left Tehran in October 1818 laden with presents from the Shah, including eighteen selected Arabian horses for the Prince Regent. The horses travelled with the Ambassador to Constantinople and then the British government organised their transport to London, an expensive undertaking arranged by a Mr George Willcox and costing over £1500. The presentation of the Shah's gifts was listed in The Times of 24 May and took place at Carlton House, the Prince Regent's London residence. There are seven horses pictured in Chalon's painting, and it is not known how many of them survived the journey, but the present drawing presumably shows one of them.

Mirza Abdu Hassan Shiraz's visit aroused considerable social and popular attention but the visit was not a success, as following the defeat of Napoleon and the conclusion of an alliance with Russia the British no longer attached much importance to their Persian alliance.