

François Louis Thomas Francia



A girl picking flowers in Greenwich Park

Reference: 10885

Dimensions:

Height: 19.70 cm / 7³/₄ in

Width: 27.50 cm / 10⁷/₈ in

KT524

Signed and dated l.c.: L Francia 1828 (?), watercolour with scratching out

19.7 x 27.5 cm.; 7 ³/₄ x 10 ³/₄ inches

Provenance

Sotheby's, London, 7 June 2006, lot 356;

Bonhams, London, 23 September 2008, lot 40

This charming view of London from Greenwich is painted from a similar vantage point to the artist's famous self-portrait

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

in Greenwich Park, in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Calais (Inv.86-57-2). The towers of the hospital can be seen in the present drawing, with the dome of St Paul's cathedral looming between them on the horizon.

Francia was Bonington's teacher whose work provides an important link between British and French watercolour painting in the early nineteenth century. A native of Calais, he left for London in 1788 after the outbreak of the French Revolution and remained until 1817. He established a practice as a drawing master in London and a reputation as a painter of marine and landscape watercolours. He attended the Monro 'Academy', made sketching tours, was secretary of the Brothers, a sketching club of which Girtin was a member and was also secretary of the Associated Artists in Water Colours. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1795-1822. Francia returned to Calais in 1817. He gave Bonington his first professional lessons in watercolour in Calais as well as other artists including William Wyld, Eugène Isabey, Tesson and Collignon. British and French artists who passed through the town on a tour of the coast or en route to Paris or London would visit him.