

William James Müller



Five studies of the head of an African

Reference: 11077

Dimensions:

Height: 50 cm / 19³/₄ in

Width: 69 cm / 27¹/₈ in

Oil on canvas

50 x 69 cm

Provenance: Spink & Son, London, 1977; Private collection, UK

Exhibited: Spink, Visions of the Orient, October 1995, cat. no. 35 (on loan)

Müller returned from Egypt in 1839 and spent the summer in Bristol before moving to London in the autumn. He worked at the Clipstone Street Academy in Fitzroy Square in the evenings, where he painted from life. This artists' society had

KAREN TAYLOR

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been founded in the 1820s to enable artists to study picturesque characters from life, and there Müller worked in oils, producing sparkling sketches of which this is a lively example. This picture seems to reflect his interest in the Cairo slave market, where he spent time sketching from 1838 to 1839 and which provided the subjects for many of his exhibited works at the Royal Academy and British Institution until his death in 1845. A further study of the same sitter is with the Maas Gallery.