

Thomas Rowlandson



SOLD

‘Human nature is fond of Novelty’ Pliny

Reference: 11134

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

Dimensions:

Height: 29.50 cm / 11⁵/₈ in
Width: 22.50 cm / 8⁷/₈ in

Inscribed with title l.c.: Human nature is fond of Novelty-Pliny, watercolour with pen and red and grey ink over pencil, on the original hand drawn mount with Gilbert Davis' collector's mark on the mount

29.5 x 22.5 cm.; 11 ³/₄ x 8 ⁷/₈ inches

Provenance

Gilbert Davis; (L.757a) Hulme Chadwick; Sotheby's, London, 1 April 1976, lot 138; Where purchased by the previous owner, private collection U.K. until 2022

?Christie's London, 20 January/June 1970 ?lot 60 (stencil no 15SSA)

This drawing, which dates from 1787-1797, shows the artist at his most cynical in his depiction of old age lusting after youth and beauty. Rowlandson's sly choice of title reflects his interest in antiquity which manifests itself throughout his career.

This drawing has a distinguished provenance. Gillbert Davis (1899- 1983) was an actor and writer, who appeared in the film 'Passport to Pimlico'. He served during both World Wars and collected over 3000 drawings and watercolours by British artists and foreign artists working in England. This included over 300 works by Rowlandson. His Rowlandson collection was exhibited in London in 1939, 1949 and 1950.

Hulme Chadwick (1910-1977) was an architect and industrial designer. He first studied at the Manchester School of Art followed by the Royal College of Art from 1931 to 1934. After the RCA he was an architectural assistant in Manchester and London until 1938 when he was appointed Chief Camouflage Officer to the Air Ministry; an appointment he held until 1944. Some of his ten dummy aircraft factories were so convincing they were heavily bombed during the war. He was also responsible for the concealment of radar stations.

After the war he established his own practice. His commissions included aircraft interiors for BOAC and A.V. Roe, exhibition design for Shell Chemicals and the Festival of Britain, interior design for the Daily Mirror, the International Wool Secretariat and British Rail. He was particularly active in the field of industrial design where he was most famous for a range of gardening products for Wilkinson Sword. In 1974, he was made a Royal Designer for Industry.