

Sarah Stone



An album of early works including portraits, vegetables, flowers, studies of hands, feet and facial features, male figure studies drawn from life and spiders, c. 1772-3

Reference: 11161

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

Dimensions:

Height: 31.50 cm / 12³/₈ in
Width: 19.70 cm / 7³/₄ in

One hundred and forty-four drawings on sixty-eight pages, laid into an album bound in vellum, the fly leaf with a large label inscribed: Miss Stones/First Efforts/plates.71

The drawings are of various sizes, on laid paper, each page 31.5 x 19.7 cm.; 12 1/4 x 7 3/4 inches

Provenance

Private collection, U.K.; Private sale by Sotheby's Australia, January 25 2001; Patrick Dockar-Drysdale (1929-2020)

Exhibited

Tate Britain, 'Now you See Us- Women Artists in Britain 1520-1920', May - October 2024, ill. p.42, p. 205

Sarah Stone was the daughter of James Stone, a fan painter and is thought to have assisted her father. The family lived in London.

The dated drawings in this album suggest that Stone executed many of them when she was ten or eleven years old and identify her as something of a child prodigy. This album contains many copies from drawing books which were a popular means of allowing an artist to develop their technique by copying. The number of drawings and the repetition of certain subjects reflect a systematic approach and a determination to improve and there are drawings after Holbein, Ribera and Boucher, the minor details may be after Le Brun.

One of the drawings is inscribed 'The New Drawing Book' which could be a reference to Francis Vivares, A New Drawing Book, in the Manner of Chalk fit for Youth to Draw after. 6 sepia soft ground etchings, by W. Hebert after Vanloo and Boucher, 4to. Frans. Vivares. Sept. 1759. The plates in this were in the manner of red chalk.

The range of subjects in the present album suggests Stone was using one of the compilation drawing books, such as Carrington Bowles, The School of Art; or, most compleat Drawing-Book extant: consisting of an extensive series of well chosen examples, selected from the designs of those eminent masters, Watteau, Boucher, Bouchardson, Le Brun, Eisen, &c. engraved on sixty copper plates, and performed in a method which expresses the manner of handling the chalk, 1765 and later editions.