

Theodor Von Holst



Studies of women including a study after Raphael, recto, a woman seated at a balcony with a flying bat and gothic spire, verso

Reference: 11162

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

Dimensions:

Height: 27.20 cm / 10³/₄ in
Width: 21.40 cm / 8³/₈ in

Inscribed (recto): T Von Holst, pencil and pen and brown ink, verso: pencil, on laid paper with a partial Strasburg Lily watermark, laid down on a brown sheet numbered 10
27.2 x 21.4 cm; 10 ³/₄ x 8 ¹/₂ inches

Provenance

John Welch Etherington Rolls (1807-1870);

By family descent to Lady Shelley Rolls, her sale at Sotheby's, London, 12 June 1959;

P. & D. Colnaghi;

Private collection U.K. until 2019

Von Holst's drawing of the seated woman, recto, is after a figure in Raphael's 'Miraculous Draft of Fishes'; the drawing for the tapestry cartoon is in the Albertina, Vienna. A print was made after the drawing, which von Holst probably copied. The figure of the standing female on the recto is a characteristic Holst pose, derived from Vincenzo Danti's bronze statue of Venus in the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence (see Max Browne, *The Romantic Art of Theodor von Holst 1810-44*, 1994, p.15).

The drawing on the verso illustrates a scene inspired by a Gothic novel such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by Ann Radcliffe, published in 1794. One of the most popular novels of its day, its main character Emily St. Aubert, a virtuous and beautiful young woman, undertakes a series of dramatic adventures; she escapes from captivity at the hands of a cruel villain in a brooding castle to freedom.

The brown card inlay on which the present drawing is contained is from the Rolls album, a large leather-bound album which forms the largest-known group of drawings by the artist. The family lived at The Hendre in Monmouthshire, where they also had at least five oils by von Holst. They were also involved with the theatre and opened their own in the grounds.

The pencil inscription "T. Von Holst" appears on almost all the drawings in the album and is effectively its collection mark.