

Thomas Rowlandson



Dr Gallipot

Reference: 11195

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

Dimensions:

Height: 29 cm / 11³/₈ in
Width: 24 cm / 9¹/₂ in

Pen and brown and grey ink and watercolour over pencil

29 x 24 cm.; 11 3/8 x 9 1/2 inches

Provenance

Sotheby's, New York, 30 October 1985, lot 30;

Andrew Clayton-Payne Ltd;

Private collection U.K. until 2025

Exhibited

Andrew Clayton-Payne Ltd, An Exhibition of Watercolours by Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827), 19 November – 2 December 1998, no. 9

Engraved

Doctor Gallipot placing his Fortune at the feet of his Mistress thro' Physic to the Dogs

Etching and aquatint on copperplate; drawn and engraved by Thomas Rowlandson and published in London in 1808.

A French doctor on bended knee makes a declaration of love to his young and attractive, female patient. The venerable doctor is declaring his love for the lady whilst gesturing towards a bottle (which in the print of the subject contains "Elixir of Life Drops"). A strategically placed syringe suggests how he might be planning to administer the dosage to obtain eternal youth. A painting on the wall behind the couple shows Cupid in a similar pose in front of a naked Venus. A maid stands behind a partially opened door surveying the scene (to be replaced by a footman in the engraving).

Rowlandson pokes fun at both the French and licentious quack doctors as well having a customary dig at the attentions of older men towards younger women.

There is more than a usual amount of pencil underdrawing in this watercolour which suggests that Rowlandson changed his mind as he worked, at his usual speed.

A pen and wash drawing in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge entitled "Doctor Cathartic declaring his passion to Miss Costive" (1798) provides a grotesque variation on this theme, with both suitor and woman older and uglier.

Another version of this watercolour in the collection of Yale University Medical Library shows a similar scene in front of a keyboard instrument.

Thomas Rowlandson, Doctor Gallipot. Yale Medical Library. Historical Library, Yale University. New Haven, CT.