

Samuel Palmer



La Vocotella near Corpo di Cava, Italy

Reference: 11241

Dimensions:

Height: 26.70 cm / 10½ in

Width: 37.80 cm / 14⅞ in

Samuel Palmer, RWS (1805-1881)

La Vocotella near Corpo di Cava, Italy

Pencil and watercolour heightened with bodycolour with scratching out

26.7 x 37.8 cm.; 10 ½ x 14 7/8 inches

Provenance

With Agnew's, London 2002, no. 53

Anonymous sale Sotheby's, London, 23 November 2006, lot 145;

W/S Fine Art, 'Andrew Wyld: Connoisseur Dealer', Christie's, London, 10 July 2012, lot 147;

Timothy Clowes, his sale at Sotheby's, London, 23 September 2021, lot 148;

Where bought by a private collector until 2026

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

Samuel and Hannah Palmer stayed at a small inn at Corpo di Cava on their Italian honeymoon in the summer of 1838. The inn overlooked a Benedictine monastery and a ravine. During this very happy period of his life, Palmer produced some of his finest watercolours, which combined the mysticism of his Shoreham work with more Italianate composition and structure. He told his friend George Richmond that it was here that he felt he was 'no longer a mere maker of sketches, but an artist' (E. Malins *Samuel Palmer's Italian Honeymoon*, 1968, p. 73).

This watercolour is constructed on classical lines with the receding serpentine path with a figure and is infused with the golden glow of Italian sunlight.

A similar watercolour of the same place from a different viewpoint is in the collection of the Graves Art Gallery Sheffield (see R. Lister *Catalogue Raisonné of the works of Samuel Palmer*, 1988, no. 311, pp. 126-7, ill.). In a letter to her parents, written during August 1838, Hannah Palmer mentioned two views of Corpo di Cava by her husband. Presumably one is the Graves Art Gallery drawing and the present work may be the second which Raymond Lister records as untraced (R. Lister, *Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of Samuel Palmer*, Cambridge 1988, see no. 310).