A Distant View of Lake Lugano from Monte Generoso

Edward Lear



REF: 3320

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Description

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Edward Lear (1812-1888)
A Distant View of Lake Lugano from Monte Generoso

Inscribed lower left.: Monte Generoso/9.AM. August 2.1878
Watercolour over pen and ink and traces of pencil
40.5 by 55.5 cm., 16 by 21 ¾ in.

Dating from one of Lear's first visits to Monte Generoso in 1878, the present watercolour is from a group of spectacular large-scale drawings of the mountain on the Italian/Swiss border originating from several summer trips there over the following few years. Lear and his Suliot manservant Giorgio Kokali began their ascent on the previous day (1st August), allowing them to reach the summit early on the following morning. He notes in his diary for 2nd August: "Slept well. Fine Clear Morning. Rose before 5. Undecided to go…to the top of the mountain…At length was so lovely, decided to go. And having packed lunch and 2 ½ bottles (two half bottles) of wine…set off at 7. By 9, rather sooner, reached the summit where already were a Swiss and his wife. Drew twice until 10.30…" (Edward Lear Diary for 2nd August 1878, held by Houghton Library, Harvard University (MS Eng 797.3) (transcribed from microfiche of original manuscript))

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