View of the Avon Gorge looking towards the Severn Estuary

Francis Danby

Sold



REF: 930

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Description

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FRANCIS DANBY
Wexford, Ireland 1793-1861 Exmouth
View of the Avon Gorge looking towards the Severn Estuary

Signed lower left: F Danby
Watercolour over pencil heightened with touches of bodycolour
274 x 428 mm., 10 ¾ x 16 ¾ in.

Provenance:
Anonymous sale, Sotheby's, 3rd October 1974, lot 210;
Private collection, UK until 2011

This is a favourite viewpoint of several Bristol School artists and especially Danby. It looks west down the Avon from Durdham Down, with the Severn estuary in the distance and the hills of Wales on the horizon. To the right are the rocks known as Sea Walls with the beyond the tower known as Cook's Folly.

Stylistically this dates from circa 1815, two years after his arrival in Bristol. Danby had trained in Dublin and in 1813 visited London with his fellow artists James O'Connor (1792-1841) and George Petrie (1789-1866). They were there only a few weeks before they ran out of money and Danby and O'Connor walked to Bristol with the intention of finding a boat to take them back to Ireland. However he found in Bristol a market for his landscapes and portraits and resolved to stay a while. In 1824, he moved to London and first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1817. By the 1820s he became famous for his grand landscape paintings. According to Redgrave `Danby will always take high rank with the lovers of art and genius. His imagination was of the highest class, his landscapes of the truest poetry' (see Samuel Redgrave, A Dictionary of Artists of the English School, 1878, p.113).

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