

A design of putti emerging from flowers on a scrolling vine with butterflies; a design for a lunette for Buckingham Palace

Thomas Stothard

Sold



Description

Thomas Stothard, R.A. (1755-1834)

A design of putti emerging from flowers on a scrolling vine with butterflies; a design for a lunette for Buckingham Palace

Brush and sepia wash

9.3 by 22 cm., 3 ¾ by 8 ½ in. (lunette)

Provenance:

With P. & D. Colnaghi, London

Stothard was one of the most prolific, successful and versatile artists of his generation, working as an illustrator, painter, engraver and designer. He initially trained as a silk-weaver before entering the RA Schools in 1777. Stothard was able to work on any scale and format, from producing large-scale history paintings and wall mural decorative schemes, as well as on small-scale works, such as book illustrations, theatre tickets, banknotes, invitation cards

Stothard was employed by George IV to produce several designs for new sculptural decorative schemes at Buckingham Palace, including for the Grand Staircase, the Blue Drawing Room and the Throne Room. Several were executed by Stothard's son A J Stothard, whilst others were executed by Frances Bernasconi (fl.c. 1803-1841) and Edward Hodges Baily, R.A (1788-1867). Mrs Bray in her biography on the artist, notes that Stothard recorded 'four designs of Cupids &c', as well as 'Three designs of Boys and Foliage', and that 'these designs [were] completed the 30th of April 1829'. (Mrs Anna Eliza Bray, *Life of Stothard, R.A., with some reminiscences*, London, 1851, p. 183).

The present lunette design appears to relate to the four lunettes, executed in high relief by Bernasconi above the cornice of the Grand Staircase. Bernasconi was one of the most successful ornamental carvers and plasterers of his generation, who worked on many of the most important projects of the period, including at Windsor Castle, Westminster Abbey, Trinity College, Cambridge and Buckingham Palace.

The Royal Collection has a design for a tympanum intended, but never executed, for the Blue Drawing room, with a similar decorative scheme to the present design (see A.P. Oppé, *English Drawings at Windsor Castle*, p. 95, fig. 49, cat. no. 601).