



LE CLAI<sup>R</sup>E  
KUNST SEIT 1982

# The Danish Golden Age



No. 6: Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, View from the Battery towards the City (Udsigt fra Batteriet imod byen). Detail.



# THE DANISH GOLDEN AGE

Ten Drawings from Private Collections

LE CLAIRE  
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36

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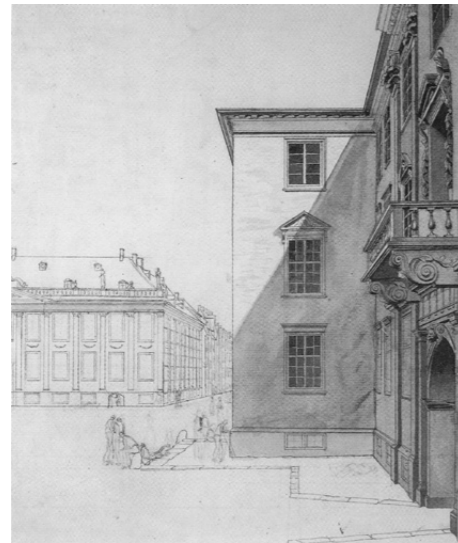
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The Danish Golden Age (*Den danske guldalder*) in the first half of the nineteenth century was an extraordinarily productive period in the creative arts. Copenhagen had been ravaged by fires and enemy bombardment. The nation had experienced a crippling bankruptcy but the arts – architecture, music, literature, ballet, theatre and painting – entered a period of remarkable creativity catalysed by the influence of German Romanticism. The Golden Age of Danish painting spans the period between 1800 and 1860 and is defined by the work of a small circle of artists - Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg and his students Wilhelm Bendz, Christen Købke, Martinus Rørbye, Constantin Hansen and Wilhelm Marstrand. Other important figures were Johan Thomas Lundbye, Peter Christian Skovgaard and the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen.

The Golden Age witnessed striking developments in neoclassical architecture – the streets of Copenhagen, in particular, experienced radical change, with buildings designed by Christian Frederik Hansen and Michael Gottlieb Bindesbøll.

In music, key figures inspired by Danish romantic nationalism were J. P. E. Hartmann, Hans Christian Lumbye, Niels W. Gade and August Bournonville. Literature focused on Romantic thinking brought to Denmark by the Norwegian-German philosopher Henrik Steffens in 1802. Important literary figures included Adam Oehlenschläger, Bernhard Severin Ingemann, N. F. S. Grundtvig and Hans Christian Andersen, the originator of the modern fairytale. Søren Kierkegaard was the outstanding philosopher of the period and in science, Hans Christian Ørsted was responsible for important discoveries.

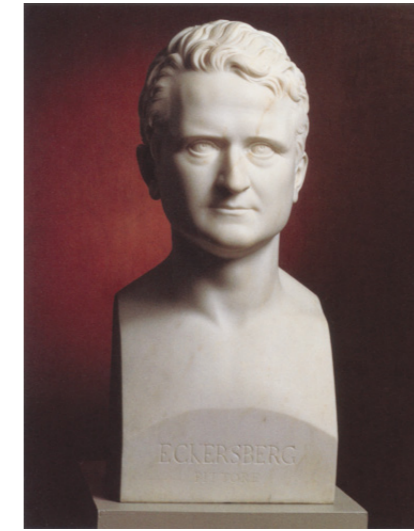
The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art was founded in Copenhagen in 1754. It still has its original seat in Charlottenborg Palace today. Its founding significantly influenced the development of drawing and painting in Denmark, laying the groundwork for the remarkable artistic achievements of the Danish Golden Age.



Albert Küchler (1803-86),  
*View from Eckersberg's Studio at the Academy, Charlottenborg Palace*, pencil on paper, c.1827. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen

Leading professors in the Academy's early years were Nicolai Abildgaard and the landscape painter Jens Juel. Both taught Caspar David Friedrich during his four years at the Academy in 1794-98. However it was Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg – academy professor from 1818 until his death in 1853 - who introduced groundbreaking changes in teaching. Eckersberg placed great emphasis on studies from life and preliminary drawings and sketches made before the motif. He championed the importance of perspective and produced a large number of works based on his own theoretical treatise titled *Linearperspectiven, avendt paa Malerkunsten*, 1841 (Linear Perspective Applied to the Art of Painting). The neoclassical realism of his approach derived from his training under Jacques-Louis David in Paris and from his contacts with Bertel Thorvaldsen. His teaching had a formative influence on the following generation of painters when portraits, genre subjects and landscapes gradually superseded history

painting. He opened the way to a quintessentially Danish school, earning himself the title 'Father of Danish painting' (*Dansk malerkunsts fader*). As early as 1838 the art historian Niels Laurits Høyen (1798–1870) was to credit Eckersberg with the remarkable development of the visual arts in Denmark.



Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770 - 1844),  
*Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg*, marble, 53,5 cm height; 1816. Thorvaldsens Museum, Copenhagen

Most of the artists in this catalogue were students of Eckersberg – members of his inner circle. Johan Thomas Lundbye was a student of Johan L. Lund (1777–1867), Eckersberg's colleague at the Academy, and did not come into direct contact with Eckersberg's teachings or share his viewpoint. He preferred to draw from nature, choosing more untraditional motifs and selecting the smallest elements of the Danish countryside to depict them in meticulous detail.

Today, paintings, drawings and sculptures by artists of the Danish Golden Age are highly sought after by collectors and public institutions. Among the first enthusiasts for the art of the Danish Golden Age were the late Eugene Thaw, the late Charles Ryskamp and the late Carlos van Hasselt, the former director of the Fondation Custodia in Paris. As collectors, they greatly influenced the development of interest in the field. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to share in their engagement with the art of the Danish Golden Age.

We would like to thank the experts and friends who have so generously shared their specialist knowledge and given their time and assistance in the preparation and design of this catalogue. Our special thanks go to: Antoine Bechet, Sue Cubitt, Eva Helsted, Eva Henschen, Ger Luijten, the late Kasper Monrad, Marianne Saabye, Jesper Svenningsen, Hans Tybjerg, Niels Vodder and Sabine Zorn.



Christen Købke (1810-1848),  
*Eckersberg Sketching En Plein Air while Marstrand Looks on*, pencil on paper, dated 17.1832, 147 x 184 mm. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen

## CHRISTOFFER WILHELM ECKERSBERG

1783 BLÅKRUG – COPENHAGEN 1853

1

### *A Greek Temple. Perspective Study, c. 1841*

Pen and black ink, grey Indian ink wash over pencil on white paper. Inscribed and wrongly dated by the artist's son, Erling Eckersberg: *C. W. Eckersberg 1838*. Bearing an inscription in the artist's hand: *Solens Straaler falde her vinkelret paa Billedfladen* (The light of the sun falls at right angles on the picture plan).

163 x 180 mm

PROVENANCE: Erling Eckersberg – His Estate Sale, Copenhagen, 20 February 1890, lot 87 (described as 'C.W. Eckersberg: "En Søjlehal. 1838. Tusch, udf." [A peristyle. 1838. Wash, finished]) Private collection, Copenhagen – Private collection, Germany

LITERATURE: Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, exhib. cat., Kunsthalle Kiel 2005, p. 140, repr.

EXHIBITION: Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, Kunsthalle Kiel, 2005, p. 140 – Markus Bertsch, Hubertus Gaßner and Neela Struck, *Eckersberg Faszination Wirklichkeit. Das Goldene Zeitalter der dänischen Malerei*, Kunsthalle Hamburg, 2016, no. 110 – Ger Luijten, *C. W. Eckersberg 1783 – 1853 Artiste Danois à Paris, Rome & Copenhague*, Fondation Custodia / Collection Frits Lugt, Paris 2016, no. 117

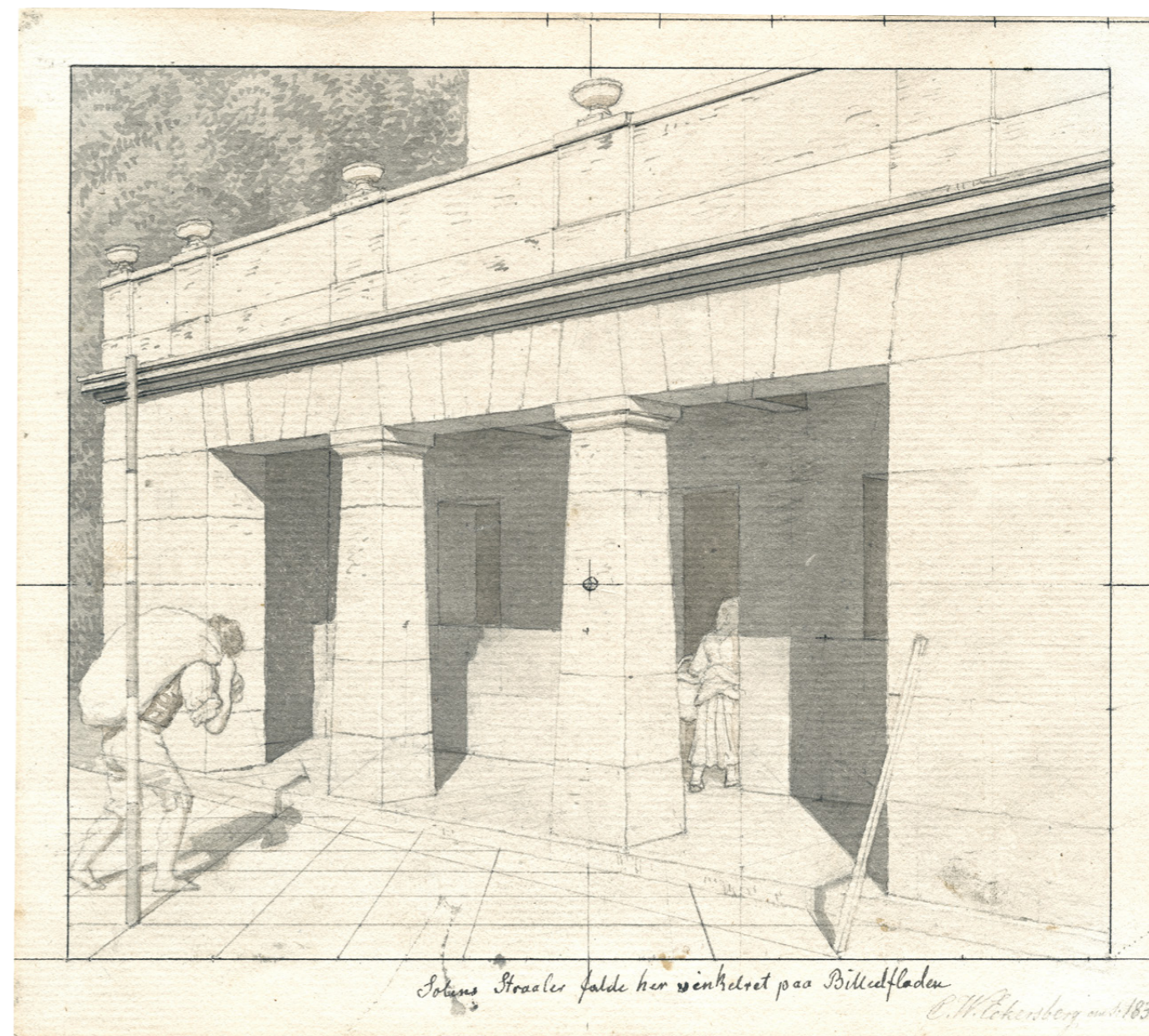
The subject of the present drawing is inspired by the Hercules Pavilion (1773) in the Royal Gardens at Rosenborg Castle, Copenhagen (Fig. 1). It is related to an etched plate published in 1841 as one of eleven plates in Eckersberg's important theoretical treatise on linear perspective, *Linearperspektiven, anvendt paa Malerkunsten* (Fig. 2). The motif was slightly altered in the final version of the print, but the direction of the solar rays is unchanged. An interesting detail is the measuring pole, a 'technical' element added to what is otherwise a naturalistic drawing. This was prompted by Eckersberg's interest in the working process – he used perspective lines for his compositions. However the pole was omitted in the etching. The study represents an ideal view of the subject, whose proportions have been adapted to a subtle, geometric system of construction. By employing linear perspective and the Golden Section, Eckersberg has acknowledged his belief in a utopian order expressed in numbers, an order in which rationality and beauty are coincidental.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 1: Caspar Frederik Harsdorff (1735-99), *The Hercules Pavilion*, Royal Gardens at Rosenborg Castle, Copenhagen, 1773



Fig. 2: Plate V, fig. 1 of Eckersberg's *Linearperspektiven, anvendt paa Malerkunsten*, 1841 (Linear Perspective Applied to the Art of Painting)



actual size

A drawing titled *Roman Villa with Three Figures at a Well* related to plate III, fig. 4 for the same project was sold by Le Claire Kunst in 2013.<sup>2</sup>

A further source of inspiration for Eckersberg's depiction of the neoclassical structure may have been his distant recollection of a Parisian *barrière* [toll-gate, customs house]. As Jesper Svenningsen has recently pointed out, 'the figures, their baggage and the measuring pole at the left all point to the building being a customs house'. Eckersberg is likely to have seen many similarly designed structures on his sojourn as a student in Paris in the years 1810-13.

We would like to thank Jesper Svenningsen and Jennifer Tonkovitch for their valuable assistance in preparing this catalogue entry.

<sup>1</sup> For a full analysis of Eckersberg's artistic concept, see Erik Fischer, 'Exkurs – Zwei Analysen der Arbeitsmethode Eckersbergs', in *Von Abildgaard bis Marstrand*, exhib. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich 1985, pp. 15–25.

<sup>2</sup> Morgan Library, New York (inv. Thaw collection 2017.74). See *Drawn to Greatness: Master Drawings from the Thaw Collection*, exhib. cat., Morgan Library, New York 2017-18, no. 111, repr.

## CHRISTOFFER WILHELM ECKERSBERG

1783 BLÅKRUG – COPENHAGEN 1853

*Det lykkelige møde; Parti fra Nyhavn (A Happy Meeting at Nyhavn); 1847*

Pen and black ink with gray wash.

Signed lower right: *Eckersberg*.

245 x 170 mm

PROVENANCE: Eckersberg's estate sale, Copenhagen 1854, no. 55 – Private collection, Denmark – Private collection, Germany

EXHIBITION: Markus Bertsch, Hubertus Gaßner und Neela Struck, *Eckersberg Faszination Wirklichkeit. Das Goldene Zeitalter der dänischen Malerei*, Kunsthalle, Hamburg 2016 – Ger Luijten, *C. W. Eckersberg 1783 – 1853 Artiste Danois à Paris, Rome & Copenhague*, Fondation Custodia / Collection Frits Lugt, Paris 2016

Two young men and a woman passing each other in Nyhavn along the amusing waterfront in central Copenhagen; Charlottenborg in the background. The men seem a little drunk. They try to get in touch with the young woman who ignores them. Our drawing relates to a painting which is dated 1847 (Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> According to Eckersberg's diary this painting was executed from 16 October to 23 December 1847: "Was working on and almost done with a small painting of a drunken sailor, moonlight, with part of Charlottenborg in the background"<sup>2</sup>. There are later drawings known which relate to our sheet at Aarhus Kunstmuseum and in a private collection<sup>3</sup>, each with some differences, and an *Ideal view of Charlottenborg and the house of the Gardener in Botanic Garden seen from the northern side of Nyhavn* (Fig. 2). The latter was once owned by Vilhelm Hammershøi which inspired him for his paintings of the *Asiatic Company* and which documents a relationship between the two artists.<sup>4</sup>

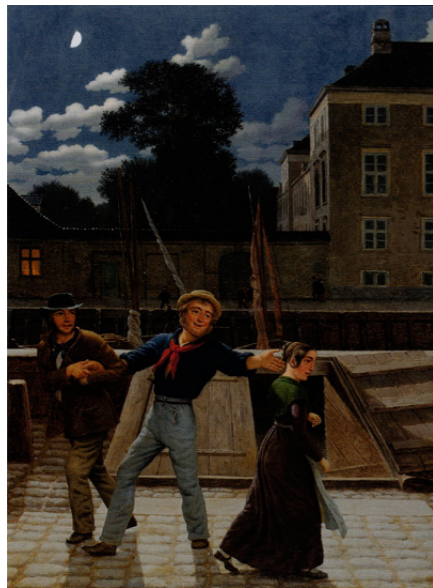


Fig. 1: *Det lykkelige møde*, oil on canvas, 63,0 x 47,5 cm. EH 601. Private collection



Fig. 2: *Ideal View of Charlottenborg and the House of the Gardener in Botanic Garden Seen from the Northern Side of Nyhavn*, 1845



actual size

<sup>1</sup> Private collection. Oil on canvas, 63,0 x 47,5 cm. See Peter Michael Hornung and Kaspar Monrad, *C. W. Eckersberg – dansk malerkunsts fader*, Copenhagen 2005, p. 366, and Emil Hannover, *Maleren C. W. Eckersberg*, Copenhagen 1898, no. 601.

<sup>2</sup> Villads Villadsen, *C. W. Eckersbergs dagbøger*, vol. 2, Copenhagen 2008, pp. 1114-1115, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> Erik Fischer, *Tegninger af C. W. Eckersberg*, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen 1983, p. 203, fig. 140.3 under no. 140.

<sup>4</sup> Poul Vad, *Vilhelm Hammershøi and Danish Art at the Turn of the Century*, New Haven and London, 1992, p. 242-246.

MARTINUS RØRBYE

1803 DRAMMEN - COPENHAGEN 1848

*Grenadier of Prins Christian Frederick Regiment, 1830*

Watercolor, pen and Indian ink over traces of pencil. Signed and dated lower right:

*Rørby 1830*. Numbered verso: 8.

240 x 140 mm

PROVENANCE: Danish private collection – Jean-François Heim, Paris (2002) - Private collection, Hamburg

Martinus Rørbye ranks as a leading representative of the Danish Golden Age, an era which marked the apex of Danish painting and flourished at the same time as German Romanticism. A significant cross-fertilization of ideas occurred between the Copenhagen Academy and the two key centres of Romantic thought in Germany, namely the Hamburg and Dresden Academies. Rørbye entered the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen in 1819, studying under Christian August Lorentzen. In 1825 he joined the class of Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg and became his private pupil. He was known as an inveterate traveller, exploring Norway, touring extensively in Germany, France and Italy and travelling as far east as Greece and Turkey. He finally returned to Copenhagen in 1841.<sup>1</sup>

According to the late Kasper Monrad, Rørbye's watercolour is very probably a study for the two paintings, *Arrestbygningen ved råd- og domhuset* (The Prison in Copenhagen), 1831 (Fig. 1)<sup>2</sup> and *View from the Citadel Ramparts*, by *Moonlight* (Fig. 2).<sup>3</sup> Two pages from a sketchbook depicting studies of soldiers of different ranks are also related to the paintings.<sup>4</sup>



Fig. 1: *Arrestbygningen ved råd- og domhuset* (The Prison of Copenhagen), oil on canvas, 47,5 x 53,0 cm; 1831. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (inv. KMS206)



Fig. 2: *View from Kastellet Ramparts by Moonlight*, oil on canvas, 29,0 x 24,3 cm; 1835. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Eugene V. Thaw collection, New York (inv. 2007.164.7)

<sup>1</sup> On Martinus Rørbye, see Kasper Monrad, *Danish Painting, The Golden Age*, exhib. cat., The National Gallery, London 1984, p.179 – *Im Lichte Caspar David Friedrichs. Frühe Freilichtmalerei in Dänemark und Norddeutschland*, exhib. cat., Hamburger Kunsthalle 2000, p. 49 – Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, exhib. cat., op. cit., Kiel 2005, pp. 266-7.

<sup>2</sup> 1831, oil on canvas, 47.5 x 63.0 cm. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (inv. KMS206). See *Martinus Rørbye – Det nære og det fjerne*, exhib. cat., Nivaagaards Malerisamling and Øregaard museum, 7 September 2014-18 January 2015, p. 27, fig. 19.

<sup>3</sup> 1835, oil on canvas, 29.0 x 24.3 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Eugene V. Thaw collection, New York (inv. 2007.164.7). See *Danish Paintings of the Golden Age*, exhib. cat., Artemis Group, London 1999, no. 3, repr.

<sup>4</sup> Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (inv. KKS14612/34 and inv. KKS14612/32). See Kasper Monrad, *Hverdagsbilleder*, Copenhagen 1989, p. 126.



actual size

## JOHAN THOMAS LUNDBYE

1818 KALUNDBORG – BEDSTED 1848

*Amaryllis*, 1842

Watercolour, pen and black ink. Signed and dated lower right *Lundbye 1842*. Inscribed and dated in pen and black ink *Amaryllis af 22 Marts 1842*.

190 x 150 mm

PROVENANCE: Private collection, Copenhagen – Thence by descent

Johan Thomas Lundbye was one of the youngest artists of the last generation of the Danish Golden Age painters. He began his training at the Danish Royal Academy of Fine Art in Copenhagen in 1835, finishing in 1842. A pupil of Johan Ludvig Lund and the animal painter Christian Holm, in his eventual decision to pursue landscape painting Lundbye was strongly influenced by his long exposure to the work of Christen Kobke, a fellow resident of Kastellet (the citadel) in Copenhagen, where Lundbye lived with his family.

In his paintings Lundbye pays homage to the natural beauty of the Danish landscape, to its expansive open spaces set beneath vast, cloud-filled skies. His subjective, emotional approach to the natural world, with its references to the past, recalls Romantic painting. But his work also reveals an appreciation of nature's smallest components, as the present meticulously executed *Study of an Amaryllis* demonstrates. Like his friend, the landscapist P. C. Skovgaard (1817–1875), he developed a profound interest in botany.<sup>1</sup> He executed several studies of flowers between 1839 and 1842.<sup>2</sup> A comparable *Study of an Amaryllis* dated 1840 is held in the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen (Fig. 1).<sup>3</sup>

In his monograph on Lundbye, Karl Madsen cites the following anecdote: *It is said that Lundbye once asked a little boy if he agreed that the flowers they had seen on their way were wonderful. The boy gave an honest answer and said that he couldn't see what was so wonderful. So Lundbye took one of them and drew it, and then the boy saw that it was beautiful*.<sup>4</sup>



Fig. 1: *Study of an Amaryllis*, watercolour, pen and black ink, dated 24. April 1840, 190 x 150 mm. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen [inv. KKS10417]



actual size

<sup>1</sup> *Von Abildgaard Bis Marstrand – Meisterzeichnungen Der Kopenhagener Schule Aus Dem Besitz Der Königlichen Kupferstichsammlung Kopenhagen*, exhib., cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich 1985, p. 73, under no. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *Tegninger & Huletanker – Johan Thomas Lundbye 1818 – 1848*, exhib. cat., Den Hirschsprungske Samling, Copenhagen 1998-9, p. 192, no. 126 and pp. 201-2, nos. 135 and 137.

<sup>3</sup> Watercolour, pen and black ink, dated 24. April 1840, 190 x 150 mm. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen [inv. KKS10417].

<sup>4</sup> Karl Madsen, *Johan Thomas Lundbye. 1818 -1848*, Udgivet af Kunstforeningen, Copenhagen 1949, p. 56 (first pub. 1895).



## MARTINUS RØRBYE

1803 DRAMMEN – COPENHAGEN 1848

*Summer's Day at Kastelsvolden – The Artist's Sister Nathalie,  
Seated on the Entrance Steps, 1827*

Pen and black ink, grey and brown wash. Monogrammed and dated on the verso:  
M.R. ten 5te Juni 1827. Bearing a number 52 in pencil on the verso.  
150 x 240 mm

PROVENANCE: Danish private collection – Private collection, Hamburg

Martinus Rørbye ranks as a leading representative of the Danish Golden Age, an era which marked the apex of Danish painting and flourished at the same time as German Romanticism. A significant cross-fertilization of ideas occurred between the Copenhagen Academy and the two key centres of Romantic thought in Germany, namely the Hamburg and Dresden Academies. Rørbye entered the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art in Copenhagen in 1819 to study under Christian August Lorentzen. In 1825, he joined the class of Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg and became his private pupil. He was known as an inveterate traveller, exploring Norway, touring extensively in Germany, France and Italy and travelling as far east as Greece and Turkey. He finally returned to Copenhagen in 1841.<sup>1</sup>

Rørbye's sister Nathalie owned a country house named Kastelsvolden on the ramparts of Kastellet [the citadel], a historic fortification in Copenhagen. Rørbye often stayed here, producing a large body of drawings and oil sketches. The British Museum owns a sheet dated *ten 12ten July 1827*<sup>2</sup> depicting the same subject as the present drawing but viewed from a different direction. Both sheets are from the same sketchbook. A comparable sheet also depicting Kastelsvolden and dated *Juli 1828* is now in a private collection (Fig. 1).<sup>3</sup>



Fig. 1: *Kastelsvolden*, pen and black ink,  
grey and brown wash,  
182 x 237 mm, dated *Juli 1828*.  
Private collection, Denmark



<sup>1</sup> On Martinus Rørbye, see Kasper Monrad, *Danish Painting, The Golden Age*, exhib. cat., The National Gallery, London 1984, p.179 – *Im Lichte Caspar David Friedrichs. Frühe Freilichtmalerei in Dänemark und Norddeutschland*, exhib. cat., Hamburger Kunsthalle 2000, p. 49 – Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, exhib. cat., Kunsthalle Kiel 2005, pp. 266-7.

<sup>2</sup> Pen and black ink, grey and brown wash, 150 x 240 mm, signed and dated *Martinus Rørbye ten 12ten July 1827*. The British Museum, London (inv. 1987.1003.7). See *Handzeichnungen und Aquarelle 1500 – 1900*, Thomas le Claire Kunsthandel, catalogue IV, Hamburg 1987, p. 116, no. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Pen and black ink, grey and brown wash, 182 x 237 mm, dated *Juli 1828*. See Dyveke Helsted et al., *Martinus Rørbye 1803 - 1848*, exhib. cat., Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen 1981, p. 43, no. 17, repr.

## CHRISTOFFER WILHELM ECKERSBERG

1783 BLÅKRUG – COPENHAGEN 1853

*View from the Battery towards the City (Udsigt fra Batteriet imod byen)*

Pen and black ink, pencil and grey wash on paper.

Signed and dated: *Eckersberg fec. 1836* and inscribed on the back: *Eckersberg 7 Sept. 1836*.

185 x 315 mm

PROVENANCE: The artist's estate sale, Copenhagen, January 1854, lot 375; there described "a view from *Trekroner*. Indian ink; very elaborate", Copenhagen – Private Collection, Denmark

LITERATURE: *C. W. Eckersbergs dagbøger 1810-1837*, vol. 1, Copenhagen 2009, p. 703 – Anja Dauschek, Regine Gerhardt, Vanessa Hirsch, *Melbye – Maler des Meeres*, exhib. cat., Historische Museen Hamburg, Altonaer Museum, Hamburg 2017-18, pp. 65 and 96, repr.

EXHIBITIONS: Anja Dauschek, Regina Gerhardt and Vanessa Hirsch, *Melbye – Maler des Meeres*, exhib. cat., 20. September 2017 until 4. February 2018, Altonaer Museum, Hamburg, p. 65, repr.

Eckersberg wrote in his diary on 7 September 1836: "Went to the battery at 9 o'clock to see the Russian ships, but the wind was not good for sailing. Went ashore with Normann and his wife at 11 o'clock and on board again with them at 1 o'clock, it became calm. – Drew a view from the battery towards the city".<sup>1</sup> Most probably the present drawing had been executed on that day. It relates to a small but very prominent painting also from 1836 depicting a *View from the Battery of Trekroner with Copenhagen in the Distance* [fig. 1].<sup>2</sup>

Trekroner is a fortress on a small island at the entrance to Copenhagen Harbour. When Eckersberg did the painting he was standing in a different place on Trekroner than when he did the present drawing. Consequently the foreground is different, but the view of Copenhagen is almost identical.



Fig. 1: *View from the Battery of Trekroner with Copenhagen in the Distance*, 1836, oil on canvas, 21,5 x 30,5 cm. Den Hirschsprungske Samling, Copenhagen



<sup>1</sup> *C. W. Eckersbergs dagbøger 1810-1837*, vol. 1, Copenhagen 2009, p. 703.

<sup>2</sup> Den Hirschsprungske Samling, Copenhagen. Peter Michael Hornung and Kasper Monrad, *C. W. Eckersberg – dansk malerkunsts fader*, Copenhagen 2005, p. 247, repr.



## BERTEL THORVALDSEN

1770 – COPENHAGEN – 1844

*Chiron Teaching Achilles to Shoot with the Bow, after 1810*

Black crayon heightened with white on brownish paper. Signed: A [Alberto] Thorvaldsen Fecit.  
On the original mount.  
370 x 430 mm

PROVENANCE: Private collection, Germany (until 1996) – Private collection, North Germany

LITERATURE: Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, exhib. cat., Kunsthalle Kiel 2005, p. 34, repr.

EXHIBITION: Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, Kunsthalle Kiel 2005, p. 34, repr.

Bertel Thorvaldsen was widely considered the greatest sculptor in Europe after the death of Antonio Canova. He was admitted to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen at the early age of eleven in recognition of his unusual talent for drawing. In 1793 he won the major gold medal and the Academy's travelling scholarship which enabled him to leave for Italy. He arrived in Rome on 8 March 1797 and henceforth regarded the day of his arrival as his 'Roman birthday', celebrating it throughout his life. He remained in Rome until 1838, returning only briefly to Denmark in 1819-20. During his early years in Rome, Thorvaldsen established a close friendship with the artists Asmus Jacob Carstens and Joseph Anton Koch, with whom he shared lodgings in via Sistina 141 from 1800 to 1803. He emerged as one of the greatest sculptors of the period, an outstanding representative of the neoclassical style and a central figure within the artistic community in Rome. The subjects of his sculptures were mostly taken from Greek mythology. He also produced a large body of portrait sculpture, initially medallions and increasingly, portrait busts. After his return to Denmark in 1838 he donated his own works and his collections to his native city, laying the foundations for the future Thorvaldsen Museum. His body was laid to rest in the courtyard of the Museum on its completion in 1848.

Thorvaldsen's earliest drawings of *Chiron Teaching Achilles to Shoot with the Bow* clearly date before 1810 since they bear the signature *B. Thorvaldsen*. In 1810, he altered his signature to *A. [Alberto] Thorvaldsen*<sup>1</sup> – the signature that the present drawing carries. A fairly large group of finished drawings and sketches on the theme are held in the Thorvaldsen Museum in Copenhagen. The last of these drawings served as the model for an engraving by Johannes Riepenhausen (1788-1860) (Fig. 1) executed in 1831. Thorvaldsen was hailed as the 'patriarch of the bas-relief' during his lifetime. In the 1820s, he worked on a number of classically themed reliefs (Fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> Although he may have planned to execute a relief depicting the present motif, the project remained unrealised.<sup>3</sup> Thorvaldsen's biographer J. M. Thiele notes that although Thorvaldsen's interest in themes related to Chiron's education of Achilles was reflected in a number of drawings from 1797 onwards, it became noticeably stronger in 1804.<sup>4</sup>

Thorvaldsen showed little respect for his own drawings – he would often draw on the verso of a sheet or simply throw it away, treating unwanted modelling clay in the same way. Nevertheless, a sheet of pencil studies dating from 1804-5 showing a small, rapidly sketched first idea for the present composition has survived [Fig. 3]. Another important exception is the present, meticulously executed and highly finished drawing. It belongs to a group of large-format sheets that Thorvaldsen set aside as elegantly mounted gifts for close friends and patrons.

We are grateful to Eva Henschen from the Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen, for her valuable assistance in cataloguing this drawing.





Fig. 1: Johannes Riepenhausen (1788-1860), *Chiron Teaching Achilles to Shoot with the Bow*, (1831), etching after Thorvaldsen, 214 x 239 mm. Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen (inv. E89)



Fig. 2: *Cupid Received by Anacreon*, white marble, 52.5 x 68.0 cm. Commissioned in 1823 by Count Franz Erwein von Schönborn-Wiesentheid and executed in 1824. Formerly Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin, restituted in 2003. Swiss private collection. The relief was sold at Sotheby's London on 4 July 2018, auction sale *Treasures*, lot 26, repr.



Fig. 3: *Chiron Teaching Achilles to Shoot with the Bow - Chiron Teaching Achilles to Play the Lyre - Achilles and Penthesilea - Caricature Portrait of Martin von Rohden (?) - Caricature Portrait of Napoleon*, 1804-5, pencil, 536 x 425 mm (sheet). Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen (inv. C536v)

<sup>1</sup> Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen (for a selection, see inv. C780, C513r and C563.72v).

<sup>2</sup> Jørgen Birkedal Hartmann, *Antike Motive bei Thorvaldsen - Studien Zur Antikenrezeption des Klassizismus*, Tübingen 1979, p. 59, pl. XIV, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Helmuth Sichtermann, 'Zur Achill und Chiron-Gruppe', in *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts*, 64/1957, pp. 98-110. - Wolfram Martini, 'Lehrer und Schüler', in *Opus Nobile, Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Ulf Jantzen*, Wiesbaden, 1969, pp. 105-8.

<sup>4</sup> J. M. Thiele, *Thorvaldsen's Leben nach den eigenhändigen Aufzeichnungen, nachgelassenen Papieren und dem Briefwechsel des Künstlers*, 1852-6.

<sup>5</sup> 1804-5, pencil on light brown paper, 536 x 425 mm. Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen (inv. C524v).

## CHRISTOFFER WILHELM ECKERSBERG

1783 BLÅKRUG – COPENHAGEN 1853

*Viewing the Solar Eclipse of 28th July 1851*

Pen and black ink, brown wash over pencil on white paper.

Dated and inscribed by the artist 28 Juli 1851. *Solformørkelse.*

Bearing a number 535 in pencil lower right.

250 x 160 mm

PROVENANCE: Eckersberg's Third Estate Sale, Copenhagen, 3 January 1855, 'Drawings dated 1848-51', lot 533 (described as 'en Gadescene. Pen') – Acquired at the above sale by 'Eilertsen' (almost certainly the landscape painter Eiler Rasmussen Eilersen, 1827-1912) – Private collection, Germany

LITERATURE: Peter Michael Hornung and Kaspar Monrad, *C. W. Eckersberg – dansk malerkunsts fader*, Copenhagen 2005, p. 388, repr. – Dirk Luckow and Dörte Zbikowski, *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, ehhib. cat., Kunsthalle Kiel 2005, p. 139 – Villads Villadsen (ed.), *C. W. Eckersbergs dagbøger*, vol. 2, Copenhagen 2008, p. 1215, note 9

EXHIBITION: *Die Kopenhagener Schule. Meisterwerke Dänischer und Deutscher Malerei von 1770 bis 1850*, Kunsthalle Kiel 2005, p. 139 – Markus Bertsch, Hubertus Gaßner and Neela Struck, *Eckersberg Faszination Wirklichkeit. Das Goldene Zeitalter der dänischen Malerei*, Kunsthalle Hamburg 2016, no. 86 – Ger Luijten, *C. W. Eckersberg 1783 – 1853 Artiste Danois à Paris, Rome & Copenhague*, Fondation Custodia / Collection Frits Lugt, Paris 2016, no. 119

A group of people are gathered to view the solar eclipse that could be seen in Copenhagen on the afternoon of 28 July 1851. On that day it was possible to see a total eclipse of the sun in several places in Denmark. The central track of the solar eclipse of 28 July 1851 ran across northern Canada, Greenland and Iceland, before traversing Continental Europe over southern Norway and Sweden and heading east-southeast across Poland and into the Ukraine.

To view the partial phases of the solar eclipse – before and after totality – viewing took place through a blackened glass. During the total phase, observers could view with the naked eye.

Eckersberg was very interested in astronomy and meteorology and carefully noted the different reactions and behaviour of adults and children on that particular day. In his diary entry for 28 July 1851 he describes the eclipse: *Around 3 pm the solar eclipse started, which was almost total at 4 pm, and terminated around 5 pm. There were a great many people on the square with their glasses to see this rare event.*<sup>1</sup>

We are grateful to Jesper Svenningsen for his help in preparing this catalogue entry.

<sup>1</sup> See Villads Villadsen (ed.), *C. W. Eckersbergs dagbøger*, op. cit., p. 1215.



actual size

## JOHAN THOMAS LUNDBYE

1818 KALUNDBORG – BEDSTED 1848

*Two Self-Portraits**A. In Profile, to the Left, 1837*

Pencil. Inscribed in pen and brown ink *Castellet den 4 Februar (18)37* and signed in pencil *Th. Lundbye* lower right.

176 x 138 mm

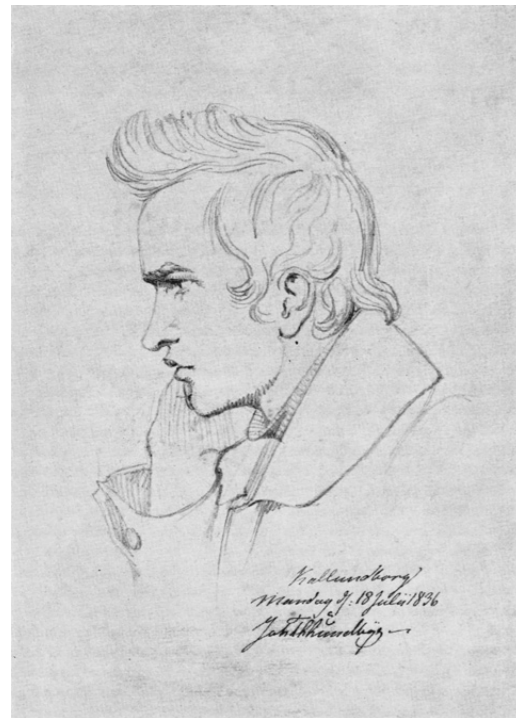
PROVENANCE: T. Vincent Nissen, Copenhagen – Private collection, Copenhagen – Thence by descent – Private collection, Germany

*B. Frontal View, Eyes Downcast, 1839*

Pen and grey ink over pencil. Inscribed in pen and black ink on the verso *EGET PORTRAET FRAN 1839 AF HAM SELF GENGIVET* (lit.: self-portrait from 1839 shown of himself). 215 x 170 mm

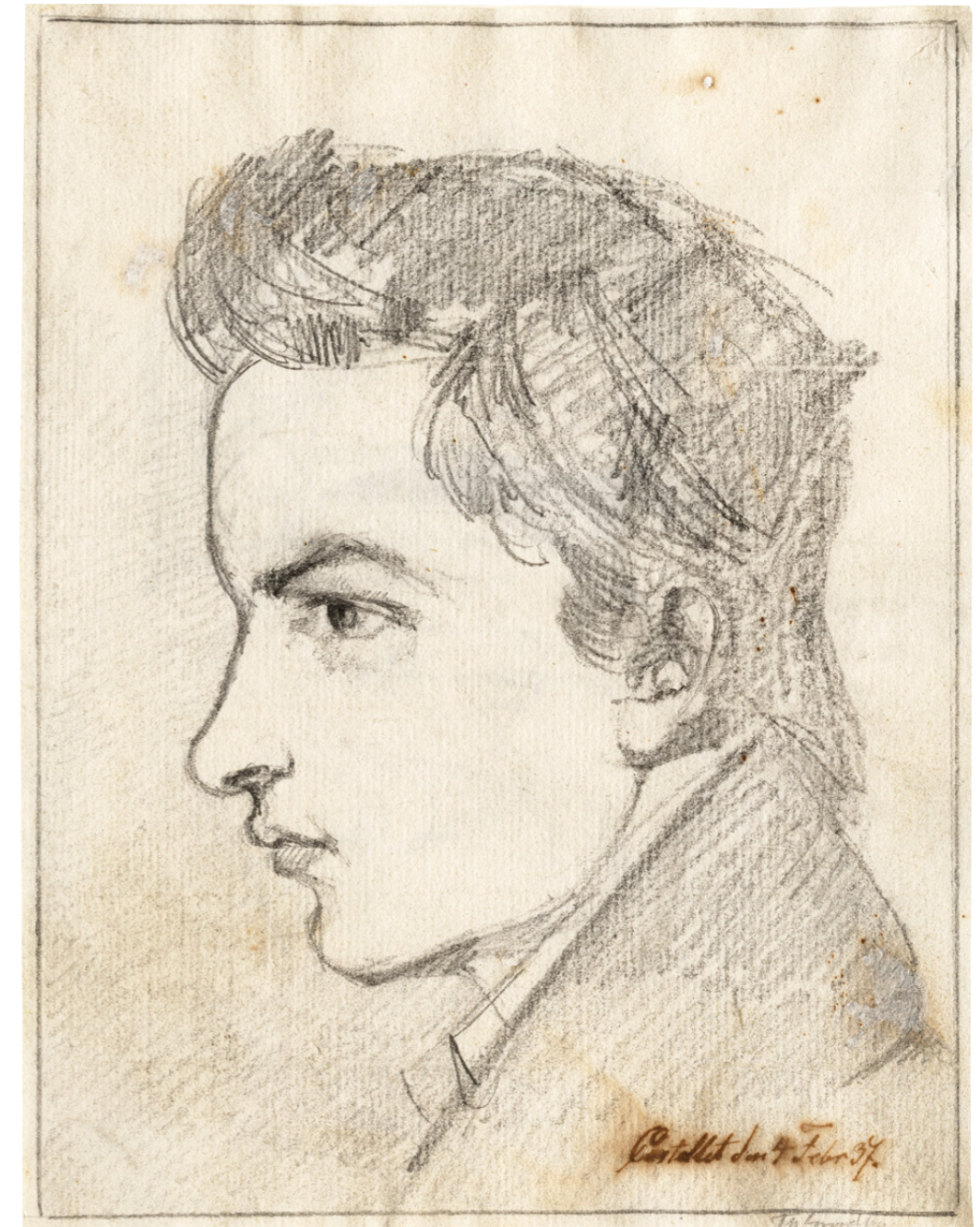
PROVENANCE: Private collection, Copenhagen – Thence by descent – Private collection, Germany

Johan Thomas Lundbye is considered the leading exponent of Danish romantic nationalism in landscape painting in the 1840s. He entered the drawing school of Johan Ludvig Lund (1777–1867) at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art in Copenhagen in 1835. In his youth, Lund had been a close friend of Caspar David Friedrich and had lasting contacts to the Nazarenes, a group of German romantic painters in Rome. His artistic approach was diametrically opposed to the neoclassical realism of his colleague and rival at the Academy, C. W. Eckersberg (1783–1853). Lundbye did not come into direct contact with Eckersberg's teachings at the Academy and it is therefore no surprise that his art would reflect the romantic idealism of Lund.



Lundbye executed the present two self-portraits at the age of nineteen and twenty-one while an Academy student. His earliest-known self-portrait dates from 18 July 1836 (Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup>

Fig. 1: *Self-Portrait*, pencil, inscribed, dated and signed Kallundborg, Mandag af: 18 July 1836, JohThLundbye, 180 x 130 mm. Private collection, Denmark



actual size

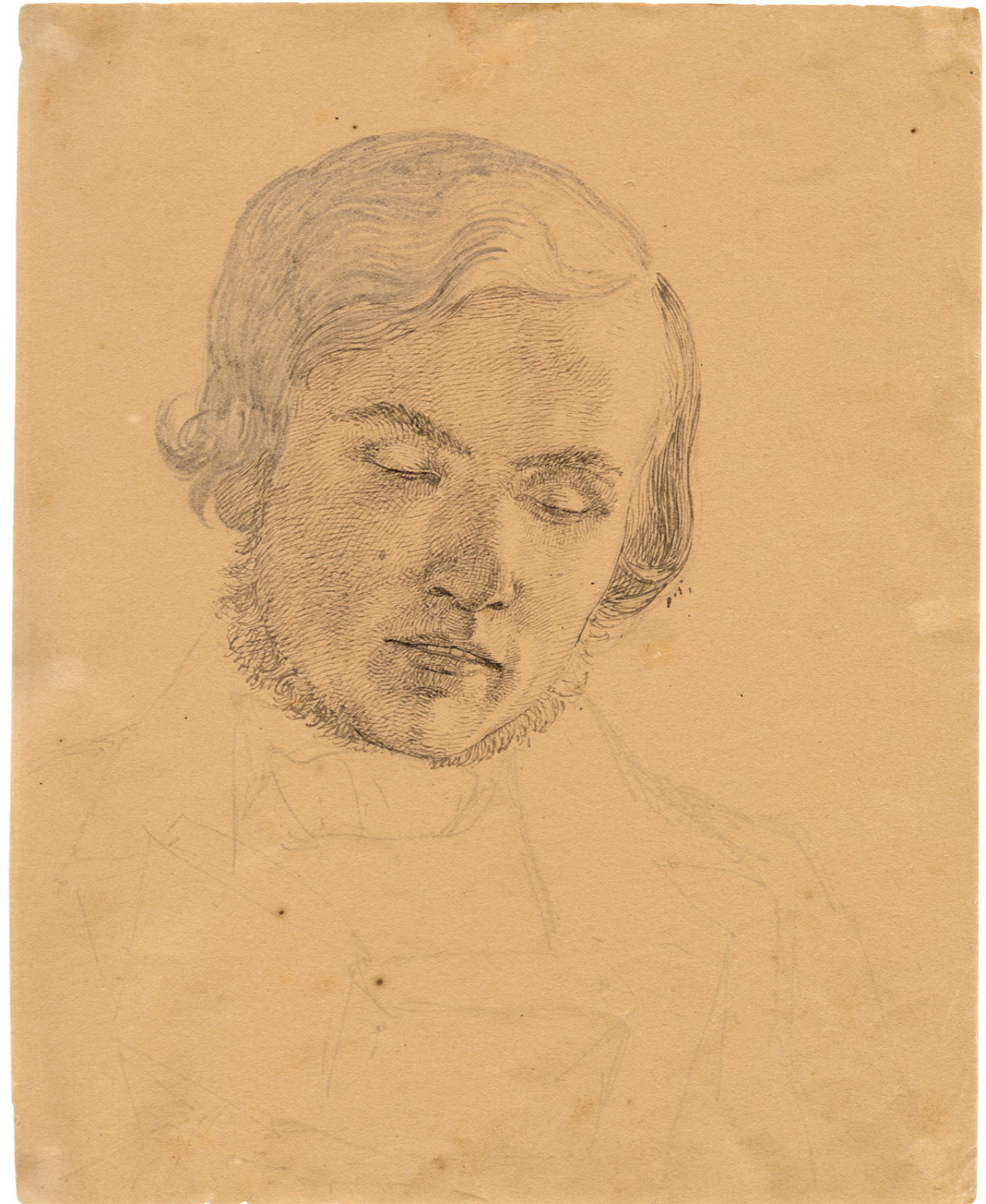
<sup>1</sup> *Self-Portrait*, pencil, signed and dated Kallundborg, Mandag af: 18 July 1836, JohThLundbye, 180 x 130 mm. Private collection, Denmark.

His output of self-portrait drawings is large. Over a period of approximately thirteen years he regularly studied his own physiognomy from different angles and with different facial expressions, registering mood swings and bouts of despondency over unrealised ambitions. These self-portraits form a unique, intimate biography – Lundbye felt a strong need to communicate his inner emotional responses and the mental anguish he experienced.<sup>2</sup> As a youth, his face reflects watchful optimism; later, his expression is pensive and has a hint of inner doubt; by the age of twenty-seven, wearied by his struggles, his features mirror anxiety, melancholy and even resignation.<sup>3</sup>

The second of the two self-portraits was executed in 1839 and is a frontal-view portrait. In a self-portrait of the same year Lundbye also shows himself in frontal view, but with his parting on the right (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: *Self-Portrait*, pen and black ink, inscribed, dated and signed in pen and black ink *Vedby-Gaard den 23 Aug 1839|JohThLundbye*; bearing a monogram in pencil at the lower centre *J:Th:L* (in runic script), 211 x 170 mm. Statens Museum for Konst, Kobberstiksamling, Copenhagen



actual size

<sup>2</sup> Hans Edvard Noorredård-Nielsen, 'The Golden Age in Denmark – Artists' in *The Golden Age of Danish Art : Drawings from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Copenhagen*, exhib. cat., The Frick Collection, New York 1995, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Jens Peter Munk, *Tegninger & Huletanker – Johan Thomas Lundbye 1818 - 1848*, exhib. cat., Den Hirschsprungske Samling, Copenhagen 1998-9, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Pen and black ink, inscribed, dated and signed in pen and black ink *Vedby-Gaard den 23 Aug 1839|JohThLundbye*; bearing a monogram in pencil at the lower centre *J:Th:L* (in runic script, probably reflecting Lundbye's preoccupation with the historic past), 211 x 170 mm. Statens Museum for Konst, Kobberstiksamling, Copenhagen (inv. Td713.2a r). – See Munk, op. cit., 1998-9, p. 125, no. 3, repr.





VILHELM HAMMERSHØI

1864 - COPENHAGEN - 1916

*A Group of Trees - Landscape on the 'Kongevejen' near Gentofte*

Black chalk on laid paper; executed in 1892.  
210 x 285 mm

PROVENANCE: Karl Madsen (1855-1938), Copenhagen (1918) – Madsen's estate sale, Winkel & Magnussen, Copenhagen, 28 September 1938, sale 237, lot 112, repr. p. 37 – Helge Bartholdy Møller (1875-1952), Copenhagen – Thence by descent

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