



THOMAS FEARNLEY

(Fredrikshald, 1802 - Munich, 1842)

Studies of rocks and thistles

signed and dated lower left: 29 Juny 1835 TF

oil on paper

163 x 183 mm

Provenance:

Hofjägermeister Thomas Fearnley (only son of the artist) 1841-1927

Shipowner Thomas Fearnley (grandson of the artist), 1880 –1961

Private collection, Oslo, 1960's - 2017

During the summer of 1835, on his way back from Rome, Fearnley travelled for three months in the Swiss Alps in order to sketch the Grindelwald glaciers. He also made studies in the Alpine valleys around Brunnen, Meiringen, Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen and Brienz. According to Sigurd Willoch, his first biographer, "his meeting with the mountain world of the Alps seemed to steel him, all the masculine force in him asserts itself. The studies from this summer are full of force, and the colouring is deeper than in the Italian sketches".

Taken from an album assembled by the artist's grandson, this oil sketch was executed during Fearnley's stay in Brunnen, a town situated on the shores of the Vierwaldstättersee (Lake Lucerne). Here Fearnley spent over a week studying the dramatic views of the Urnersee to the eastern side of the lake, and across to the Bürgenstock and Gotthard Massif. Many of the pencil studies that he made at this time are in the National Gallery of Norway's collection. This delicate plant sketch, made possibly on the last day of his stay, shows a more intimate look at the nature of this area. Using oils, he has focused on a cluster of rocks and plants on the lake's shore in exquisite detail.