



GIOVANNI BATTISTA CIPRIANI

(Florence, 1727 - Hammersmith, 1785)

Design for an Allegory of the Earth: Cybele accompanied by the Four Seasons

pen and black ink with grey wash

105 x 635 mm

Provenance:

The artist's estate sale, Christie's, London: 2 April 1787 [Lot 37]

This drawing is a preparatory design for a panel painted by Cipriani in 1770-1 for the newly renovated library at Audley End House [Fig. 1]. The panel formed part of a six-part frieze which was installed by Robert Adam for Sir John Griffin Griffin. The allegorical design represents the Earth through all the four seasons. Cybele in her chariot is surrounded from left to right by: Spring, represented as Flora; Summer, represented as Ceres; Autumn, represented as Bacchus; and Winter represented as Saturn. Animals, satyrs, putti, and centaurs are interspersed between the Olympian protagonists. The five other panel designs for the library are allegorical depictions of: Religion; Fire; Water; the Arts, Sciences, and Learning; Day, Night, and Air.

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