

PIETRO DA CORTONA

(Cortona, 1596 - Rome, 1669)

Waterfalls in a hilly landscape

point of brush and brown ink and wash over traces of black chalk

216 x 289 mm

Provenance:

Kunstveilingen Mak van Waay B.V., Amsterdam: 10 June 1975, cat. 246, lot 67 (as attributed to Bartholomeus Breenbergh)

Sotheby's, New York: 14 January 1992, lot 18

with Baskett & Day Ltd, London

where acquired by the present owner in January 1992

Literature:

J.M. Merz, 'Landscape Drawings by Pietro da Cortona', *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 2004, Vol. 39 (2004), pp. 139-140, fig. 16

Landscape drawings only account for a small but intriguing portion of Pietro da Cortona's extensive graphic corpus and although he is better known for his innovations in the field of illusionistic fresco painting, a group of approximately 20 drawings attests to Cortona's experimentations with the drawn landscape and the refinement of his technique over the course of a long career. The present drawing is a relatively late example, dated by Jörg Martin Merz to around 1650, and it demonstrates the virtuosity of Cortona's later brush and wash drawings. The drawing depicts a mountainous landscape with a waterfall flanked by two hermitages. As first proposed by Merz, the drawing's arched outline and the existence of comparable, lunette-shaped designs suggest that this is a preparatory study for the right half an unidentified fresco lunette.

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