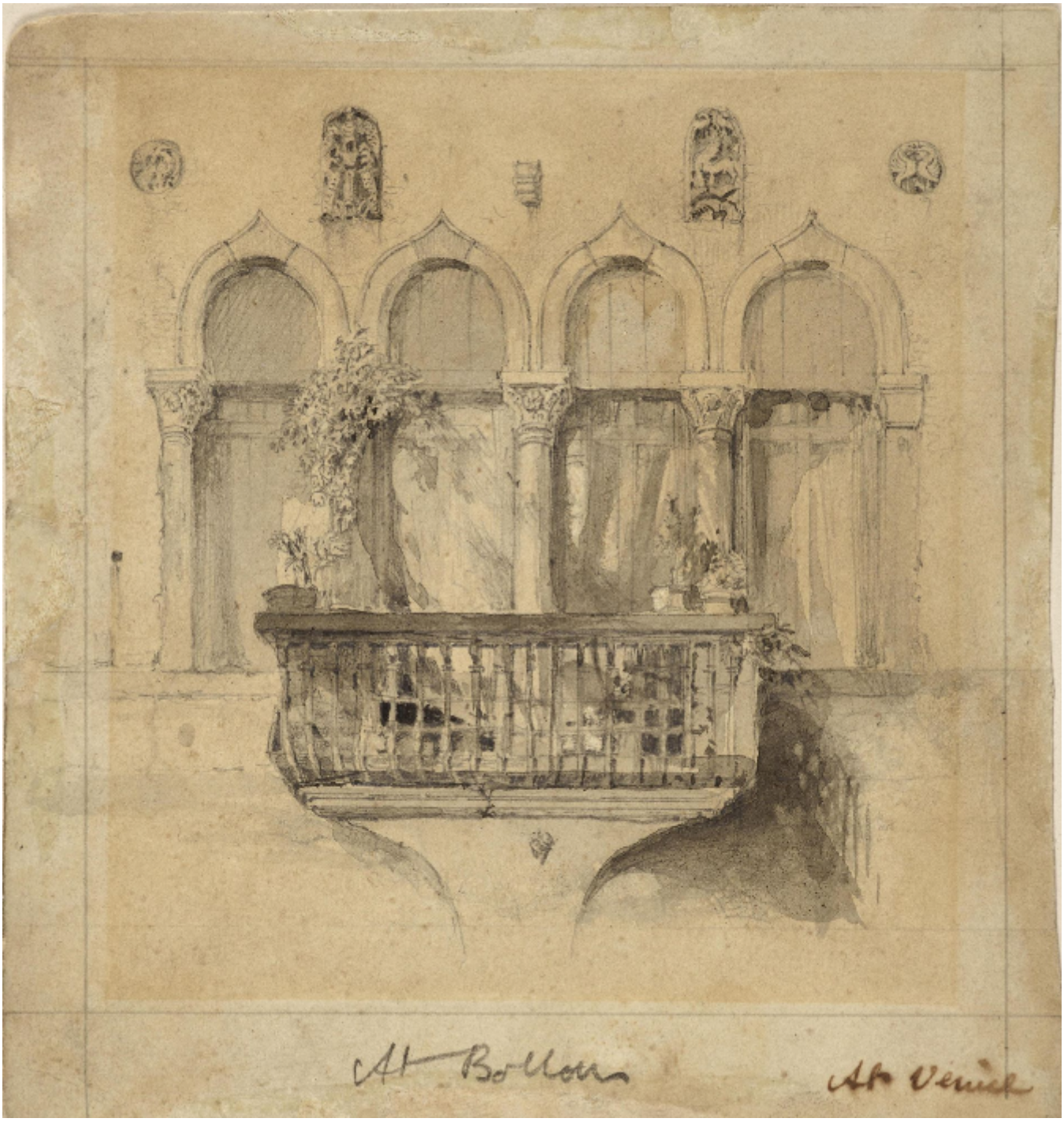
The Windows of the Second Order: Casa Falier, St. Apostoli, Venice

John Ruskin

Sold



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Description

John Ruskin (1819-1900)
The Windows of the Second Order: Casa Falier, St. Apostoli, Venice

Inscribed on border lower right: At Venice and indistinctly inscribed lower centre
Inscribed on part of old mount by Robert Cunliffe: 2/"Windows of the second order"/"Casa Falier"/original drawing by J Ruskin for the engraving/by Armytage Stones of Venice Vol 2 p.254 Sold to me by/Mr … Severn Sept. 1900/Robert Cunliffe/Exhibited at Coniston 1900
Grey washes and pencil
Sheet 12. 9 by 11.9 cm., 5 by 4 ½ in.

Provenance:
Bequest from the artist to Arthur (1842-1931) and Mary Severn (1846-1924);
Sold to Robert Ellis Cunliffe (1848-1902), September 1900;
Acquired by the present owner, November 2007

Exhibited:
Cumbria, Coniston Institute, Ruskin Memorial Exhibition, July to September 1900, no. 86;
London, Royal Society of Painters in Water-colours, Ruskin Exhibition, February 4 - March 2 1901, no. 398

Literature:
E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), The Works of John Ruskin, 1903-1912, vol. XXXVIII, p. 299, no, 1986;
Paul Walton, Master Drawings by John Ruskin, London, 2000, p. 172, fig. 68

Engraved:
By Armytage for The Stones of Venice, vol. II, 1853, p. 254, pl. XV

Ca' Falier was built in about 1105 and became the home of Marino Falier (1274-1355), who became Doge of Venice in 1354. He was executed the following year for attempting a coup against the ruling nobles. It is one of the oldest buildings in Venice and its façade shows the Byzantine influence. Ruskin studied the Palazzo during his extended visit to Venice between September 1851 and late June 1852. He was accompanied on this trip by his wife Effie and this, and their previous visit in 1849-50, mark the high points in their brief marriage. They took rooms in the Casa Wetzler, later the Gritti Palace Hotel and Effie thoroughly enjoyed the lively social scene, whilst Ruskin continued his work, studying and recording the architecture of Venice, which he first discussed in Seven Lamps of Architecture (published May 1849) and culminated in his three volume publication dedicated to the city, Stones of Venice (1851-53).

Ruskin makes frequent references to the Palazzo throughout Stones, remarking variously on its windows, facade, capitals and other architectural features and the present highly detailed drawing was the basis for the engraving, plate XV, in volume II. In the accompanying text Ruskin notes 'the balcony is, of course, modern, and the series of windows has been of greater extent, once terminated by a pilaster on the left hand, as well as on the right; but the terminal arches have been walled up. What remains, however, is enough, with its sculptured birds and dragons, to give the reader a very distinct idea of the second-order window in its perfect form'. (John Ruskin, op. cit., vol. II, p. 297).

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