Falla near Strongili, Corfu

Edward Lear



REF: 2600

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Description

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Edward Lear (1812-1888)
Falla near Strongili, Corfu

Inscribed lower left with the title in Greek and dated 4th May 1862 and numbered lower right: 49+2
Pen and brown ink over pencil on blue paper 21.5 by 44.5 cm., 8 ½ by 17 ½ in.

Provenance:
With Spink and Son, London;
John, Lord D'Ayton (1922-2003);
By descent until sold, Sotheby's, 3rd July 2003, lot 187;
Private Collection UK

Lear first visited Corfu in 1848, where he was astonished by the beauty of the island, its flora and fauna and especially the flowers that carpeted the island in spring. He wrote to his sister, Ann, 'I wish I could give you an idea of the beauty of this island, it really is a paradise. The splendour of olive groves, the blue of sky and ivory of church and chapel, the violet of mountain can hardly be imagined'. (Letter to Ann, 14th May 1848, quoted in, Edward Lear & The Ionian Islands, 2012, p. 47). He returned towards the end of 1855, in the company of his friend Franklin Lushington (1823-1901), who had been appointed Judge to the Supreme Court of Justice in the Ionian Islands and decided to settle on the island. Corfu remained Lear's base until the islands were ceded to Greece in 1863 and the majority of British residents left the island.
His diary entry for Sunday 4th May, the day that the present drawing was executed records, 'Particularly lovely, all day… the olives are wonderful, the interminable perspective of the silver light catching trunks contrasting with the deep shades on the green & fern below. Soon at Stavros [where a villager] showed us to the topos where [all the English] were wont to go & no lovelier view can be seen, - so much so that I rank it first of all the distant Corfu views, - as regards the seeing all & everything… I sat down to draw… 6 hours of it'. (Lear, Edward, 1812-1888. Diary: autograph manuscript, 1862., MS Eng 797.3, (5). Houghton Library, Harvard College Library).

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