

Study of Trees

Thomas Rowlandson



Description

Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827)
Study of Trees

Pen and grey ink and pencil
28.5 by 44 cm., 11 ¼ by 17 ¼ in.

Although best known as a caricaturist, Rowlandson also produced a number of pure landscape watercolours, which demonstrate a sophistication and elegance of handling, as well as a deep understanding of the natural world. The emphasis in the present drawing is clearly on the shape and form of the two majestic trees, rather than in the large house that they frame, which has only been very slightly sketched in. The vivacity of line and refined handling of light and shade, demonstrate the artist's extraordinary prowess as a draughtsman, as well as indicating the influence of Gainsborough on the younger artist. In 1788, Rowlandson produced a series of soft ground etchings of a number of Gainsborough's drawings.

This drawing has traditionally been identified as being a view of Knole, Kent, however, the sketch of a building between the trees, although slight, does not appear to depict Knole.