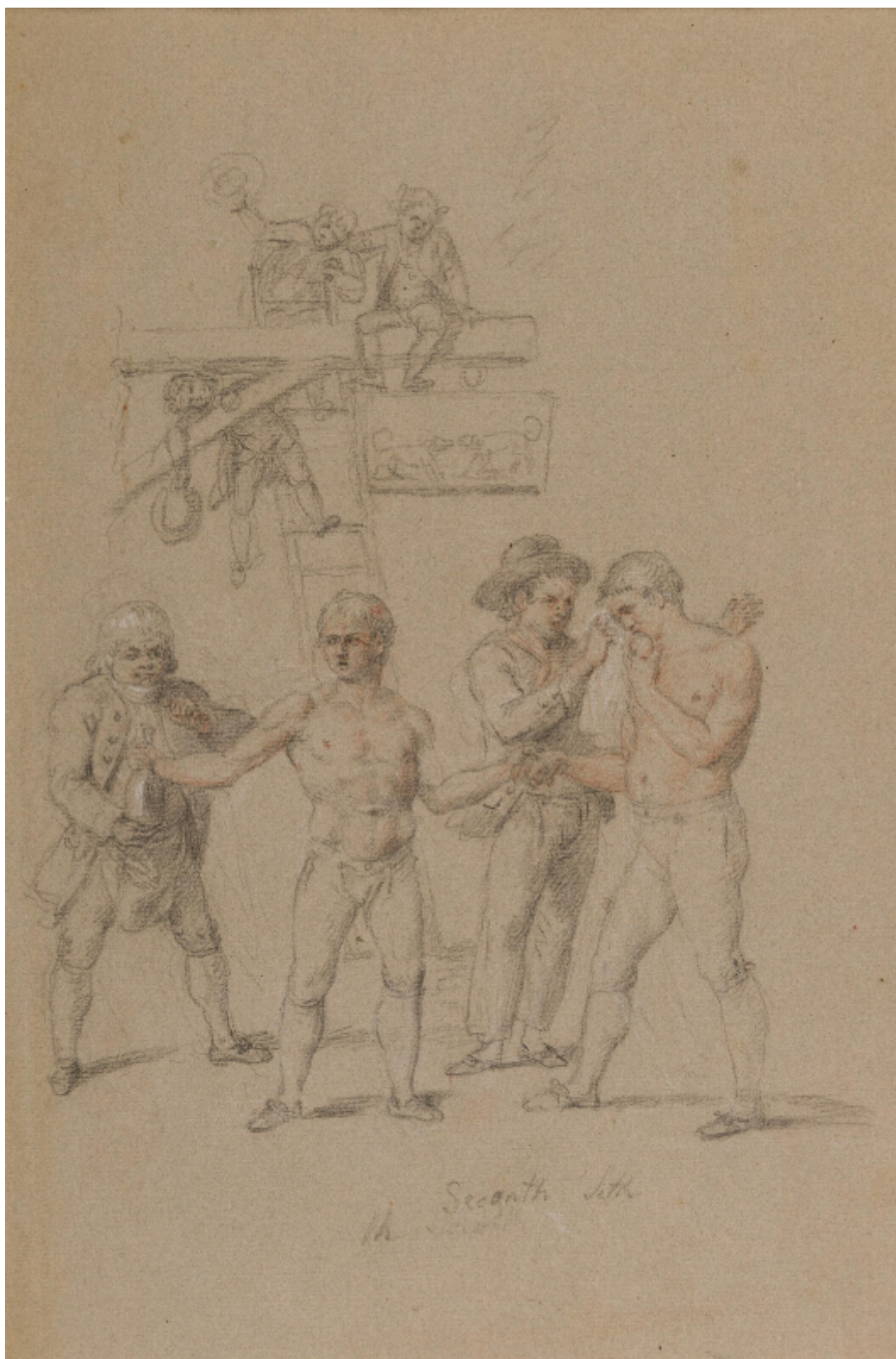


The Boxing Match

Johann Joseph Zoffany



Description

Johan Joseph Zoffany, R.A. (1733 -1810)
The Boxing Match

Inscribed lower centre: Th Seconth Seth [sic]
Black and red chalk, heightened with touches of white, on buff laid paper
38.5 by 25.5 cm., 15 ¼ by 10 in.

Provenance:

Major-General Claude Martin (1735-1800);
Benjamin Wolff (1790-1866) (L.420), by descent until sold 'The Wolff Collection' Sale, Bruun Rasmussen,
Copenhagen, 30 May 2018, part of lot 437

Exhibited:

London, Andrew Clayton-Payne, From London to Lucknow, A Re-Discovered Collection of Drawings by
Johan Zoffany (1733-1810), 2019, cat. no.20

Zoffany here depicts a pause in a boxing match, presumably drawn from life. The fighter on the right is having his injuries attended to while his opponent on the left takes a swig from a bottle. Behind a group of young boys eagerly watch the fight perched on a pub sign. Boxing had been a popular sport in Britain since the late seventeenth century.

This drawing forms part of a group of fifty-three works assembled by Zoffany in the late 1790s and sent to his friend Major-General Claude Martin (1735-1800). Zoffany had met Martin in India in the mid 1780s. On Martin's death his collection was sold and the drawings later came into the possession of the Danish lawyer Benjamin Wolff (1790-1866) who lived in Calcutta between 1817 and 1829. Wolff put together an important collection of European and Indian art which he housed at Engelholm Manor on southern Zealand, Denmark. The group remained with Martin's descendants until they were sold in 2018. Zoffany drawings are rare and fewer than fifty were recorded before the emergence of this group.