

Outer Harbour, Margate

John Rubens Smith

Sold



Description

John Rubens Smith (1775-1849)
The Outer Harbour, Margate

Signed lower centre: J.R. Smith Junr/1803
Watercolour over pencil
26.5 by 60.8 cm., 10 ½ by 23 ¾ in.

Provenance:
With Berry-Hill Galleries, New York

The rather precarious looking constructions on the edge of the harbour walls, with steps leading down to the sea, were the bathing rooms, where the fashionable residents and tourists would wait to be taken in the celebrated, four-wheeled, horse-drawn bathing machines that Smith has taken such evident delight in depicting. These 'carriages [were] covered with canvas, and having at one end of them an umbrella of the same materials; which is let down to the surface of the water, so that the bather descending from the machine by a few steps is concealed from the public view'. (W. C. Oulton, *The Travellers Guide, or English Itinerary*, London, 1805, p. 245.). The bathing rooms depicted here, were destroyed by a storm in 1808, although their popularity meant that they were quickly rebuilt.