

DAVID TUNICK, INC.

PRINTS & DRAWINGS

ALBRECHT DÜRER (1471-1528)

Landscape with a Large Cannon

Date: 1518
Medium: Etching on laid paper
Dimensions: Sheet: 216 x 318 mm. 8 1/2 x 12 1/2 in.
References: Bartsch 99; Meder 96 a (of b), before the rust;
Schoch, Mende, Scherbaum 85;
Art in Print, January-February 2016, *An Undiscovered State of Albrecht Dürer's Large Cannon*, by Maik Bindelwald, pp. 6-7, first state of three
Watermark: Small high crown, Briquet 4960, Meder 31 (the only watermark that Meder describes for the print as Meder a)
Provenance: Junius Spencer Morgan (Princeton/Paris, 1867-1932), Lugt 1536;
Private collection, U.S.A.; and
By descent
Impression: Extremely fine
Condition: Excellent, trimmed to and just within the platemark

Landscape with a Large Cannon is the last, largest, and most ambitious of the six etchings in Dürer's oeuvre. This impression is an exceedingly rare example before rust. Prior to the introduction of copperplates in Germany, etchings (the first produced very possibly in the 1490's) were printed from iron plates, which quickly rusted, forming intrusive gray and black spots.

A 2016 article in *Art in Print* (*Ibid.*) describes a new state, the third with posthumous polishing and changes made in about 1600 to the monogram and tree upper left. Our impression conforms to the article's first state, of which the author remarks, "Only a handful of good impressions without rust marks exist worldwide."

The group of five figures at the right were inspired by Turkish costume studies by Gentile Bellini, whom Dürer had met in Venice. The cannon, manned by two Landsknechts (German mercenaries), faces the Turks, most likely referring to the growing tension between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire. The cannon itself, outdated by the time of the etching, may be deliberate commentary by Dürer as to the futility of battle. The village has been identified as Kirchehrenbach in Franconia.

Census of first state impressions (Meder a) before the rust:

1. Boston
2. Braunschweig
3. Copenhagen
4. Melbourne
5. New York
6. Paris
7. Paris
8. Schweinfurt
9. Washington
10. Los Angeles
11. David Tunick, Inc., New York

The best known early German etching.