

DAVID TUNICK, INC.

PRINTS & DRAWINGS

ALBRECHT DÜRER (1471-1528)

Knight, Death, and the Devil

- Date: 1513
Medium: Engraving
Dimensions: 243 x 187 mm. 9 5/8 x 7 3/8 in.
References: Bartsch 98; Meder 74 a (of g); Schoch, Mende, Scherbaum 69 a (of g)
Watermark: No watermark (earliest impressions do not have a watermark)
Provenance: S.S. Scheikevitch (1842-1908, Moscow and Paris), Lugt 2367, this impression cited by Lugt;
Frederik Muller & Cie, Amsterdam; May 1910 to Colnaghi London; sold 20th century to Private collection, North America; by descent to Heir of same; to Estate of same; to David Tunick, Inc., New York; 2000 to Private collection, New York; 2019 to David Tunick, Inc., New York
- Impression: An extraordinarily rich, early impression of Meder's highest rank of quality, before the scratches and considerable weakening of the plate, printed with superb contrasts allowing a clear reading of the nuances of shadow and textural elements.
- Condition: Excellent condition, the corner tips reinforced and restored, pen-and-ink borderline, trace of a horizontal fold only visible verso, trimmed close.

"The Knight, Death and Devil, St. Jerome in His Study, and the Melencolia I...they are Dürer's most famous engravings and, not unjustly, known as his 'Meisterstiche'...Dürer's awareness that the first [made] of these three prints, the Knight, Death, and the Devil, was an important enterprise is again manifested by the special form of the signature. The figure 1513 is preceded by an 'S.,' an abbreviation of the word 'Salus'..." (i.e., "Hail, greetings!").

The artist provided a clue to the the interpretation of the print in his diary, when "grieved and incensed by the unfounded rumors of Luther's assasination, Dürer jotted a magnificent outburst against the Papists which culminates in a passionate appeal to Erasmus of Rotterdam: 'O Erasme Roderodame, where wilt thou take thy stand? Look of what avail is the unjust tyranny of worldly might and the powers of darkness? Hark, thou Knight of Christ, ride forth at the side of Christ our Lord, protect the truth, obtain the crown of the Martyrs!'" (Both quotes are from a discussion of the print by E. Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, Princeton, 1955, pp. 151-154).