

JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

“Pozzuoli, looking towards Baiæ – Istria in the distance”

CLARKSON FREDERICK STANFIELD

£ POA



Description

CLARKSON FREDERICK STANFIELD R.A.; Hon.R.S.A.1793 – 1867 English School "Pozzuoli, looking towards Baiæ - Istria in the distance"

Oil on canvas, traces of signature lower right, signed and inscribed on label on reverse 91.5 x 122 cms 36 x 48 inches Overall framed size 115 x 148 cms 45 1/4 x 58 1/4 ins Exhibited Royal Academy 1842 No. 313 This notable Victorian marine and landscape painter, who worked in both oils and watercolours often on a large scale, was praised by both John Constable and the eminent art critic John Ruskin for the artist's portrayal of clouds and sea calling him the "...leader of our English Realists..." and the latter also thought him the nearest rival to J M W Turner as a delineator of cloud forms. He was born in Sunderland on 3rd December 1793 and named Clarkson after the slave trade abolitionist Thomas Clarkson who was a friend of his father. He has been called William Clarkson Stanfield in many art reference books but this is erroneous and he only ever went after the name Clarkson Stanfield. His father, James Field Stanfield, was of Irish descent who, at the time of his son's birth was keeping a spirit merchant's shop but previously he had been a seaman, actor and author of prose and verse. His mother was Mary Hoad who had been an actress and accomplished artist. In 1806, the thirteen year old was apprenticed to a heraldic coach-painter but in 1808 he went to sea in a Shield's collier, delivering coal extracted from the mines to the industrial cities. Whilst in London in 1812, he was pressed into the Royal Navy and served on the Sheerness guardship Namur. It was while serving there that he first displayed his artistic talent by painting scenery for a play performed by the crew. However he was invalided in December 1814 but his talents as a draughtsman had been noticed and actively encouraged. In March 1815 he made a voyage to China on the East Indiaman Warley which provided the opportunity to produce many drawings and sketches. A change of direction ensued in August 1816, the consequence of missing his next ship to Madras as he was visiting his father so he abandoned his life at sea and began work painting scenes for the Royalty Theatre, Wellclose Square, Wapping. The eminent marine painter John Thomas Serres had entered into an agreement whereby he was a one eighth shareholder in the newly opened Royal Coburg theatre on the corner of Waterloo Road and New Cut and he was appointed "Director of the internal Decorations...and also principal artist and scene Painter..." It was a huge undertaking and Serres needed assistants so when it opened on Whit Monday, 11th May 1818, the programme for the opening night stated that: "Decorations of the Interior and Grand Panoramic Marine Saloon designed and executed by Mr Serres (Marine Painter to His Majesty)...The Scenery is entirely New, and painted by the following celebrated artists – Messrs. Serres, Latilla, Morris, Scruton, Stanfield and Assistants." The project for Serres eventually proved to be a financial d...