

COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Italian School, 17th Century

Study of a fragmented Corinthian column

Pen, ink and wash on paper

24 × 14.5 cm; 9 7/16 × 5 11/16 in.

Bears an old attribution to Giovanni Antonio Fumiani (1640-1710).

Provenance

French private collection.



This compact study presents with great immediacy a broken Corinthian architectural fragment. The draughtsman has isolated the remains of a column and its capital on open ground, treating the fractured stone as a sculptural body in its own right. The acanthus ornament and volutes are described with a nervous, abbreviated pen line, while broad applications of brown wash establish the weight of the fragment and the irregular planes of its damage. The darker pools of wash around the broken forms give the sheet a strongly pictorial character.

The historical attribution to Giovanni Antonio Fumiani, though not verifiable on present evidence, is of some contextual interest. Fumiani's formation in Bologna with Domenico degli Ambrogi, a specialist in *quadratura* and perspective, and his later Venetian work, above all the vast ceiling of San Pantalon, reveal an artist deeply engaged with fictive architecture and the scenographic treatment of space. The sheet's broken Corinthian fragment, modelled through rapid penwork and dense brown wash, may be seen in relation to this broader culture of architectural invention. It also accords with the more decorative side of Fumiani's practice, represented by his designs for allegorical *torcieri* made for Grand Prince Ferdinando de' Medici, in which antique-derived forms and painterly fantasy are brought into close relation.