

COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Roman School, 18th Century

Studies of Architectural Ornaments and Bas-Reliefs, double-sided

Ink and wash on paper with traces of pencil

18.1 × 26 cm; 7 1/8 × 10 1/4 in.

Inscribed lower-left 'Pantonuflo' on the verso.

Provenance

European private collection.



This double-sided sheet is a lively study of antique ornament, probably made in Rome in the eighteenth century as part of a working repertory of architectural and decorative motifs. On the *recto* the draughtsman isolates individual elements: a smoking candelabrum with military references, an urn with fluted body and pinecone-like finial, a slender decorated burner, a funerary vessel seen in cross-section, a scrolling grotesque ornament with a *cornucopia* and a low table, richly decorated and supported by carved legs. The motifs are arranged as visual notes, each form selected for its usefulness as a decorative invention.

The verso shows a winged griffin occupying the centre of a frieze-like panel, set among acanthus scrolls and an urn. The motif belongs to the antique vocabulary of Roman grotesque and relief decoration, widely studied in the eighteenth century following the renewed interest in Roman interiors, painted ornament and excavated antiquities. The use of brown wash gives the design a warm tonal ground and clarifies the alternation between carved projection and recessed background.

The sheet is especially valuable as evidence of practice: it preserves the immediacy of an artist collecting forms from ancient sources and translating them into a usable ornamental syntax. Its Roman character is suggested by the vocabulary of *candelabra*, griffins, acanthus and festooned supports, all central to the decorative idiom cultivated in the Eternal City's workshops, academies and antiquarian circles during the later *Settecento*.