



Inv. no. 4/2020

C.W. ECKERSBERG (1783–1853) & NBSP;
THE AQUEDUCT AT ARCUEIL, 1812
OIL ON CANVAS

32.5 X 40.5 CM

In his diary covering the years 1810 to 1813, C.W. Eckersberg made notes of his numerous excursions in and around Paris. His sojourns included visits to the suburb of Arcueil, where he did several drawings and sketches for later use as the basis for oil paintings. Among them is this painting, *The Aqueduct at Arcueil*, which, together with its counterpart, *The Longchamp Gate in the Bois-de-Boulogne* (16/1969), was completed in Paris in December 1812.

A feature shared by both works is that Eckersberg has chosen subjects that cut across several genres within the art of painting, namely city prospects, genre scenes and landscapes. Another common trait is that both works reflect Eckersberg's interest in linear perspective, which would later greatly influence his art and his teaching at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen.

Paris was where Eckersberg first used carefully planned and calculated perspectival constructions to assist his depictions of the world around him. He most frequently based these on the city's architecture – in this case the aqueduct in Arcueil, which was built in 1613–1623. The aqueduct moves from the right side of the painting into the pictorial space, after which it disappears behind the tall

deciduous trees that spread out on the left side of the painting, emphasising the rural nature of the setting. Eckersberg's choice of a tight, but also quite complex approach to perspectival construction may perhaps be due to the fact that he specifically wanted to work with perspective lines.¹ The light and colours play an important role, too. The light blue summer sky, the white sheet hanging along the aqueduct, and the clothes of the working, resting and strolling people are among the finest features in this evocative depiction of everyday life in Arcueil.

¹ Gry Hedin: 'Billedkonstruktion. Kunsten at se med ét øje' in Kasper Monrad and et al.: *Eckersberg, SMK – The National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen 2015*, p. 154.

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