



Inv. no. 18/1969

C.W. ECKERSBERG (1783–1853)
PROSPECT FROM VILLA CASALE WITH SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO,
1824
OIL ON CANVAS

46.5 X 62 CM

C.W. Eckersberg executed numerous prospects of Rome during the years he spent living in the city. In his diary and letters, he eagerly referred to the many studies he created in preparation for future paintings of the Eternal City and its architecture. He brought hundreds of drawings and sketches with him when he returned to Denmark. Some of these served as references for subsequent paintings, including *Prospect from Villa Casale with SS. Giovanni e Paolo*, based on a drawing done a decade before the painting.¹

In the foreground of the picture we see a scene of three men playing the hand game known as 'morra' while two women, one of them accompanied by a small child, look on. The Italian atmosphere is emphasised by the warm light, by the pergola with its proliferation of foliage and by the slender, gnarled tree trunks that contrast up against the brick pillars. Eckersberg clearly focused more on depicting Italian everyday life than on the architecture. Even so, there are references to Rome's historical past to be found: in the centre of the picture is the church of SS Giovanni e Paolo, and on the left are the ruins of one of the Roman aqueducts.

Prospect from Villa Casale with SS. Giovanni e Paolo was commissioned by the Danish merchant M.L. Nathanson (1780–1868).

He was a great supporter of Eckersberg at the outset of the artist's career and it is his family that are so famously portrayed by Eckersberg in *The Nathanson Family*, and in 1820 Eckersberg painted a double portrait of two of his daughters, Bella and Hanna.² On 26 December 1824, Bella Nathanson (1801–1878) was married to grocer Jacob S. Trier (1799–1886), and for the wedding this painting and its counterpart (17/1969) were given to the newly married couple by Nathanson.³

¹ C.W. Eckersberg: *The Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo Seen from Villa Casale, Rome, 1815*, Thaw Collection. The Morgan Library & Museum, New York. The drawing is dated 6 March 1815. Several other drawings of the church SS. Giovanni e Paolo created by Eckersberg during the period 1813–16 still survive today.

² C.W. Eckersberg, *The Nathanson Family, 1818*. SMK, inv. no. 1241 and Mendel Levin Nathanson's *Elder Daughters, Bella and Hanna*, SMK, inv. no. KMS3498.

³ C.W. Eckersbergs dagbøger, the artist's diaries published and annotated by Villads Villadsen, Copenhagen 2009, vol. 1, 1810–1836, p. 190, note 2. The diary reveals that Eckersberg did not complete the painting until 18 February 1825, and that the price for it, together with its pendant, was 50 rigsdaler.

Published in:

Philip Weilbach: *Maleren Eckersbergs Levned og Værker*, København 1872, p. 228;

Udstillingen af C.W. Eckersberg's Malerier i Kunstforeningen, Oktober-November 1895, København 1895, cat. 177, p. 44;

Emil Hannover: *Maleren C.W. Eckersberg: En Studie i dansk Kunsthistorie*, Kunstforeningen, København 1898, cat. 331 and p. 188 (the title given here: Et parti av S. Giovanni E Paolo, Taget fra Villa Casale);

V. Winkel & Magnussen (ed.): *Kunst i privat eje*, vol. 1, København 1944, fig. 13, pp. 143-144;

Vagn Poulsen: "Guldalderbilleder" in *C.L. Davids Samling. Fjerde del, Jubilæumsskrift 1945-1970*, København 1970, pp. 23-24, fig. 3, p. 28;

Dansk kunst og kunsthåndværk, Davids Samling, København 1972, p. 10;

Verner Jul Andersen: *Dansk kunst og kunsthåndværk*, Davids Samling, 2. ed., København 1983, cat. 416 ((the title given here: Romersk vedute);

Dyveke Helsted, Eva Henschen and Bjarne Jørnæs: *C.W. Eckersberg i Rom 1813-16*, Thorvaldsens Museum, 1983, cat. 51, p. 115;

Peter Michael Hornung and Kasper Monrad: *C.W. Eckersberg – dansk malerkunsts fader*, København 2005, pp. 168-169;

C.W. Eckersbergs dagbøger, udgivet og kommenteret af Villads Villadsen, København 2009. Vol. 1, 1810-1836, p. 190, note 2 and note 7.