



Inv. no. B 370

JOHAN THOMAS LUNDBYE (1818–1848)
LANDSCAPE FROM THE CAMPAGNA, 1845
OIL ON PAPER

18.5 X 56 CM

In the summer of 1845, Johan Thomas Lundbye set out on a trip to Italy. It was his first trip abroad. His journey to his ultimate destination of Rome – via Germany, Switzerland and France – was long and arduous, and in his travel diary Lundbye wrote that he was looking forward to some peace and quiet, to exploring the big city with all its sights and its vibrant life. He was also looking forward to seeing his friends and fellow painters J.A. Jerichau (1816–1883) and Thorald Læssøe (1816–1878), who at the time lived in Rome, and with whom Lundbye moved in.¹

In Rome, Lundbye was highly productive. With great zeal, he did sketches of everything that happened to attract his attention in the Italian capital: its people and animals, the ancient sculptures in public and private collections and, not least, landscapes and nature, which for several decades had held a particular attraction for many Danish painters. In the 1840s, several Danish painters developed a fondness for panoramic views of wide vistas, and many found such subject matter in the Roman Campagna – the flood plain around Rome.² Lundbye was no exception. In a diary entry of 27 September 1845, he writes about how he first set out to explore the Roman Campagna:

'I had long wanted to spend a day in the Campagna, in this strange, vast solitude... (...) The Campagna is the loveliest thing I have ever seen; I never saw Nature so great, so noble anywhere else'.³

The sketch-like qualities are evident in the small landscape painting that Lundbye did in the Campagna, presumably in the early autumn of 1845. He has captured the view towards the mountain Torre del Quinto and concentrated on capturing the light falling on the mountain. The painting is a study for a major work, *A Drove of Oxen in the Roman Campagna*.⁴ It was among the works that Lundbye sent back to Denmark from Rome before he himself returned, hoping that it would be a great success with the Danish audience.

- ¹ *Johan Thomas Lundbye, A Drove of Oxen in the Roman Campagna, 1845, SMK, inv.no. KMS510.*
- ² *Jesper Svenningsen: Seks år af et liv. Johan Thomas Lundbye. Dagbøger om tro, skæbne, kunst og kærlighed, Copenhagen 2018, p. 371. Translated by René Lauritsen.*
- ³ *Kasper Monrad: Hverdagsbilleder, Copenhagen 1989, pp. 212–213.*
- ⁴ *Jesper Svenningsen: Seks år af et liv. Johan Thomas Lundbye. Dagbøger om tro, skæbne, kunst og kærlighed, Copenhagen 2018, pp. 361–364.*

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