



Engraving and aquatint with contemporary hand-colour, on board.

ONE OF ROWLANDSON'S EARLIEST IMAGES

Vauxhall, 1732.

Author

ROWLANDSON, Thomas

Publication date

after 1785].

Publisher

Publication place

[London,

Physical description

Engraving and aquatint with contemporary hand-colour, on board.

Dimensions

324 by 440mm (12.75 by 17.25 inches).

Notes

'Vauxhall' is one of two watercolours submitted by the young Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) to the Royal Academy member's exhibition of 1784, the other being 'The Serpentine River'.

The print, one of many variants published after the original watercolour, was first engraved by Robert Pollard in 1785. It is populated by caricatures of identifiable celebrities of the day, including: "Mrs. Weichsel singing from the front balcony and Mr. Barthelemon leading the orchestra. Below is

a supper party with James Boswell, Dr. Samuel Johnson, Mrs. Thrale, and Oliver Goldsmith,... Playwright and columnist Captain Topham is looking through a spyglass at the Duchess of Devonshire and her sister, Lady Duncannon. Further to the right, the Prince of Wales flirts with his former mistress Perdita Robinson, who remains on the arm of her husband" (Princeton).

Although available for public use since 1661, Vauxhall Gardens entered its stride during the eighteenth century as the most significant of the Pleasure Gardens of London. From May to September, from early evening to the small hours of the morning, paying visitors were entertained with lively music, gay company, refreshments and secluded corners. After sunset artificial illuminations delighted and amazed. The date 1732, in the title, refers to the year in which the Gardens were re-launched, with a costume ball that was attended by the Prince of Wales.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £2000

Inventory reference: 18130