Finch & Co



PORTRAIT OF THE TWO MASTED BRIG 'HELIANTHUS OF LONDON' SAILING OUT OF THE BAY OF NAPLES

CIRCA 1854

A PORTRAIT OF THE TWO MASTED BRIG 'HELIANTHUS OF LONDON' SAILING OUT OF THE BAY OF NAPLES THE SMOKING VOLCANO VESUVIUS BEYOND

A PORTRAIT OF THE TWO MASTED BRIG 'HELIANTHUS OF LONDON' SAILING OUT OF THE BAY OF NAPLES THE SMOKING VOLCANO VESUVIUS BEYOND THE SHIP FULLY RIGGED FLYING THE BRITISH ENSIGN WITH THE CAPTAIN AND CREW ON DECK

INSCRIBED 'HELIANTHUS OF LONDON 1854 JOHN REYNOLDS MASTER' SIGNED 'MICHELE FONDO.P.'

GOUACHE AND INK ON PAPER

CIRCA 1854

SIZE: 53.5CM HIGH, 75CM WIDE - 21 INS HIGH, 29½ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

MICHELE FUNNO ALSO SIGNED HIS WORKS 'FONDO' AND WAS AN ITALIAN PIER-HEAD PAINTER WORKING IN NAPLES. HE PORTRAYED MANY OF THE FIRST SCHOONERS TO VISIT THE PORT BETWEEN 1835 AND 1865 WITH AROUND TWENTY FIVE OF HIS GOUACHE KNOWN TO DATE.

FOR THE VERNACULAR ARTIST SEASCAPES, LIKE LANDSCAPES, WERE NOT IMPORTANT IN THEMSELVES, BUT PROVIDED ESSENTIAL BACKGROUNDS FOR SHIP PORTRAITS. THEY COULD BE 'READ' PROVIDING THE VIEWER WITH INFORMATION OF THE LOCATION, TYPE OF SHIP AND ITS IMPORTANCE. SHIP'S LIKENESSES WERE IN GREAT DEMAND AMONGST CAPTAINS AND OWNERS, AND THIS PORTRAIT OF THE HELIANTHUS WAS ALMOST CERTAINLY COMMISSIONED FROM THE ARTIST BY THE MASTER JOHN REYNOLDS. THIS DESIRE FOR PORTRAITS OF SAILING SHIPS CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE 19TH CENTURY, BUT THE INTRODUCTION OF STEAM DRIVEN VESSELS WITH IRON HULLS, AND THEN THE ADVENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY, MARKED A NOTABLE DECLINE IN DEMAND FOR, AND THE QUALITY OF, SUCH PICTURES.