Portrait of Stephen Granger

Augustus John O.M, R.A

£650

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REF: 1226

Height: 27 cm (10.6")

Width: 20 cm (7.9")

Framed Height: 52 cm (20.5")

Framed Width: 43 cm (16.9")

Description

This finely observed study was used by Augustus John made as part as the basis of awell-known portrait etching. In the mid-1900s John was at the height of his powers as both a portrait draughtsman and as an etcher.Stephen Granger was a fellow Slade School graduate, who showed work at the New English Art Club's 1906 exhibition, but little is known about his work as an artist. John made three etched portraits of Granger in 1906. The present work, which would have been drawn from life, was used as the basis of the ‘Bust of Stephen Granger: full face’, catalogue No. 16 in Campbell Dodgson’s catalogue of John’s etchings. Thanks are due to Tom Edwards of Abbott and Holder for describing how John probably transfered the design from this sheet via an intermediary sheet to the etching plate, reversing the image so that the printed proof came out the same way round as the original drawing.John based a number of his portrait etchings on drawings made direct from the subject. A fast worker with a pencil, John would not require much of his sitter's time to make a drawing, whereas the etching would consume much more time in the making, proofing and trial and error. Of the surviving drawings used for etchings, this is unusual in being quite extensively worked with the etching needle, used mainly to scrape through shade graphite areas. John even signed the drawing with the etching needle, on the back of the sheet.The vertical and horizontal pencil lines on the right and bottom of the drawing do not actually indicate the proposed edges of the etching and were a common device used by the artist in his drawings, as if as a sign off, although two lines made with the needle towards the top of the sheet do correspond approximately with the etching plate.

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