

H. H. RUMBLER



MASTER E. S.
(Active in the Upper Rhine 1450 - 1467)

The Apostles Bartholomew and Matthew

Engraving

9.6 x 6.2 cm (3 3/4 x 2 1/2 inches)

ca 1467

Not in Bartsch and Passavant; Lehrs 98

Provenance

Count Maltzan, Militsch / Schlesien (cf. Lugt 3024a)

Gutekunst & Klipstein, Bern, auction 76, March 11, 1954, no. 147 with ill. On front cover

Richard Zinser, New York

Dr. Otto Schäfer, Schweinfurt (not in Lugt)

Galerie Kornfeld, Bern, auction 207, June 24, 1992

UNICUM

A specialty of the first order on the market today in view of the extreme rarity of outstanding early prints.

Superb impression mentioned specifically by Lehrs, who discovered it for the first time in 1881 in the collection of Count von Maltzan in Militsch.

Precious, pristine, pure impression, of deep brilliance and clarity, complete, with traces of the plate mark. From the master's late period, indisputably one of the pearls of the art of German engraving. The delicately engraved folds of the garments still emerge in all of their plasticity, and in effective contrast to the more deeply engraved, cleanly printed and brilliantly prominent architectural framework, to cite the praise found in the auction catalog published in 1954 by Gutekunst and Klipstein.

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Acquired at that time by R. Zinser for 16,500 Swiss francs, one of the highest prices paid at this auction, the sheet ultimately entered the exquisite collection of Dr. Otto Schäfer in Schweinfurt, which was auctioned by the Galerie Kornfeld in Bern in 1992.

In a perfect state of preservation.

Inscribed by hand on the reverse in brown ink with the inventory number of Count Maltzan.

In the 2nd volume of his *Geschichte und Kritischer Katalog des Deutschen, Niederländischen und Französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, published in 1910, and devoted to Master E. S., Lehrs mentions altogether only three known copies, while calling into question, in a footnote of his catalog the existence of a second proof in the Durazzo collection).

The third proof in Northwick Park (today in the British Museum, inv. no. AN52571001) is a reversed copy by van Meckenem (L. 236), as corrected later by Lehrs himself (1934) in vol. IX of his *Kritischer Katalog*.

This means that the present impression, from the collection of Count Malzahn, and characterized by Lehrs as *very beautiful*, is the sole known exemplar.

This composition belongs to a series of altogether six sheets, each containing a pair of depictions of the 12 Apostles. All are of the greatest rarity. Only a single sheet (Lehrs 96) is inscribed with the date "1467," and this attractive sequence is regarded as a late work by the master. According to M. Geisberg *these miniature masterworks are among the most beautiful we know from Master E. S.*