Oil painting - Line Fishing, Off Hastings

Object: Oil painting

Place of origin: Great Britain (painted)

Date: ca. 1835 (painted)

Artist/Maker: Turner, Joseph Mallord William, born 1775 - died 1851 (artist)

Materials and Techniques: oil on canvas

Credit Line: Given by John Sheepshanks, 1857

Museum number: FA.207[O]

Gallery location: Paintings, Room 87, The Edwin and Susan Davies Galleries, case EAST WALL

Public access description

This painting shows inshore fishermen using a baited line in the English Channel. Turner based it on a sketchbook drawing of 1816 and a watercolour of 1818. A critic described the painting as 'a beautiful marine piece'. It is probably a pair with the painting St Michael's Mount, Cornwall, also in the V&A.

Descriptive line


Physical description

Exhibited at the RA in 1835, and bought (or possibly commissioned - see Butlin and Joll, I, p.189) by John Sheepshanks. Butlin and Joll note that the work shows essentially the same view as a watercolour in the British Museum signed and dated 1818, which is in turn based on a drawing in the second "Hastings" sketchbook of 1816. The foreground shipping is composed differently, however, and the oil painting shows the land further away.

Dimensions

Height: 58.4 cm estimate, Width: 76.2 cm estimate

Museum number

FA.207[O]

Object history note

FA 207 was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1835 (no. 234), and bought (or possibly commissioned ) by John Sheepshanks; by whom given to the museum 1857

[John Sheepshanks]


John Sheepshanks (1784-1863) was the son of a wealthy cloth manufacturer. He entered the family business, but his early enthusiasms were for gardening and the collecting of Dutch and Flemish prints. He retired from business at the age of 40, by which time he had begun collecting predominantly in the field of modern British art. He told Richard Redgrave RA, then a curator in the South Kensington Museum (later the V&A) of his intention to give his collection to the nation. The gallery built to house the collection was the first permanent structure on the V&A site, and all concerned saw the Sheepshanks Gift as forming the nucleus of a National Gallery of British Art. Sheepshanks commissioned works from contemporary artists, bought from the annual RA summer exhibitions, but also bought paintings by artists working before Queen Victoria ascended the throne in 1837. The Sheepshanks Gift is the bedrock of the V&A's collection of British oil paintings, and served to encourage many other collectors to make donations and bequests.

Historical significance: Butlin and Joll note that the work shows essentially the same view as a watercolour in the British Museum signed and dated 1818, which is in turn based on a drawing in the second 'Hastings' sketchbook of 1816. The foreground shipping is composed differently, however, and the oil painting shows the land further away.

Reviews of the RA concentrated on the 'Burning of the Houses of Parliament' (Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio) and 'Keelmen Heaving in Coals by Night' (National Gallery of Art, Washington DC). The Literary Gazette (9 May 1835) thought it 'Decidedly one of Mr Turner's most charming productions', and the Spectator on the same day described it as 'a beautiful marine piece'; Waagen in 1854 found it 'very cleverly composed, though slight in execution'.

Engraved by W Miller, for the Turner Gallery 1859

Ronald Parkinson.
Historical context note

JMW Turner was born Covent Garden, London, 23 April 1775, son of a barber. Entered RA Schools 1789. In a long and exceptionally distinguished career, exhibited 259 works at the RA between 1790 and 1850 and 17 at the BI 1806-1846, predominantly landscapes, sometimes with historical themes. Generally considered the greatest painter in the history of British art. Died Chelsea, London, 19 December 1851 and buried in St Paul's Cathedral. Bequeathed his extensive collection of oil paintings and watercolours to the nation, now principally housed in the Clore wing of the Tate Gallery.

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O82565/line-fishing-off-hastings-oil-painting-turner-joseph-mallord/