

# PATRICK JEFFERSON



**Item** FELICE GIANI, ATTR. 'PHAETON DRIVING APOLLO'S SUN CHARIOT'

**Date** Italy, circa late eighteenth-century.

**Provenance** Joanna Booth, as Polidoro da Caravaggio.

**Dimensions** Height 4" (10cm) Width 5" (13cm) Frame 50 by 34cm

**Description** *Black chalk, pen and brown ink, brown wash; inscribed Polidoro Roma; probably trimmed from a sketch book; later framed and mounted.*

Felice Giani (1758-1823) studied under the architect Antonio Galli Bibbiena, then in the studios of Ubaldo Gandolfi and Domenico Pedrini in Bologna, before entering the Accademia di San Luca in Rome as a pupil of Pompeo Batoni. Shortly after he set up as a fresco painter, specialising in classical ornamental decoration inspired by Roman wall paintings, working at the Palazzo Altieri in Rome, the Palazzo Chigi and the Villa Borghese, before returning to Bologna in 1784. Between 1790-96 Giani hosted a 'salon' in Rome known as the Accademia dei Pensieri. His fresco commissions of the early 19th century included Palazzo Milzetti, Faenza; Palazzo di Spagna and the Palazzo del Quirinale, Rome. Giani travelled to Paris in 1803 and is thought to have decorated rooms at the Tuileries and Malmaison for the Empress Josephine, followed by the Villa Aldini at Montmorency in 1813.

This robust little drawing has affinities, notably in the handling of the horses, with another drawing by the artist 'Achilles drags the body of Hector around the Walls of Troy', in the Cooper Hewitt, New York, (1901-39-3329)<sup>3</sup>; another of much larger scale was sold, Christies, New York, 26 January 2012, lot 9, (\$22,500).<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Daniel Katz for his suggestion that the inscription 'Polidoro Roma' may refer to a drawing by Polidoro da Caravaggio, copied here by Giani.

**Price** £1,800

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Fig. 1



Fig.2



Fig.3