

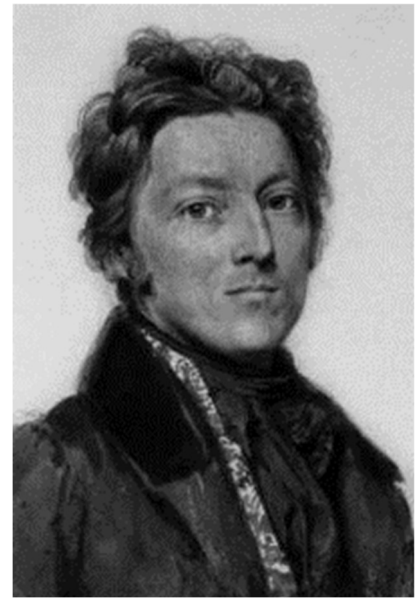
KUNKEL FINE ART

Zeichnungen, Gemälde und Skulpturen
des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts

August Riedel

1799 Bayreuth – 1883 Rome

A member of a family of architects from Bayreuth, August Riedel took up his studies at the Academy of Art in Munich in 1818. He first visited Rome in 1823, returning five years later. In 1832 he settled permanently in the city. The sale of his painting titled *A Neapolitan Fisherman and his Family* to the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen in 1833 marked a high point in his early career. Thorvaldsen kept the painting in his studio where it met with an enthusiastic reception and accelerated interest in Riedel's work both nationally and internationally. By the late 1830s, distinguished patrons and collectors from the European nobility were among his clients. Riedel played a prominent role in the artistic life of Rome and was accepted into the highest echelons of society. He was a member of the Berlin, Munich, Vienna and St. Petersburg academies.



Franz Xaver Winterhalter,
August Riedel, c.1834

Riedel was first and foremost a portraitist and figure painter. He specialized in depictions of young Italian women whom he singled out for their beauty. He portrayed them as nymphs in woodland settings, as sumptuously dressed and richly bejewelled single figures, and as mothers watching over their children. The delicate gleam of his surfaces and his sophisticated handling of light lend his figures luminosity and elegance. He developed a highly original method of lighting his models by using sheets of gold foil which produced a warm, shimmering glow. He would project this on to them from subtly different angles and would sometimes place the model against a dark background to heighten the effect of inner radiance. This gave his figures a strange, other-worldly beauty which captured the aesthetic imagination of contemporary collectors and established him as one of the most popular painters of his time.