

Vesuvius in Eruption by Wright of Derby

Acquisition of painting 'Vesuvius in Eruption' by Joseph Wright of Derby. This picture appears to have been painted soon after Wright's return from Italy to England in 1775. Wright has created a dramatic composition, taken from the foothills of Vesuvius, looking towards Sorrento and island of Capri. The inclusion of the islands of Ischia and Procida, neither of which would be visible in reality, emphasises the tranquility of the sea in contrast to the violence of the volcano. Wright stayed in Naples from early October to early November 1774, too early to witness the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 1777, and yet during his lifetime he painted over thirty views of the exploding volcano. Circa 1776-80, oil on canvas, support: 1220 x 1764 mm.

Nation/region

London

Grant awarded

£300,000

Award date

26/07/1990