



**Michael Wutky**

**Title** A view of Vesuvius erupting with Sir William Hamilton observing from afar with his crew, the painter on the right

**Description** Michael Wutky (Krems 1739-1823 Vienna)  
A view of Vesuvius erupting with Sir William Hamilton observing from afar with his crew, the painter on the right

oil on canvas  
29 x 38 1/2 in. (73.7 x 97.6 cm.)

Michael Wutky's artistic career began at the Vienna Academy in 1755. Just over ten years later, he became a member of the newly-founded Imperial Drawings Academy and, in 1771, he travelled to Italy. In Rome, he was commissioned by Marcantonio Borghese to work alongside Jakob Philipp Hackert (1737-1807) and Gavin Hamilton (1723-1798) on the decoration of the Villa Princiiana, Rome. In Naples he was commissioned by Sir William Hamilton to paint eruptions of the Vesuvius.

The expansion of scientific curiosity and knowledge in the Age of Enlightenment led to increased fascination with volcanoes, particularly amongst natural philosophers in France and England. Mount Vesuvius became a popular destination for tourists and artists alike towards the end of the eighteenth century. Michael Wutky is documented on one expedition to Vesuvius, with Sir William Hamilton in 1779, after the great eruption of the volcano in that year. The figure in the lower right capturing the eruption might be a self-portrait.

We are grateful to Prof. Riccardo Lattuada and Dot. Ermanno Bellucci for independently advancing the attribution.

**Medium** oil on canvas

**Size** Height 29 in.; Width 38.4 in. / Height 73.7 cm.; Width 97.6 cm.

**Sale of** Christie's London: Friday, December 8, 2017 [Lot 00186]  
Old Masters including Old Master & British Drawings and Watercolours

**Estimate** 20,000 - 30,000 GBP  
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(26,734 - 40,101 USD)

**Sold For** 56,250 GBP Premium  
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(75,190 USD)