

Fantastically French!

Design and Architecture in 16th- to 18th-Century Prints

7: Jean-François Janinet

To the right of Gourmont's etching is one of the few color prints in the exhibition: *The Ruins of an Egyptian Palace* by Jean-François Janinet after a design by the Italian artist Giovanni Paolo Panini. Panini is known for popularizing a genre of art known as the *capriccio*, in which artists combine archaeological ruins, fictional structures, and views of actual places, integrating them into a fantasy landscape.

Here, we see a group of barefoot explorers admiring a classical sculpture. They are surrounded by architectural fragments, crumbling buildings, and encroaching foliage. Almost all of these elements derive from the architecture of Greece and Rome. You have to look very carefully to find the one motif that refers to Egypt. On the cornice fragment at the lower left, there is a carving of a winged cat, which was a common religious icon in ancient Egypt.