



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

GUSTAVUS FRANKENSTEIN (1827-1893)

Milky Lake, Alps

Oil on canvas

11 x 15 ¼ inches

Signed at lower right and inscribed on verso

INSCRIPTION: Painted originally from Nature / By Gustavus Frankenstein / and Given to Miss Helen Macbeth [on stretcher]

In addition to being a landscape painter and art teacher, Gustavus Frankenstein was a mathematician, author, clockmaker, and botanist. Born Gustav Ludwig Tracht in Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, his name was changed to Gustavus Frankenstein upon his family's immigration to the United States in 1831. The Frankenstein family—consisting of two parents and six children—settled in Cincinnati, Ohio. Each Frankenstein child was, to some degree, artistically inclined. Gustavus worked first as a typesetter, then as an art teacher at the Springfield Female Seminary during the 1860s alongside his brother, Godfrey. Frankenstein and his brother traveled to Europe together in 1867, visiting England and various points in the Alps. From this trip Frankenstein produced a number of alpine scenes, one of which was exhibited at the Cincinnati Industrial Exposition in 1875.

It was around this time that Frankenstein shifted his focus from fine art to mathematics. He published two separate mathematical studies, which led to a lecture on the subject at Steinway Hall. Following this success, Frankenstein spent several years in the Bahamas before returning to Springfield, Ohio, in 1880. At this time, Frankenstein was producing landscapes painted on seashells and, in the first several years of the 1880s, devoted considerable time to the authorship of poems, stories, and articles. In his later years, Frankenstein set aside his studies of mathematics to focus on botany and watch repair.

Milky Lake, Alps was likely painted during Frankenstein's travels in the Alps during the late 1860s, as the inscription on the stretcher indicates it was “painted originally from nature.”



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