



## HAWTHORNE Fine Art

### ADELE FRANCES BEDELL (1861-1957)

*Landscape with Tree*

*Mountain Landscape*

Oil on panel

3 7/16 x 6 1/4 inches

Unsigned

Adele Frances Bedell was born in Dana, Massachusetts, located in Worcester County. Bedell moved to New York City, likely in the 1880s,<sup>1</sup> and became an active member of the city's art community. In 1889, Bedell and five other women founded the Woman's Art Club of New York, headquartered in Manhattan. The organization, now known as the National Association of Women Artists, promoted higher standards for women artists and provided them with an opportunity to exhibit their work through annual exhibitions. This was significant at a time when women artists were primarily associated with crafts and the "decorative" arts rather than the "fine" arts of painting and sculpture.<sup>2</sup> Bedell married Henry Matthias Brown, a clergyman, in 1894, and the couple continued living in the city with their two sons, Philip and Randolph, at least through the mid-1890s.<sup>3</sup> During her artistic career, Bedell exhibited at the National Academy of Design and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.<sup>4</sup>

These works by Bedell are unique for their inclusion of paintings on both the recto and verso. *Landscape with Tree*, likely painted in autumn, features a single, leafless tree in the center of the composition. The tree is placed against a clear blue sky and a backdrop of orange fall foliage in the distance. The verso of *Landscape with Tree* includes another landscape that also features a tree, but this time painted in either spring or summer, and in a vertical format.



C. D. Arnold; H. D. Higinbotham, *Photograph of the Illinois Building*,  
World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.  
Published in the *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition*, 1893.

The *Mountain Landscape* depicts a trail that winds between rolling green hills, which are placed against a blue sky scattered with soft white clouds. The verso of this painting portrays the iconic neoclassical architecture of the "White City" at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. The domed structure is likely the Illinois Building. Though the catalogue of art shown at the Woman's Building does not list Bedell as an exhibitor, Bedell certainly would have visited the pavilion to support her fellow women artists.

The small scale of these works, combined with their sketchy Impressionistic style, suggest that they were painted *en plein air*.

<sup>1</sup> New York, New York, City Directory, 1889.

<sup>2</sup> "NAWA History," *National Association of Women Artists, Inc.*, accessed Sept. 7, 2017. <http://www.thenawa.org/nawa-history/>.

<sup>3</sup> United States Federal Census, New York, Bronx Assembly District 35, 1910.

<sup>4</sup> "Adell [sic] Frances Bedell," *askArt*, accessed Sept. 7, 2017.

[http://www.askart.com/artist/adell\\_frances\\_bedell/10003618/adell\\_frances\\_bedell.aspx?stm=adele%20frances%20bedell](http://www.askart.com/artist/adell_frances_bedell/10003618/adell_frances_bedell.aspx?stm=adele%20frances%20bedell).