



HAWTHORNE  
Fine Art

**ERNEST FREDERICK MEYER (1863-1952)**

*New York Street Scene*

Oil on board

5 ¾ x 8 inches

Signed lower right

Provenance:

Robert Schoelkopf Gallery, New York

Ernest Frederick Meyer was born in Rothenberg, Germany in 1863. However, he spent the majority of his life in America, particularly in New York City, while also establishing a residence in Connecticut. Meyer studied with American painters such as, John Henry Twachtman, James Carroll Beckwith, Frank Vincent, DuMond, Charles Henry Turner, and most notably, William Merritt Chase. Chase became a close friend to, and profound influence on, Meyer, who studied with Chase at his Tenth Street Studio in Greenwich Village and Shinnecock Summer School of Art, in the Southampton area of Long Island.<sup>1</sup> While Meyer is best known for his landscapes, this painting is representative of his body of work depicting daily life in more urban settings, such as the streets of Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn.



Ernest Meyer, *Greenwich Village*, undated, 24 x 30 inches, oil on canvas, private collection.<sup>2</sup>



Ernest Meyer, *Flower Market, Willoughby Street*, undated, 25 x 30 inches, oil on canvas, private collection.<sup>3</sup>

This picture is likely set in Manhattan, possibly near the Greenwich Village area where he studied with Chase. The large mass of figures that crowd the street and sidewalk suggest a type of gathering or celebration. The red brushstrokes that emblazon the façade of the building to the right further indicate the subject as a special occasion or spectacle. Indeed, the daubs of red are echoed throughout the crowd, suggesting a sort of unifying sartorial decoration. The gray sky, snow-covered streets and heavy clothing situate this as a winter scene. While the exact subject cannot be fully determined, one possible reading is

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<sup>1</sup> "Ernest Meyer," *askART*, accessed Sep. 6, 2017, [http://www.askart.com/artist\\_bio/Ernest\\_Frederick\\_Meyer/25248/Ernest\\_Frederick\\_Meyer.aspx](http://www.askart.com/artist_bio/Ernest_Frederick_Meyer/25248/Ernest_Frederick_Meyer.aspx).

<sup>2</sup> Sold at auction through Doyle New York, April 6, 2016.

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to identify it as a holiday celebration. Meyer's picture, with its fragmented and gestural brushwork, dark palette and subject matter of the urban streets of New York is representative of the Ashcan movement. This Realist movement challenged the prevailing Academic and Impressionist art at the turn of the century.

Meyer was a member of the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts and the Salmagundi Club, located in New York City and one of the oldest art organizations in the United States. Meyer exhibited at the Salmagundi Club, the National Academy of Design in New York (multiple years from 1895-1906), the Boston Art Club (1901), and the Brooklyn Art Association (1935).<sup>4</sup> The artist died in New York City in 1952.

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<sup>4</sup> "Ernest Meyer," *askART*, accessed Sep. 6, 2017, [http://www.askart.com/artist\\_bio/Ernest\\_Frederick\\_Meyer/25248/Ernest\\_Frederick\\_Meyer.aspx](http://www.askart.com/artist_bio/Ernest_Frederick_Meyer/25248/Ernest_Frederick_Meyer.aspx).