



FRANK ANDERSON (1844-1891)

Gathering Leaves, 1883

Oil on canvas

24 1/4 x 15 5/16 inches

Signed and dated 1883, lower left

In July of 1879, a writer for *The Art Critic* declared that Frank Anderson was, “without doubt one of the best Hudson River scenery painters.” Born in Mt. Sterling, Ohio, on January 2, 1844, his artistic gifts manifested themselves at a very early age. The History of Peekskill records the following:

Almost at infancy, he developed a liking for the pencil and in his first school days frequently got in trouble with his teacher by attracting the attention of other pupils with the pictures he would make on his slate. He began the use of watercolors when very young Without any special instructor, but by perseverance, diligence and observation, he produced pictures as a boy that commanded notice. When he was eighteen years of age, his family moved to Peekskill in 1862. There was not a beautiful prospect for miles around Peekskill that was unknown to Mr. Anderson, and many of his sketches are now becoming of historic interest. He became well known in art circles and was a regular and welcome contributor to the annual exhibitions of the Academy of Design. The metropolitan art critics gave his works the highest commendation.

Although he was shy about taking part in public events, Anderson did exhibit at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the National Academy of Design. The History of Peekskill alludes to this aspect of the artist's character, as well, recording that, “in person, Anderson was tall and slender, of genial nature, modest and unassuming. He was so devoted to art that he scorned to consider commercial value in connection with his brushwork.”



Anderson was also deeply devoted to the Hudson River Valley. According to the Highland Democrat, his hometown newspaper, he was constantly busy, “immortalizing with his inspired pencil and brush the beauties of nature and transferring to canvas the incomparable and unapproachable picturesqueness of the hills amid which he lived.”

Works such as *Gathering Leaves*, 1883 are testaments to Anderson's inherent talent for depicting the natural world. The inherent grandeur of the autumnal trees is underscored by the canvas's vertical orientation, and the palette vibrates with warm hues of red, orange and brown. The two figures in the middle ground both reference the scale of the scene while adding a rustic narrative. Through the brush of fallen leaves and undergrowth a stream flows languidly in the foreground, drawing the viewer's eye through the scene. One can easily see the beauty of Anderson's careful observation and attention to detail. Many of his landscapes are still located in private collections in Peekskill, NY. Today, his works can also be seen at the Adirondack Museum and the Hudson River Museum, among others.