



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Carl Gustaf Theodore Olson (1875- 1952)

Carl Gustaf Theodore Olson was born on June 7, 1875 in Jung, Sweden to Anna and Olous Magnus Olson. He came to the United States at the age of 17 and settled near Detroit, Michigan. He later moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts where he became a naturalized citizen in 1902. In 1910, Olson married Anna Matilda Anderson. Their son, Carl G. Olson was born on April 6, 1912.

Olson Studied under the artist Peter Roos (1850-1919) in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He claimed it was Roos “who first discovered he had talent and gave him special training which developed his gift.”¹ After the death of Roos in 1919, Olson honored his late teacher’s memory by presenting a bronze plaque bearing his likeness to Cambridge High and Latin School where Roos had been Art Director. ²

In addition to his work as an artist, Olson was a beloved teacher and Assistant Principal at Belmont Hightschool in Belmont, Massachusetts. Upon his retirement in 1942, the graduating class dedicated the yearbook to Olson, “whose sympathetic understanding and fatherly advice have guided and helped us so much during our highschool days.”³

In 1923, Olson’s work was included with other notable Swedish American artists in the Tercentenary Exposition in Gothenburg, Sweden. The exhibition highlighted the contributions of Swedish and Swedish American artists to American Art and included work by notable artists

¹ “Artistic Memorial to His Former Teacher”, Boston Post (Boston, Massachusetts) · Sat, Dec 25, 1920 · Page 69

² Ibid

³ Belmont Hightschool, *The Blue Print* (Belmont, Mass: 1942)



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John F. Carlson, Henry Reuterdaahl, Carl Rungius, and Birger Sandzen.⁴ In 1949, Olson was a premium winner at the Upper Peninsula State Fair [Michigan] having won 4th and 5th place for his oil paintings.⁵

In his lifetime, Olson exhibited with the North Shore Art Association, the Boston Art Club, the Museum of Fine Arts, the Mac Beth Gallery [New York], and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. His most notable work includes murals painted for the Bethlehem Church [Brooklyn], an Altar piece in the Zion Church [Worcester, Mass.], and a memorial portrait and altar piece in the Augustana Church [Cambridge, Mass.].⁶

Carl Gustaf Theodore Olson died in Belmont, Massachusetts in 1953. He was 78 years old.

⁴ “American Art to be Shown in Sweden,” *The American Magazine of Art* (New York, NY), 1923, p.274

⁵ “Premium Winners At Upper Peninsula Fair”, *The Escanaba Daily Press* (Escanaba, Michigan) · Thu, Aug 18, 1949 · Page 5

⁶ Belmont Highschool, *The Blue Print* (Belmont, Mass: 1942)