



IN THE PRESENCE OF BEAUTY

19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN PAINTINGS



Hawthorne Fine Art, LLC

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by Jennifer C. Krieger, Principal & Rebecca M. Collins, Associate



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PREFACE



Ralph Waldo Emerson once proclaimed, “Let us be poised, and wise, and our own, today.” He understood the importance of experiencing the world with an enlightened eye and remaining true to one’s convictions. Artists of his time attained this vision. They surrounded themselves with beauty both in nature and in humanity and thereby elevated their sensibilities. As a result, their canvases reflect the special light with which they beheld their subject. Their art offers us the opportunity to “elevate our sensibilities” and to edify ourselves with the beauty of the landscape or figure and the grace of its portrayal. It is for this reason that we have titled this catalogue, “In the Presence of Beauty.” In the presence of beautiful works of art, we can redeem our senses and uplift our mind. We hope that the American paintings and sculptures we are offering of great beauty and exquisite quality will have this effect on you.

This catalogue would not have been possible without the participation of several individuals. Rebecca Collins, my right hand lady, writes with insight and clarity, reflecting on the most meaningful elements of our paintings. Kate Brewster-Duffy, our summer intern, fastidiously mined the New York libraries for research material, excavating even the most obscure primary sources. I would also like to recognize the brilliant efforts of Joanna Gardener, designer; Timothy Pyle, photographer; and Suzanne Noguere, editor. Our sincere thanks to the collectors, scholars, colleagues, friends, and our families, all of whom give us endless support and inspiration.

—Jennifer C. Krieger

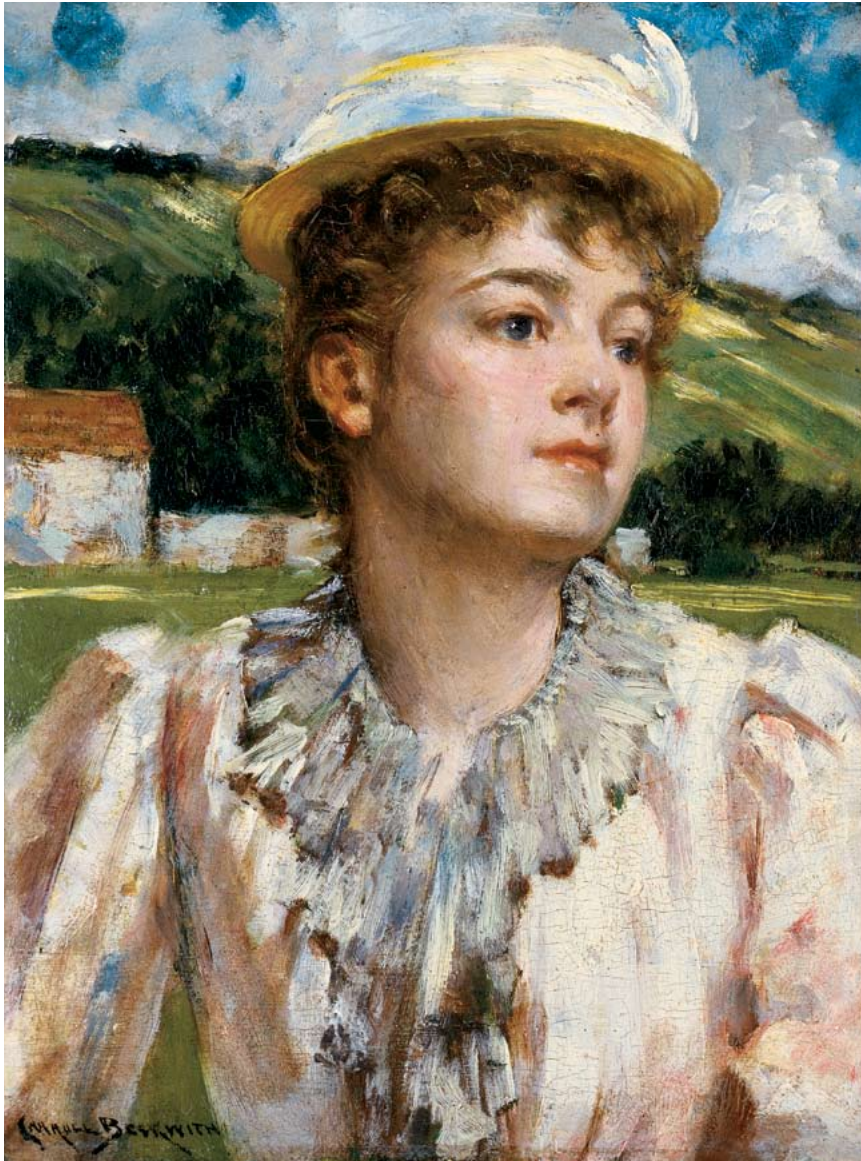
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NITA *p.1*

JAMES CARROLL BECKWITH (1852-1917)



Nita, 1897

Oil on panel

10¹/₁₆ x 7⁵/₈ inches

Signed lower left

Inscribed, "Background of/Nita Sewell/1897," verso



Of an Academic disposition and keenly industrious, James Carroll Beckwith worked alongside John Singer Sargent as a premier portraitist in the genteel tradition of the late nineteenth century. Born in Hannibal, Missouri, he subsequently moved to Chicago. There Beckwith took his first art lessons in the atelier of Walter Shirlaw in 1868. Three years later, he moved to Manhattan to study at the National Academy of Design under Lemuel Wilmarth.

After departing for France in 1873, Beckwith was admitted into Emile Carolus-Duran's distinguished circle of pupils. As both an admirer of Velasquez and a friend of Edouard Manet, Carolus-Duran was steeped in classical traditions yet projected his students forward into the modern. Beckwith's contemporary Will Low commented that Carolus-Duran's students were "classed as outlaws by the conservative pupils of the government schools."¹ Beckwith did, however, also take drawing lessons at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts with Adolphe Yvon.² Profoundly influenced by Carolus-Duran, Beckwith lauded the bold characterization of his female subjects, the "extreme modernity in the types, the dress and the attitude." Beckwith adds, "His women have the ease and luxury of the French Salon."³

In Paris, Beckwith befriended John Singer Sargent (a fellow protégé of Carolus-Duran), joining him and Carolus-Duran in 1877 to paint a ceiling mural in the Palais du Luxembourg. After having absorbed the imprint of French Impressionism, Beckwith returned to New York in 1878 and took a professorship at the Art Students League. He won a prize at the Paris Salon, a medal at the Exposition Universelle of both 1889 and 1890, gold medals at the Atlanta Exposition of 1895 and Charleston Exposition of 1902; and he painted a mural at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. One of Beckwith's most famous portraits, *William Walton*, 1886 (The Century Association), won an award at the Exposition Universelle of 1899. According to Carolus-Duran, it was "the

strongest portrait" to come from a New York studio.⁴ Beckwith's paintings later found their way into the esteemed collections of the Wadsworth Atheneum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Art Gallery, Smithsonian American Art Museum, and New-York Historical Society.

Nita is a distinguished example of the intimate vignettes the artist created in his portraits of women. The composition is brilliantly executed in the placement of the figure close to the picture plane with the fresh rolling countryside behind her. Alive and vivid, the subject extends a thoughtful gaze outward, her mien both self-assured and soft. The viewer has a sense of her piercing awareness of the world before her. One immediately sees the influence of John Singer Sargent's psychologically probing portraits as well as the brilliant finesse of his brushwork. Beckwith reveals character not only through the careful modeling of Nita's delicate features (particularly her jewel-like eyes) but also through her statuesque pose. The staccato brushstrokes of her dress capture both the richness of its texture and the dispersal of sunlight upon her. The palette is bold and rich, carrying the picturesque freshness of her airy surroundings.

JCK

THE HUDSON RIVER AT CROTON POINT *p.2*

JULIE HART BEERS (1835-1913)



The Hudson River at Croton Point, 1869

Oil on canvas

12 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches

Signed and dated 1869, lower right

Provenance

Private Collection, Connecticut



One of the first American women to gain recognition as an accomplished painter, Julie Hart Beers became known for her masterful Northeastern landscapes. Her works include views of the Hudson River, New Jersey, Maine, Massachusetts, and particularly Vermont. A native of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Beers depicted expansive vistas in a most intimate manner. Her works were exhibited at all the major venues including the Brooklyn Art Association, National Academy of Design, Artist's Fund Society, Palette Club, and Lotos Club.¹

As the younger sister of William and James MacDougal Hart, Beers must have been significantly influenced and encouraged by the accomplishments of her family. One wonders if Beers would have been given the same support for her talents had her brothers not been professional artists. While exploring the gender restrictions imposed on female artists in her famous essay, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," Linda Nochlin poses the question: "What proportion of painters and sculptors, or more specifically, of major painters and sculptors, came from families in which their fathers or other close relatives were painters and sculptors or engaged in related professions?"² Did the indirect exposure to her brothers' artistic training elevate her chances as an artist and hone her own skills? At the same time, it is obvious that Beers ultimately looked toward nature as her teacher, and she was its independent student. The clarity of her brushwork betrays a most minute inspection of the natural world, which could be obtained only by her own scrutiny.

Various elements of *Hudson River at Croton Point*, 1869, attest to Beers' superb talents. Here, the artist depicts a serene view of Hook Mountain set in the distance from Croton Point, a location named after a Native American term meaning "wild wind."³ Beers introduces two small figures, a mother and child, who walk along a meandering sun-lit path approaching the bluff, ultimately to gaze upon the glistening Hudson.

Unrestrained in its sprawling scope, *Hudson River at Croton Point* captures close detail, forging an intimacy between subject and spectator. Paint is applied in exacting brushstrokes, as if each hue was deliberately planned. The variation of rich pigments is one of the most defining elements of this composition. Ranging from deep crimson to gradations of lavender and subtle pink, from bright gold to calm blues and ever changing tones of green, the harmonious, saturated colors keep the eye moving between each element of the scene.

The painting also features a dramatic sky of billowing clouds separated only enough to let the sun seep into the scene, drench the land, and create a warm atmosphere playing light against shadow. Two stately birch trees are set in the foreground with cascading leaves that draw attention to the choreography of each branch. One wonders if the quaint stone wall, the path, and its figures imply the presence of a house seated high above this majestic overlook.

RMC

MOUNTAIN LAKE WITH FISHERMEN *p.3*

WILLIAM MASON BROWN (1828-1898)



Mountain Lake with Fishermen

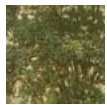
Oil on canvas

24 x 20 inches

Signed lower left

*It is a sultry day; the sun has drank
The dew that lay upon the morning grass,
There is no rustling in the lofty elm
That canopies my dwelling, and its shade
Scarce cools me. All is silent, save the faint
And interrupted murmur of the bee,
Settling on the sick flowers, and then again
Instantly on the wing. The plants around
Feel the too potent fervors; the tall maize
Rolls up its long green leaves; the clover droops
Its tender foliage, and declines its blooms.
But far in the fierce sunshine tower the hills,
With all their growth of woods, silent and stern,
As if the scorching heat and dazzling light
Were but an element they loved.*

—William Cullen Bryant, *A Summer Wind*



William Mason Brown was one of the most virtuoso painters of the nineteenth century. His early training as an engraver foreshadowed his technical precision in portrait, landscape, and still-life painting. Native to Troy, New York, he began his artistic training as an apprentice under Abel Buel Moore, developing the skills of a portrait painter. In 1850, he moved to Newark, New Jersey, eight years later settling in Brooklyn, New York. During this period, Brown's focus was on painting rich and meticulous landscapes. It is in these romantic compositions that his keen observation and careful craftsmanship coalesce and clearly reflect the influence of Thomas Cole.

An important aspect of the Hudson River School gained expression in the Pre-Raphaelite style. American painters were introduced to the style through the Philadelphia exhibition of modern British Pre-Raphaelites in 1858. That exhibition, which traveled also to New York and Boston, cultivated an American following.¹ Artists such as Brown produced very detailed, faithful portraits of nature.

Mountain Lake with Fishermen is a primary example of Brown's early compositions, depicting a bright and scenic view of this pristine pool nestled within abundantly detailed flora.

It is a landscape of classic grandeur typical of Adirondack topography. With the introduction of two gentle figures quietly fishing on the shore, Brown captures the sultriness of a summer day. Beyond the detail within this landscape, the composition heightens our attraction to the scene. Brown infuses the sky with diagonal featherlike clouds, creating distance and leading the eye to specific areas of the canvas. The trees and boulders are most deliberate in their placement. The tonalities he uses within the sky and the reflections of the lake are soft yet dramatic to convey the glowing heat of a summer day.

Brown achieved great success during his lifetime, exhibiting at the National Academy of Design for over thirty years (1859-1890). Among many other formal venues, his works were shown at the Brooklyn Art Association and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.²

RMC

STILL-LIFE WITH PEACHES AND GRAPES *p.4*

WILLIAM MASON BROWN (1828-1898)



Still-Life with Peaches and Grapes

Oil on panel

6 ³/₄ x 8 ³/₄ inches

Signed lower left

Provenance

Richard York Gallery, New York

Private Collection, New Jersey

*From laden boughs, from hands,
from sweet fellowship in the bins,
comes nectar at the roadside, succulent
peaches we devour, dusty skin and all,
comes the familiar dust of summer.*

—Li-Young Lee, *From Blossoms*



Around 1860, William Mason Brown not only changed his focus from landscapes to still lifes but also developed a new and more controlled method of painting.¹

Once interested in depicting expansive vistas with painstakingly tight detail, the artist became more intimate with his choice of subject matter, favoring fruit such as peaches, cantaloupe, apples, and berries. His emphasis now was on creating illusions of diverse surfaces, spatial contrivance, lighting technique, and a composition full of varying textures.

Still Life with Peaches and Grapes expresses the artist's treatment of a more specific, yet highly attractive, subject matter. The style of his still-life paintings has been categorized as an almost photographic realism² as Brown delicately dealt seemingly non-existent brushstrokes. This composition depicts peaches, a subject Brown favored and painted quite often.³ Their fuzzy surface texture presented a challenge that Brown mastered by creating a glow of light that surrounds each peach. With bright, harmonious colors and careful attention to perfectly rounded edges, Brown captures the sumptuous weight of each fruit and of each chestnut.

Much of his recognition stemmed from the development and popularity of chromolithographs. "In 1868, Currier and Ives had published the first chromolithograph of Brown's work, bringing the artist national fame. Lithographic firms were attracted to his paintings because of their bright colors and contoured edges, which translated well into print. It is even possible that Brown altered his style in the late 1860s in order to attract lucrative chromolithographic commissions."⁴

Brown's still lifes reflect the intimacy with which he embraced his subjects. Whether capturing the plump succulence of a grape or perfecting the exact texture of a peach, his attentive eye and sure hand revealed the quintessence of each thing.

TWILIGHT IN THE TROPICS *p.5*

NORTON BUSH (1834-1894)



Twilight in the Tropics, 1877

Oil on canvas, mounted on board

9⁷/₈ x 14 inches

Signed and dated 1877, lower right

Provenance

Kenneth Lux, New York

*This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On sweet summer wind its purpled wings . . .*

—Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Chambered Nautilus*



The same expansive spirit of the poem above propelled Norton Bush and his colleagues Frederic Church, Louis Remy Mignot, Martin Johnson Heade, Granville Perkins, and Titian Peale to travel and devote their artistry to painting the lush lands of Latin America. Born in Rochester, New York, Bush took early training between 1851 and 1852 in New York City under Jasper Francis Cropsey. In 1853, he set out for San Francisco, California, rather circuitously following Cornelius Vanderbilt's shipping route through Nicaragua. It was a propitious detour for the artist, as it was on this trip that he discovered the lulling enchantment of Latin America and applied his skills to portraying its beauty. Bush's tropical scenes won notice. Before long he was commissioned by a San Francisco banker and collector, William C. Ralston, to paint scenes of Central America as it related to his business endeavors. Railroad magnate Henry C. Meiggs sponsored Bush's final trip through Peru and Ecuador.¹

Bush was also recognized for his local involvement in the Bric-a-Brac Club and the San Francisco Art Association, serving as Director from 1878 to 1880. He won four gold medals at the California State Fairs. Today his paintings can be admired in the collections of the Crocker Art Museum, Oakland Museum, Hearst Art Gallery, California Historical Society, and Parrish Art Museum.

Colleague George Catlin articulated the deep allure of the tropics:

*If anything on the face of this earth could properly be called paradise, it was the beautifully rolling prairies with their copses and bunches of leaning palms and palmettos, encircled with flowers of all colors...hedged in a hundred directions with the beautiful foliage bordering the rivulets and rivers wending their serpentine courses through them.*²

In *Twilight in the Tropics*, Bush brings to life the images evoked in that passage: enshrouded in roseate light, an earthly paradise full of thriving palms, pristine waters, colorful flowers, and warm vapors. Bush simplifies the composition, making the glow of the sky, the thick layering of luminous clouds a focal point of the painting. The delicate depiction of the flora and exacting sense of recessionary space bear the imprint of Cropsey's training. The scene is uncomplicated by the presence of man-made structures. Only the canoe interrupts the natural motion of the water, albeit gently. By the still and removed quality of the scene Bush gives the viewer the sense of being the only person present to behold the place. It is a testament to his skills as an artist that he can evoke this sense of seamless intimacy transcending both time and space.

JCK

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD *p.6*

JASPER FRANCIS CROPSEY (1823-1900)



Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, 1891

Oil on canvas

12 x 20 inches

Signed and dated 1891, lower right

Provenance

A direct descendant of Jonathan Sturges (1802-1874)
and Mary Cady Sturges (1806-1894)

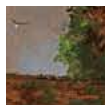
*The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.*

*Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;*

*Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.*

*Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.*

—Thomas Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*



Gray's famous poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* held special significance for Jasper Francis Cropsey, for he executed a series of paintings devoted to its imagery. This example is particularly noteworthy not only for its exquisite beauty but also for its personal history. It comes from the family of Jonathan Sturges (1802–1874), the preeminent patron of the Hudson River School and one of the key organizers as well as Acting President and Director of the Illinois Central Railroad. Referenced in her papers, Gray's poem was a favorite of Jonathan's wife, Mary Cady Sturges (1806–1894), as her father would have read it to her as a child. According to family lore, Cropsey may have painted it expressly for Mrs. Sturges, knowing her fondness for the poem.

Cropsey's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, 1891, is a perfect delineation of the poem. Sensitive to its halcyon tone, the painting depicts the “knell of parting day,” the retiring action of the plowman, and the sweet burgeoning repose of the landscape. All elements of the scene, both living and inanimate, conspire in the closing of the day; the evening bell resonates from its tower as the sky shows the first shining, roseate glimmer of dusk. For a prototype, one looks to the glistening sky of *Moonlight*, 1833–1834 (New-York Historical Society) by Thomas Cole (1801–1848), Cropsey's ultimate mentor. As the transition into night occurs,

both Gray's poem and Cropsey's painting enshrine the thriving elements of daylight: the vivid green foliage of “those rugged elms,” the energetic spray of birds, and the keen glint caught upon the “ivy-mantled tower.” The viewer marvels at the riveting architecture of the church, identified as St. Mary's of North Stifford, located just outside of London.¹

Cropsey was incredibly skilled both as a leading landscape painter of his day and as an architect, having built his Gothic Revival estate, Aladdin, in 1867; a villa for railroad industrialist George M. Pullman in 1874; and a Queen Anne style revival for W. H. Webb in 1887.² Growing up in Staten Island, New York, without any exposure to painting, Cropsey was apprenticed for five years to New York architect Joseph Trench, who emphasized the importance of landscape architecture.³

Cropsey apparently found eager collectors for the subject of Gray's *Elegy*. In his well-known volume, *Book of the Artists*, Henry Tuckerman records Cropsey's work: “The first set of pictures of Stoke Poges—the scene of Gray's *Elegy*—was painted for Sir Danie Gooch, who has seven of Cropsey's pictures.”⁴

JCK

FROM APPLIEDORE ISLAND, COAST OF MAINE *p.7*

WILLIAM DE HAAS (1830-1880)



From Appledore Island, Coast of Maine, 1872

Oil on board

8 1/16 x 13 7/8 inches

Signed and dated 1872, lower right

Inscribed with title, signed and dated again, verso

*Rock, little boat, beneath the quiet sky,
Only the stars behold us where we lie, —
Only the stars and yonder brightening moon.*

*On the wide sea to-night alone are we;
The sweet, bright summer day dies silently,
Its glowing sunset will have faded soon.*

*Thick falls the dew, soundless on sea and shore:
It shines on little boat and idle oar,
Wherever moonbeams touch with tranquil glow.*

*Rock softly, little boat, the while I mark
The far off gliding sails, distinct and dark,
Across the west pass steadily and slow.*

*And yonder slender stream of changing light,
Now white, now crimson, tremulously bright,
Where dark the lighthouse stands, with fiery crown.*

— Celia Thaxter, stanzas of *Off Shore*, from the Appledore Edition



The coastal subjects of William De Haas resonate with a cool, crisp Luminism. Born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, both he and his younger brother, Mauritz F. H. De Haas, trained there and in The Hague, with William taking lessons under Johannes Bosboom, a Dutch painter of church interiors. Once in the U.S., William and Mauritz, who arrived five years later, established themselves as noted seascape painters. William took a studio in the famous Tenth Street Studio Building also occupied by such artists as Martin Johnson Heade and Albert Bierstadt. William exhibited at the National Academy of Design and the Brooklyn Art Association. His works can be seen in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Akron Art Institute, Wells College, and Cortland Free Library.

The largest island in Maine's Isle of Shoals, Appledore Island enchanted De Haas. The same environs inspired the well-known writer and gardener of the area, Celia Thaxter, to pen the poem above. Thaxter was also the author of an *Island Garden*, which took as its subject the Isle of Shoals and was illustrated by Childe Hassam. The scenes De Haas and Thaxter paint respectively with brush and pen rhyme in similar tones of color and mystery. Thaxter's verse resonates through the painting with its depiction of a quiet sky, a glowing sunset, far off gliding sails, and a slender stream of changing light that is tremulously bright. Chromatically, the painting is an absolute triumph in its blue and golden show of color, calling to mind J.M.W. Turner's theatrical seascapes laden with poetry and dramatic light.

VIEW OF NIAGARA *p.8*

ALVAN FISHER (1792-1863)



View of Niagara

Oil on panel

13 x 17 1/2 inches

Related works

Niagara Falls, 1823, oil on canvas mounted on wood panel, 23 1/16 x 30 1/8 inches,
Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut

ROAR, raging torrent! and thou, mighty river,
Pour thy white foam on the valley below;
Frown, ye dark mountains! and shadow for ever
The deep rocky bed where the wild rapids flow.
The green sunny glade, and the smooth flowing fountain....

—Niagara, Joseph Rodman Drake



Alvan Fisher was not only one of the first American artists to devote himself to landscape painting but also one of the first to claim the “mighty” Niagara in 1820 as a leitmotif after the earlier exploits of John Vanderlyn in 1801. Judge Daniel Appleton White of Salem, Massachusetts, commissioned the artist to paint multiple views of the subject for him. Accordingly, Fisher set out to conquer the falls in the summer of 1820. His mission proved fruitful. He immediately generated two large panoramas: *A General View of the Falls of Niagara* and *The Great Horseshoe Falls, Niagara*, 1820 (Smithsonian American Art Museum).¹

Fisher is known to have produced at least ten large paintings of Niagara. He also made numerous sketches and sent them to his patron with the comment, “They will serve to point out the most important parts of the scenery to those who have not visited them.”² Panels such as *View of Niagara*, a brilliant depiction of Horseshoe Falls, aroused much excitement and provided for viewers an intimate window into the nation’s favorite natural wonder. Intent on marketing his Niagara subjects, Fisher found a ready audience for them. As far south as Charleston, South Carolina, he posted a local advertisement stating that he had some Niagara views to sell.³

View of Niagara displays the influence of the Picturesque aesthetic in Fisher’s work. The falls, while monumental, do not overwhelm the viewer with their raw power. They fit within the scenic molding of sloping rocks and mountains and are delicately framed by the surrounding foliage, much as Claude Lorrain composed a landscape. On a picturesque touring retreat, the figures wander about and behold the magnificence of the falls, comparing it to the illustrations in their guidebook.

Fisher notes their manner and details of their courtly dress, accessories such as the walking staff, and their dog, its attention riveted on something altogether different. The painting stands not only as a revelation of the falls’ sublime beauty but also as an image of the way Americans of the time would have experienced it.

Fisher’s *oeuvre* included landscapes of upper New York, western Massachusetts, and Connecticut, where he painted Montevideo, Daniel Wadsworth’s country seat near Hartford. He boasted other esteemed patrons including Thomas H. Perkins, The Honorable Josiah Quincy, and Henry Pickering.⁴ Born in Needham, Massachusetts, and based in Boston, Fisher was also commissioned to depict views of Harvard College.

JCK

AUTUMN ON CATSKILL CREEK *p.9*

HERMANN FUECHSEL (1833-1915)



Autumn on Catskill Creek, 1870

Oil on canvas

14 x 24 inches

Signed, dated 1870 and inscribed NYC, lower right

There is one season when the American forest surpasses all the world in gorgeousness—that is the autumnal;—then every hill and dale is riant in the luxury of color—every hue is there, from the liveliest green to deepest purple—from the most golden yellow to the intensest crimson. The artist looks despairingly upon the glowing landscape, and in the old world his truest imitations of the American forest, at this season, are called falsely bright, and scenes in Fairy Land.

The sky will next demand our attention. The soul of all scenery, in it are the fountains of light, and shade, and color. Whatever expression the sky takes, the features of the landscape are affected in unison, whether it be the serenity of the summer's blue, or the dark tumult of the storm. It is the sky that makes the earth so lovely at sunrise, and so splendid at sunset. In the one it breathes over the earth the crystal-like ether, in the other the liquid gold.

—Thomas Cole, *Essay on American Scenery*



Cole's essay seems to best describe the ebullient manner with which Hermann Fuechsel approached the beauty of the American autumn. German born, he was a student of Carl Frederick Lessing at the Düsseldorf Academy, the venue where he met fellow painters Albert Bierstadt and Worthington Whittredge.¹ Fuechsel settled in New York City in 1858 and occupied a space in the Tenth Street Studio Building.

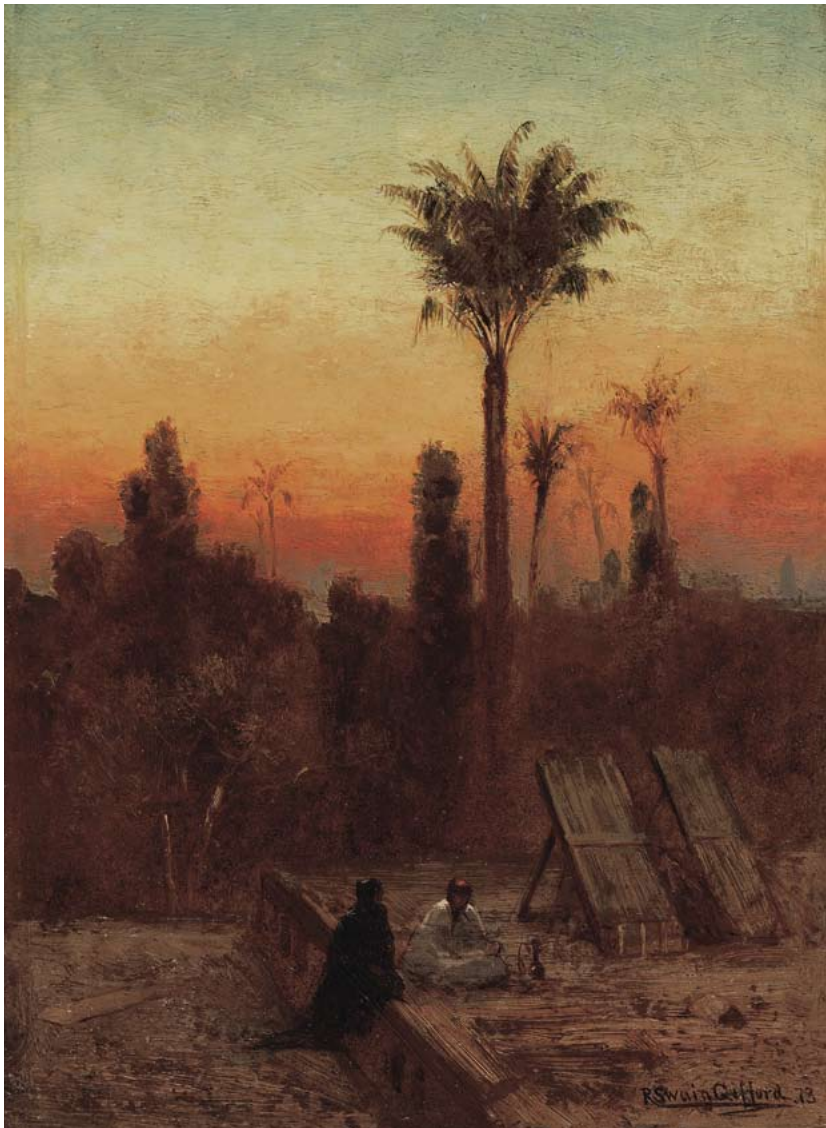
Light-infused depictions, Fuechsel's landscapes are rich in atmosphere. *Autumn on Catskill Creek* is an all encompassing scene of the luminous light and lush foliage to be found in the untainted Catskill region. Fuechsel leaves no intricacy unexplored. He subtly paints the translucent veiling of colored hues shed upon the land by the glowing halo above. A New York critic from the *Weekly Review* describes a similar landscape by Fuechsel so:

*A soft sunshine lies like a veil over mountain and watery depth; the air indicates the serene repose of nature... We are struck at once with the deep poetical feeling that has inspired it, the charming unity in idea and execution, combined with careful manipulation, and complete fidelity to beauty of nature without any forced effects.*²

In the 1860s, Fuechsel was showing his work at various venues including the National Academy of Design, Brooklyn Art Association, and galleries in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Berlin, Germany. He was also elected a member of the Artist's Fund Society. The artist focused on depicting the Hudson River region, various views of the Adirondack Mountains and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. His works can now be appreciated in the collections of the Hudson River Museum, Walker Art Center, Wadsworth Atheneum, and New-York Historical Society.

ROSETTI GARDEN, CAIRO, EGYPT *p.10*

ROBERT SWAIN GIFFORD (1840-1905)



Rosetti Garden, Cairo, Egypt, 1873

Oil on board

11 x 8 inches

Signed and dated 1873, lower right

Signed again, verso and inscribed, "The Rosetti Garden/Seen from a house-top/Cairo, Egypt"

Morning and evening the deep sonorous voice of the muezzin calling the people to prayer can be heard over the strange, old town, impressing one deeply.

—Robert Swain Gifford, cited in *The Evening Post*, November 9, 1870¹



Swain Gifford, as he was known, journeyed to North Africa and the Middle East with Louis Comfort Tiffany in 1870. Their trip was documented on the front page of *The Evening Post* in 1870, “American Artists in Northern Africa,” and it was in this article that Gifford’s comment above was cited. One can imagine the muezzin’s calls resounding through the twilight in *Rosetti Garden, Cairo, Egypt*, 1873, a mesmerizing souvenir of his exotic sojourn. The painting captures not only a sense of the city’s melodic echoes but also its riveting color and solemn poise. Gifford and Tiffany were both struck by the area’s rich tapestry of colors. In 1917, Tiffany addressed the Rembrandt Club in Brooklyn with a speech recalling his trip with Gifford: “When first I had a chance to travel in the East and to paint where the people and the buildings are also clad in beautiful hues, the preeminence of color in the world was brought forcibly to my attention.”² In *Rosetti Garden, Cairo, Egypt*, the dramatic colors of sunset express the richness and elegance of the surrounding architecture. The deep rainbow of lavender, orange, yellow, and blue-green hues extends a magical penumbra over the series of minarets and towering palms extending into the distance.

Swain Gifford was celebrated for his Orientalist subjects, not only for their beauty but also for their documentation of the culture and customs they portray. For instance, in *Rosetti Garden, Cairo, Egypt*, Gifford depicts a casual evening shared by the two figures but is careful to note the use of a water pipe or hookah as well as details of garb, particularly the white jaballah. According to the research of Cara Seitchek, a jaballah is “an ankle-length cloak with long, straight sleeves and a hood made from goat or camel hair and worn by both sexes.”³

Apparently, a white jaballah would be a more expensive garment as “white cloth required extensive bleaching to remove the natural colors of animal hair that range from yellow to gray.”⁴ Gifford and Tiffany’s great artistic and anthropological contributions were well received. After returning from their trip, the two artists mounted an exhibition at the New York YMCA with material culled from their travels, including their paintings as well as souvenirs such as costumes and headdresses.⁵

It is quite possible that Gifford met Tiffany through their mutual friend Samuel Colman, with whom Gifford shared a studio in New York beginning in 1866. Gifford was made an associate of the National Academy the next year and later a full academician in 1878. He was among those invited to contribute illustrations for *Picturesque America*, an important tome edited by William Cullen Bryant in 1869. Gifford received other honors including gold medals at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia of 1876, the Pan-American Exposition of 1901, and the Charleston Exposition of 1902. He was lauded both for such dazzling Orientalist subjects as *Rosetti Garden, Cairo, Egypt*, and such somber, poetic Tonalist scenes as *Near the Coast* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art).

JCK

THE HUDSON RIVER AT TROY, NY *p.11*

WILLIAM M. HART (1823-1894)



The Hudson River at Troy, NY, 1849

Watercolor on paper

6⁵/₈ x 12¹/₈ inches (sight size)

Signed and dated 1849, lower left

Provenance

Private Collection, Florida

Hart reproduces the beautiful in nature with simplicity and effect.

—Henry Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*¹



The site of *The Hudson River at Troy, NY, 1849*, was a place well trodden by William MacDougal Hart, a Hudson River School painter of major import. According to an early biographical account, “His first studio was a rude shed on a side hill near Troy.”²

Born in Paisley, Scotland, William was the older brother of fellow landscapists James Hart and Julie Hart Beers. After emigrating from Scotland in 1831, the family settled in Albany, New York, also along the Hudson and only about 15 miles from Troy.

At an early age, Hart sported all the trappings of a successful painter. In 1848, just twenty-five years old, he had already had two paintings exhibited at the National Academy of Design. Ten years later he became a full member of the Academy. Upon viewing his submission to the 1856 National Academy Annual, a critic for *The Crayon* reported, “There are some excellent studies from nature—the chief of which is that by William Hart.”³ Collectors were equally effusive when it came to Hart’s paintings. In 1879, critic G. W. Sheldon stated that Hart’s landscapes “may be found in almost all the auction-rooms where pictures are sold, and in almost all the principal private collections in the Atlantic cities.”⁴ Taken even further, Hart’s paintings now reside in the distinguished collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; and the White House.

As gifted in watercolor as he was in oil, Hart served for three years as President of the American Watercolor Society. *The Hudson River at Troy, NY, 1849*, demonstrates his delicate facility in the medium. Remarkably intricate in detail and scope, the piece presents an iconic, topographical image of the Hudson River, its waters connoting the lifeblood of the Hudson River School. It was an area of paramount significance. *The New York Times* relates, “In the 19th century, Troy, at the junction of the Hudson River, the Erie Canal and several important railroad lines, was an industrial powerhouse.”⁵

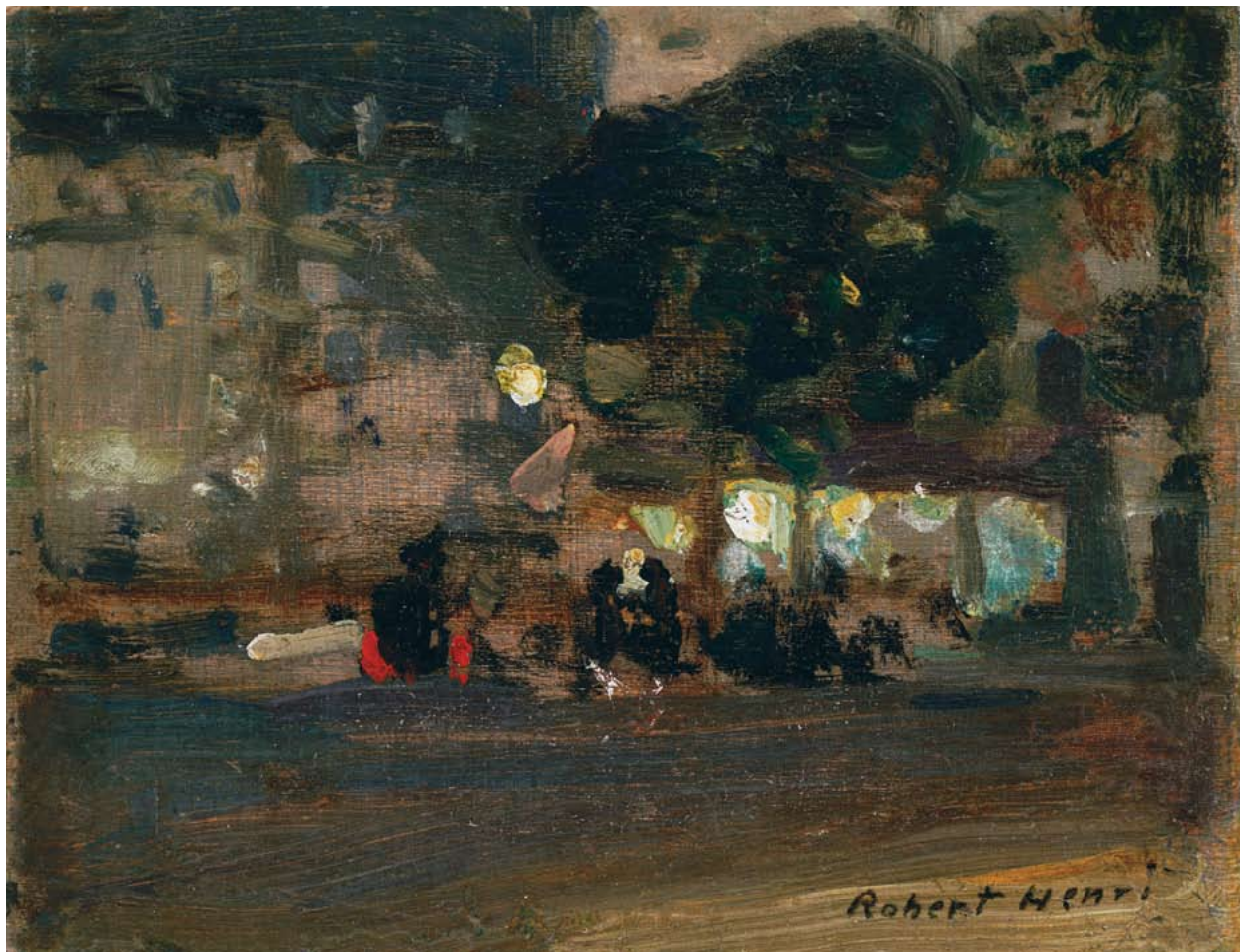
One surveys the activity abounding in the river, the movements of the gliding steamer and the billowing sailboats. One also admires the picturesque perch offered by the elevation of Troy situated upon the Hudson, overlooking the colorfully foliated environs and the gently washed horizon beyond. In the foreground, Hart’s fine brushwork delineates the gothic country architecture seated on high. It is a scene in which the verses of Henry Van Dyke’s famous poem *Hudson’s Last Voyage* resound:

*But what a river! God has never poured
A stream more royal through a land more rich.
Even now I see it flowing in my dream,
While coming ages people it with men
Of manhood equal to the river’s pride.
Stately manors rise
Along the banks, and castles top the hills,
And little villages grow populous with trade,
Until the river runs as proudly as the Rhine, —
The thread that links a hundred towns and towers!*

JCK

PARIS STREET SCENE *p.12*

ROBERT HENRI (1865-1929)



Paris Street Scene
Oil on board
4 ⁵/₈ x 5 ⁷/₈ inches
Signed lower right



Robert Henry Cozad, better known as Robert Henri, was born in 1865 in Cincinnati, Ohio. His artistic training began at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1886 under the tutelage of Thomas Anshutz, James B. Kelly, and Thomas Hovenden.¹ In 1888, Henri traveled to Paris, where he enrolled in the Académie Julian and worked with the French academic painters Adolphe William Bouguereau and Tony-Robert Fleury.

While abroad, Henri traveled extensively to locations such as Corcarneau, Brittany, Pont-Aven, Brolles, and Barbizon. After two years in France, he returned to Philadelphia, enrolled in the Pennsylvania Academy once again and resumed study, this time with Robert Vonnoh. In 1892, Henri began his distinguished teaching career at the School of Design for Women and became the leader of a circle of independent artists, some of whom would later help form The Eight. He moved to New York in 1900 with his wife and began teaching at the Vetlin School as well as at William Merritt Chase's New York School of Art, today the Parsons School of Design. Later he taught at the Henri School of Art, the Modern School of the Ferrer Society, and the Art Students League.²

It was during his first years in New York that Henri was given several one-man shows and won his first award at the Pan-American Exposition. His innovative and expressive style of painting gained him much recognition; he was honored by numerous awards including gold medals at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. He was elected to the Society of American Artists in 1903 and included as an associate of the National Academy of Design in 1905.

The following year he became an academician.³ After protesting the regulations imposed on the exhibitions, Henri withdrew his pieces and worked on a more progressive form of art, one that was committed to social issues and relevant to everyday life.

According to art historian Sarah Burns, Henri “promoted an ideology of life, energy and vitalism.”⁴ His mode of expression was to capture the urban working class, city streets, and the common person. The goal was for his art to appeal to all types and for artists to express their individuality.

Early in his career, while still in France, Henri executed several *pochades*, prize vignettes of Parisian streets. *Paris Street Scene* exemplifies the powerful brushwork and limited palette that was so distinct in his work. It is through these formal qualities that Henri captures the mysterious character of a night spent on the streets of Paris. He keeps the scene dark and highlights the composition with a few saturated colors to portray the flicker of lights upon the nocturne and the turn of carriage wheels. He sets the viewer outside the scene as though looking through a window, privately beholding lively action on this street corner.

RMC

A SUMMER LANDSCAPE *p.13*

HERMANN HERZOG (1832-1932)



A Summer Landscape

Oil on canvas

15 ¹/₈ x 20 ¹/₁₆ inches

Signed lower left



Hermann Herzog was called the “Dean of American Landscape Painters” by the *Philadelphia Record* in 1932, the year of his death.¹ Yet Herzog was born and raised in Germany, taking his training at the Düsseldorf Academy under leading painters Johann Schirmer (1807–1863), who also taught Worthington Whittredge (1820–1910), and Andreas Achenbach (1815–1910). When Herzog came to the United States he thoroughly embraced our land for its variety of beauty and heroic scope, applying his training to the magisterial depth of his vision. In turn, the American public embraced his art. The same year, 1876, that Herzog became a naturalized citizen and settled in Philadelphia, one of his major works, *Sentinel Rock, Yosemite* (The Reading Public Museum), was accepted into the International Centennial Exhibition.²

His biographer Donald S. Lewis writes, “Herzog’s empathy for his adopted land forever changed his art. It drove him to describe his surroundings with a poetic honesty and factuality unapparent in his earlier European landscapes.”³ Herzog imparts this forthright realism in *A Summer Landscape*, as a human camera transmitting the scene in photographic detail. The setting resembles the Pennsylvania countryside, its farm architecture, the dress of its inhabitants, and similar genre views he executed of the region, including *The Hill Farm, Pike County, Pa.* (Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Graham Arader III), *Homeward Bound* (Collection of Louis H. Rosequist), and *Old Mill Near Westbrook’s Blooming Grove* (Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas C. Walker). Apparently, Herzog was quite fond of this area, as one of his contemporaries remarked, “He has been almost a pioneer in one of the most romantic regions of Pennsylvania if not indeed all America...through scenery scarcely equaled in the world for variety of charm, for grandeur combined with beauty.”⁵

In its Homeresque charm, *A Summer Landscape* displays the artist’s talent for describing light and shadow. One critic in 1885 attributed this talent to the fact that “Herzog painted out of doors and that his rapidity of execution enabled him to seize and fetter the most transient phenomena of light and shade.”⁶ Light enters the composition alluringly from the left, casting a sharp and penetrating illumination upon the graceful laundress and the man fetching water. The painting is also exemplary of the artist’s gifts as a colorist, particularly in the crisp line of bright red, white, and blue laundry that divides the composition and leads the viewer’s eyes into the golden fields beyond. His sincere portrayal of the vibrant green flora and the tall leafy tree flourishing in the foreground denotes his rigorous artistic training. Another noteworthy feature is Herzog’s signature bird hovering over the scene. In its entirety, *A Summer Landscape* carries a patriotic and wholesome charm in much the same way as works by Winslow Homer and Eastman Johnson.

JCK

WESTERN LANDSCAPE *p.14*

HERMANN HERZOG (1832-1932)



Western Landscape

Oil on canvas

20 x 28 inches

Signed lower right

Provenance

Private Collection, Connecticut, c. 1980–2006

*Beneath the forest's skirts I rest,
Whose branching pines rise dark and high,
And hear the breezes of the West
Among the threaded foliage sigh.*

*And lo! thy glorious realm outspread—
Yon stretching valleys, green and gay,
And yon free hilltops, o'er whose head
The loose white clouds are borne away.*

*And there the full broad river runs,
And many a fount wells fresh and sweet,
To cool thee when the mid-day suns
Have made thee faint beneath their heat.*

—William Cullen Bryant, *The West Wind*



Hermann Herzog caught the imagination of the public with his soaring views of the American West. Giving strong pictorial expression to Western lore promulgated in publications like *Scribners Monthly*, *The Century Illustrated Monthly*, and *Harper's Weekly*, such panoramas as *Western Landscape* attracted a ready audience.¹ Herzog's Western landscapes have invited comparison to those of Albert Bierstadt. Both artists were alike in their rigorous German training and heritage. Herzog's biographer Donald Lewis makes the following evaluation of their styles:

*Bierstadt had the temperament of a showman, and his works, for example, Among the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California, 1868 (The Smithsonian American Art Museum), are brilliantly theatrical... Herzog had the temperament of a poet; his El Capitan, Yosemite (Sentinel Rock), 1876 (The Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery), displays a softer, more realistic mood.*²

The poetic quality of which Lewis speaks presides over *Western Landscape*. While awesome in scope, the landscape is softened by a colored atmosphere and the presence of encircling birds. Indeed, the painting resonates with Bryant's poem above. Analogous to the "branching pines" rising "dark and high" are the tall firs sweeping throughout the undulating terrain.³

The "fount" that "wells fresh and sweet, to cool thee" from the "mid-day suns" is reflected in the charging waterfall traversing the mountain ledge. This particular feature of Herzog's compositions won notice. Lewis comments, "The changing, transient quality of waterfalls offered the artist an endless number of visual possibilities.... In many of Herzog's paintings, the waterfall cuts through the earth as a force of destruction.... In several scenes, the dynamism of water is juxtaposed with the calming and more pleasing elements in nature, conveying the variety of nature's moods." There is a magical aspect to the presence of the falls and their iridescent lavender mist as well as to the transcendent glow cast upon the heavenward mountains. The painting carries a patriotic thrust in its limitless breadth and awesome height. Similar compositions of commanding grandeur enabled Herzog to court such royal patrons as Queen Victoria and the Grand Duke Alexander of Russia and later to secure representation in such museums as The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

JCK

ROGERS SLIDE, LAKE GEORGE *p.15*

DAVID JOHNSON (1827-1908)



Rogers Slide, Lake George, c. 1864-1873

Oil on card

6 1/2 x 9 3/8 inches

Provenance

Child's Gallery, until September 1977

Private Collection, New York

Exhibited

Cleveland Museum of Art, June–July 1975



The still reaches of Lake George held particular charm for David Johnson, a leading painter of the Hudson River School's second generation and creator of *Rogers Slide, Lake George*. Situated south of the Adirondack Mountains, the lake's distinct topography of soaring hills balanced against the water's flat surface provided inspiration for Johnson's pure, reflective style. Endlessly fastidious, Johnson mined the landscape for every beautiful detail, transcribing moss covered rocks, gentle water ripples, and each dewy leaf with uncommon precision. From the very beginning of his career as a painter, Johnson articulated his direct rapport with nature. On the reverse of his 1849 landscape, *Haines Falls, Kauterskill Clove*, Johnson penned, "my first study of nature—made in the company with J.F. Kensett and J.W. Casilear."¹ As his wording implies, Johnson approached the landscape as a reverent learner.

Critics of the time praised his delicate efforts, a writer for *The Evening Post* of 1876 remarking, "Mr. Johnson's studies show great care and earnestness in their execution, and their freshness of color and purity are pleasant reminders of our meadows and forests as seen in nature."² Johnson's Lake George subjects were exhibited at the National Academy of Design and commanded many commissions. In its June 17, 1871 issue, *The Evening Post* documents that one Lake George view was "intended for the collection of Comptroller Conolly."³

It is most likely the period between the mid 1860s and early 1870s to which *Rogers Slide, Lake George* belongs. Johnson painted other versions of this scene, including *Rogers Slide, Lake George*, 1870, oil on canvas, 13 1/2 x 21 3/8 inches (Jean and Alvin Snowiss Collection), *Rogers Slide, Lake George, NY*, 1864, oil on canvas, 12 x 20 inches (formerly with Knoedler & Company).

Commenting on this part of the artist's career, scholar Gwendolyn Owens observes, "By the 1870s, Johnson's technique was tight and controlled; rich colors and evocative compositional structures, in combination with finely honed realistic detail, place his Lake George paintings among his finest. The minute, almost invisible strokes with a fine brush create an effect of Luminist transparency; forgetting the painterly surface and the painter's subjectivity, viewers are drawn into a heightened vision which seems unmediated—a transcendental mode of seeing. The light in the Lake George paintings is almost uniformly even, conveying a mood of serenity. Many of these works are built upon a similar compositional format: rounded hills closing off the vista in the background, shoreline trees and rock formations in the middle ground at the left and/or right, and an open expanse of water in the foreground."⁴ *Rogers Slide, Lake George* follows this format. A transparent window onto the serene scope of the lake with its boaters, the work depicts the famous slope down which General Robert Rogers trekked in snowshoes to evade the French Army in March of 1758. Keen attention is also lavished on the lithe tree branches and fine fall foliage lining them.

JCK

GOOD MORNING *p.16*

ERASTUS DOW PALMER (1817-1904)



Good Morning, c. 1863

Marble

16¹/₄ x 12¹/₂ inches

Provenance

The artist to Madeleine Palmer, daughter of the artist. By descent within the family

Literature

J. Carson Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer: Sculpture and Ideas* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983) pp. 31, 146, 147

Henry Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists* (New York: James F. Carr, 1967, first printed in 1867) p. 362

Related work

Good Morning, April 1863, Marble B., Collection of Richard Manoogian, Grosse Pointe, Michigan

This is Palmer's distinction—He looks to nature for the fact and to his own feeling for the rendering thereof.

—Henry Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*¹



When Henry Tuckerman, the well acknowledged art critic and historian of the 19th century, visited the studio of Erastus Dow Palmer, “It seemed as if by some magical process, Albany was transformed to Florence.”² So impressed was Tuckerman with Palmer’s great handiwork that he devoted a long chapter of his famous compilation, *Book of the Artists* of 1867, to discussing it. Among Palmer’s sculptures, Tuckerman acknowledged his accomplished *Good Morning* for “its purely ideal character” and “degree of excellence.”³ Most likely drawn from a tender incident with one of his children, to whom he often turned as models for his genre subjects,⁴ Palmer gave this piece to his daughter, Madeleine (the sister of artist Walter Launt Palmer). Since it was probably kept in the studio, it might be the actual example to which Tuckerman refers. In terms of its dating, under Palmer’s April 29, 1863 journal entry he “cast head in curtains (Good Morning),” and under his October 5, 1863 entry he “sent title of Good Morning for copyright.”⁵ A *Good Morning* sculpture was listed in exhibition records for the Sanitary Bazaar in Albany in 1864 and at a Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts exhibition of 1867.

Tuckerman was not the only one drawn to the beauty of this sculpture. Alfred Woltzmann, as stated in his widely dispersed publication *Ein amerikanischer Bildhauer*, “saw the work as unrivaled among the genre subjects of modern sculpture, especially for the rendering of the mischievous good humor of the facial expression.”⁶ Palmer’s biographer J. Carson Webster was also struck by the piece, calling it “a convincing projection of a good humored and playful moment in the life of a child; the contrast of high and low relief is effectively used in relation to the sudden emergence of the child’s head from the curtains.” The sculpture carries the quality of an apparition in the projecting appearance not only of the child’s delicate face, locks, arm, and hand but also something of its spirit and lighthearted expression.

The sculpture thereby merges the timeless classicism of Palmer’s flawless technique with the everyday moment, the incidental treasures of human interaction.

Palmer was fully embraced by the art lovers of his day. In 1850, he received a commission to design the State Arms, a large relief meant for the Washington Monument. He collected prizes at the American Art Union and the National Academy of Design. *The Literary World*, when reviewing three busts at the National Academy in the spring of 1852, saw in them “all that is most earnest and pure.”⁷ When Palmer decided not to exhibit at the National Academy because of poor lighting in the sculpture gallery, he received a letter from Asher B. Durand and William Cullen Bryant asking him to reconsider. Then, when his famous *White Captive* was exhibited at William Schaus on Broadway in New York, one report documented 3,000 people in attendance in the first fortnight.⁸ Palmer was also recognized for his intellectual gifts; his January 1856 submission to the *Crayon*, “Philosophy of the Ideal,” was requested for reprint in *Putnam’s* 1856 issue.

JCK

SLUMBERING BROOK *p.17*

WALTER LAUNT PALMER (1854-1932)



Slumbering Brook

Mixed media on paper

20 x 24 inches (sight size)

Signed lower left

Provenance

Private Collection, California

*The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree*

*Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.*

—Robert Frost, *Dust of Snow*



Endowed with remarkable skill, Walter Launt Palmer was surrounded by creative talent very early in his life.

As the son of master sculptor Erastus Dow Palmer, he was introduced to the arts not only by his father but also by the many artists who visited the family home in Albany, New York: “Among them were Frederic E. Church, Kensett, McEntee and Hubbard.”¹ In fact, these artists may have steered young Palmer towards painting instead of sculpture.

Palmer began his formal artistic training under Charles Loring Elliot, and by 1870 he was put under the schooling of Frederic Church at Olana, his estate near Hudson, New York. By 1873, Palmer made one of many trips abroad to work with Emile Carolus-Duran. It was at this time that he met John Singer Sargent, who was highly influential and also a student of Carolus-Duran.²

Palmer spent much time in Europe, drawn by his growing interest in French Impressionism and his attraction to Venice for subject matter. Upon returning to the United States, he settled once again in Albany, where artists such as William and James Hart, Homer Dodge Martin, and Edward Gay were all working. He did, however, spend a short period of time in New York City at the well known Tenth Street Studio Building.

The artist won numerous awards and honors during his career, including a prize at the National Academy of Design in 1887, a medal at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, a gold medal at the Philadelphia Art Club, and a prize at the Paris Exposition of 1900. His works were shown at the Brooklyn Art Association, the Boston Art Club, and the Corcoran Gallery Biennials.

His paintings commanded the admiration of critics and are now featured in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the Butler Institute of Art among other important institutions.

Slumbering Brook is a prime example of the magical snow scenes for which Palmer became so well regarded. He has been credited as the first painter to use tones of blue when delineating the substance of snow. A true colorist in his unconventional use of pinks and lavenders, Palmer depicts the sunlit reflections of color while maintaining the pure white character of snow. Using tonal contrasts, Palmer builds a chiseled sculpture out of the fallen snow, animating the snow-swept surface of the woodland floor and the frozen brook beneath. Palmer towers the landscape with emerald and lavender evergreens that form a canopy over this enchanting forest.

RMC

HARBOR-FINISTÈRE *p.18*

MAURICE BRAZIL PRENDERGAST (1858-1924)



Harbor-Finistère, c. 1907

Oil on board

5 1/2 x 8 5/8 inches

Signed lower left

Provenance

Kraushaar Galleries, New York

William B. Jaffe, 1951

Babcock Galleries, New York

R. Phillips, purchased from the above: May 21, 1955

Descent within the family of the above until 2006

Literature

Clark, Carol, Nancy Mowll Matthews and Gwendolyn Owens,

Maurice Brazil Prendergast, Charles Prendergast: A Catalogue

Raisonné (Williams College Museum of Art, 1990) p. 647, no. 1831

Perhaps even more than his associates, [Prendergast] transformed the mundane world of city parks and day-trip beaches into glorious feasts of movement, color and pattern.

—Arlene Katz Nichols¹



As stated above, Maurice Brazil Prendergast could distill magic from everyday life, making the most public settings at once intimate and elegant. A brilliant vignette, *Harbor-Finistère* displays this perfectly. Although born in Newfoundland and educated in Boston, Prendergast first achieved this synthesis in Paris. With the intention of becoming an artist, he left Boston for Paris in 1891 with his brother, Charles (a talented frame maker and artist), enrolling at the Académie Julian and the Atelier Colarossi. Art historian Carol Clark later documented his early exploits as an artist-flâneur:

*While in Paris Prendergast filled dozens of sheets of paper with a single subject, that of women walking. . . . He captured the fashion of the day in the world's fashion capital—sweeping skirts, small waists assured by boned corsets, full sleeves and pert capes, elaborate hats and veils. . . . These images set forth Prendergast's discerning attention to dress and carriage, for although he did not individualize them by facial characteristics, he observed anew each figure's comportment.*²

Prendergast's touch for female beauty finds delicate expression in *Harbor-Finistère*, c. 1907. The painting is fresh with the imprint of his Parisian *flânerie* and the potent influence of James McNeill Whistler, whom the artist admired. A mother fixes her daughter's bonnet before the dreamy harborscape filled with sailboats and awash in an azure light. The two are dressed elegantly in diaphanous gowns, captured with a soft refinement. Even before Prendergast went to Europe, while working in the Boston dry goods shop of Loring and Waterhouse, he had exhibited talent in portraying feminine accouterments, as he "sketched women's dresses that stood about the shop."³ In this work, the artist captures the essence of his figures' graceful posture and genteel fashion. It is not only the dress that is stylish but also the locale. Americans were drawn to the sophistication of French coastal towns

and emulated the artists that captured it, such as Boudin in his silvery depictions of Deauville and Trouville and Monet in his sun-drenched scenes of Saint-Adresse.⁴

In its high horizon and artful flatness, the depiction of the harbor borrows from Japanese woodblock techniques, another noted early influence. In many ways, the painting encapsulates the crux of Prendergast's style and merges an Impressionist gentility with a Realist facture. *Harbor-Finistère* is characteristic of the oil paintings Prendergast executed in 1907.⁵ It is possible that the artist exhibited this piece in the landmark Eight Show of 1908 at Macbeth Galleries in New York, as he favored his works of that size for exhibition, and critics of the time preferred his paintings of mild coloration.⁶

JCK

ON THE HUDSON RIVER *p.19*

FRANCIS AUGUSTUS SILVA (1835-1886)



On the Hudson River

Oil on canvas

12 x 20 inches

Signed lower left

Provenance

Private Collection, Clark, New Jersey, until 2006

A picture must be more than a skillfully painted canvas; it must tell something. People do not read books because they are well printed and handsomely bound.

—Francis A. Silva¹



Expression through light and atmosphere is the achievement for which Francis A. Silva has been called one of the most sensitive figures in the Luminist movement. A style that thrived throughout the middle of the nineteenth century, through the leadership of Fitz Hugh Lane, Luminism went beyond naturalism, combining meticulous realism with subtle, yet intensifying, effects of light. “The sentiment or emotion that luminists such as Silva sought to express was a poetry of nature that approached Emersonian transcendentalism.”² It seems as if his goal in painting landscapes was to facilitate a wordless dialogue between nature and its spectator.

Born on October 4, 1835 in New York City, Silva was first introduced to painting as an apprentice to a sign painter. After continued success in the trade, he set up a personal studio in 1858. Soon after, with the outbreak of the Civil War, Silva enlisted in the Seventh Regiment of the New York State Militia on May 17, 1861.³ He was appointed lieutenant and advanced to the rank of captain. After becoming ill, he left without consent from his commanding officer, resulting in a dishonorable discharge. By January of 1865 the issue was resolved, and Silva re-entered the army as a hospital steward.

In 1868, Silva married Margaret A. Watts and had his artistic debut at the National Academy of Design’s annual exhibition. Throughout the 1870s the artist made frequent trips along the Northeast seaboard in search of tranquil coastal scenes from which he could draw inspiration.

On the Hudson River is a dramatic portrayal of a coming storm set against the sharp architecture of marine vessels. The scene uniquely balances the crisp geometric forms of the upright ships and their billowing sails against the all-powerful and somewhat amorphous substance of water and clouds. The depiction of the Hudson carries visual metaphors in all of its elements. Silva counterpoises the psychology of the storm-laden sky against an

optimistic breaking light to heighten the drama of the scene, also incorporating a lighthouse in the distance, symbolic of endurance and strength, as well as flags to express a sense of national pride and hope. A spatial recession of the ships creates a line into the distance, highlighting the distinctive brow of the Palisades. Silva displays his mastery of scale with all of these features, especially the buoy set close to the picture plane, anchoring the viewer into the scene.

On the Hudson River exemplifies the crisp draftsmanship, poetic poise, and expressive light with which Silva imbued his best works. Here his flawless Luminist technique captures a truth in nature and pairs it with underlying meaning.

RMC

PASTORAL LANDSCAPE *p.20*

[Spring on the Little Miami, Ohio]

WILLIAM LOUIS SONNTAG (1822-1900)



Pastoral Landscape [Spring on the Little Miami, Ohio]

Oil on canvas

10 x 18 inches

Signed lower left

Provenance

Private Collection, Upper Montclair, New Jersey before 1960-2001

Daughter of the above, by descent, 2001-2006

Literature

(probably) *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, 6th year supplement (1861), no. 65

(probably) Moure, Nancy Duston Wall, *William Louis Sonntag: Artist of the Ideal* (Los Angeles: Goldfield Galleries, 1980) pp. 103, no 77, as "Spring on the Little Miami, Ohio"

Exhibited

(probably) Düsseldorf Gallery, New York, 1861

Far inland, blended groves and azure hills,
 Skirting the broad horizon, lift their pride.
 Beyond, a little chasm to view unfolds
 Cerulean mountains, verging high on Heaven,
 In misty grandeur. Stretch'd in nearer view,
 Unnumber'd farms salute the cheerful eye. . . .

—*Greenfield Hill* by Timothy Dwight¹



In the 1850s and 1860s, while America pursued agrarian ambitions and ideals, a wedding between farmland and wilderness took place. This concept is gracefully documented both in the poem above and in William Louis Sonntag's *Pastoral Landscape* [*Spring on the Little Miami, Ohio*], created at the height of the artist's powers.

Born in East Liberty, Pennsylvania, in 1822, Sonntag was just one year old when his family moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. It was a prosperous time for the city. In 1827, Cincinnati experienced a boon from the construction of the Miami-Erie Canal, which paralleled the Great Miami River and connected the city with the thriving farm communities of northern Ohio, enabling commerce and development. It was in Cincinnati that Sonntag came of age as an artist and won the immediate patronage of major aesthete and connoisseur The Reverend Elias Magoon, a Baptist Minister, who commissioned him to execute a series of paintings titled *The Progress of Civilization*, based on William Cullen Bryant's poem "The Ages."

There was such strong demand for Sonntag's works that Charles Cist, an important local critic, "listed for him thirteen Cincinnati collectors as well as many collectors on the Atlantic seaboard."² His works were shown at the National Academy (where he was made an Associate), the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and the Boston Athenaeum and were later collected by such museums as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, National Gallery of Art, and The Brooklyn Museum. Accordingly, the Director of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad "commissioned the artist to paint that line's wild and impressive scenery as it crossed the Alleghenies."³ It is quite possible that *Pastoral Landscape* [*Spring on the Little Miami, Ohio*] follows from that commission since the Little Miami Railroad had already been set up in 1837.

Pastoral Landscape was most likely the 10 x 18 inch work applauded in the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*'s sixth-year supplement from 1861, which describes a painting of the same dimensions and subject matter and titles it *Spring on the Little Miami, Ohio*. Based upon our painting's tight brushwork and distinct topography, one can assume that *Pastoral Landscape* belongs to Sonntag's output of the 1850s and early 1860s and depicts the early green tones of springtime around the Little Miami River, and thus would have been included in this supplement. The *Cosmopolitan*'s critic confers animated praise on the painting: "Nature rarely has a happier interpretation than in this truly exquisite work."⁴ Indeed *Pastoral Landscape* exudes a bright and buoyant air over the fertile valley.

Full of winning detail, *Pastoral Landscape* depicts farmers busy in the afternoon sun, grooming the land for abundant crops easily transported by new railroad lines. The farming scene is blessed with lush natural growth and a celestial blue evanescence, mirroring the idea of an intertwined "pastoral dream and agrarian ideal"⁵ and ultimately of the "moral nobility and political rightness of American's yeomen farmers,"⁶ concepts later proffered in the writings of art historian Sarah Burns. In its pristine horizon and picturesque panorama, *Pastoral Landscape* represents the ideal of "perfect farmland" also echoed in Cropsey's *American Harvesting*, 1851 (Indiana University Art Museum).⁷

JCK

NOTES

Plate 1

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- 4 Unidentified author, http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/horo_beckwith.shtm

Plate 2

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- 2 Nochlin, Linda, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" first published in *Art News*, Vol. 69, No. 9 (January, 1971). Reprinted in Nochlin, Linda, *Women, Art and Power and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1988).
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Plate 3

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- 2 Driscoll, John, *All That Is Glorious Around Us: Paintings From the Hudson River School* (Ithaca, New York: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University Press, 1997) 34.

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- 2 Gerdts, William H. and Russell Burke, *American Still-Life Painting* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971) 67.
- 3 Gerdts, 67.
- 4 Larson, 72.

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- 3 Hall-Duncan, n.p.
- 4 Tuckerman, Henry T., *Book of the Artists* (New York: James F. Carr, 1967; first published in 1867) 536.

Plate 8

- 1 Kornhauser, Elizabeth Mankin, *American Paintings Before 1945 in the Wadsworth Atheneum* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) 365.
- 2 Cited in Kornhauser, 365.
- 3 Adelson, Fred B. and Jennifer Yunginger Madden, *Seeking the Realization of a Dream: The Paintings of Alvan Fisher* (Cape Cod, Massachusetts: Heritage Plantation of Sandwich, 2001) 16.
- 4 Adelson and Madden, xvi–xvii.

Plate 9

- 1 O'Toole, Judith Hansen, *Different Views in Hudson River School Painting* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) 37.
- 2 Cited in Kornhauser, Elizabeth M., *American Paintings Before 1945 in the Wadsworth Atheneum, Volume One* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) 398.

Plate 10

- 1 "American Artists in North Africa: Tangier and Its People," *The Evening Post*, New York, November 9, 1870: 1.
- 2 Seitchek, Cara, "Market Day Outside the Walls of Tangiers, Morocco," *American Art*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Summer 2000): 92.
- 3 Seitchek, 94.
- 4 Seitchek, 94.
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Plate 11

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- 2 Tuckerman, 546.
- 3 Cited in Sullivan, Mark, *James and William Hart: American Landscape Painters* (Philadelphia: John F. Warren, 1983) 4.
- 4 Cited in Sullivan, 6.
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Plate 12

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- 2 Nichols, Arlene Katz, *American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885–1915* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994) 347.
- 3 Gerdts, 112.
- 4 Burns, Sarah, *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art & Culture in the Gilded Age America* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1996) 75.

Plate 13

- 1 Lewis, Donald S., *American Paintings of Hermann Herzog* (Brandywine Conservancy Inc., 1992) 42.
- 2 Lewis, 15.
- 3 Lewis, 16.
- 4 Illustrated in Lewis, Plates 30, 31, and, 1, respectively.
- 5 Cited in Lewis, pp. 19–22.
- 6 Lewis, 30.

Plate 14

- 1 Lewis, Donald S., *American Paintings of Hermann Herzog* (Brandywine Conservancy Inc., 1992) 36.
- 2 Lewis, 37.
- 3 There appear to be aspen trees, prevalent in the American West, interspersed with the pine trees.
- 4 Lewis, 28.

Plate 15

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- 2 Cited in Owens, 15.
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- 2 Clark, Carol, Nancy Mowll Matthews and Gwendolyn Owens, *Maurice Brazil Prendergast, Charles Prendergast: A Catalogue Raisonné* (Williamstown, Massachusetts: Williams College Museum of Art, 1990) 24.
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- 4 Weinberg, 100.
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- 6 In the opinion of Gwendolyn Owens, telephone conversation, July 14, 2006.

Plate 19

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- 2 Baur, John I. H., "Francis A. Silva: Beyond Luminism," in *The Magazine Antiques* 118 (November 1980), pp. 1018–31.
- 3 Howat, John K., *American Paradise: The World of the Hudson River School* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987) 316.

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- 2 Moure, Nancy Dustin Wall, *William Louis Sonntag: Artist of the Ideal* (Los Angeles: Goldfield Galleries, 1980) 19.
- 3 Moure, 19.
- 4 Moure, 103, no. 77.
- 5 Burns, 5.
- 6 Burns, 5.
- 7 Burns, 5.

Front Cover: **Francis Augustus Silva (1835-1886)**
ON THE HUDSON RIVER (detail)
PLATE 19

Back Cover: **Maurice Brazil Prendergast (1858-1924)**
HARBOR-FINISTÈRE, c. 1907
PLATE 18



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