



HAWTHORNE Fine Art

GUY WIGGINS (1883-1962)

Columbus Circle, c. 1920

Oil on board

5 1/2 x 4 inches

Signed lower left

Guy Wiggins's scenes of New York kept the American Impressionist movement alive well into the twentieth century. The artist received formal training at the National Academy of Design under William Merritt Chase and later studied with Robert Henri. At an early juncture of his career, Wiggins had already won national renown. At the age of twenty, he became the youngest artist to have his work accepted into the Metropolitan Museum of Art's permanent collection.¹ In 1916, he received the Turnbull Prize from the Salmagundi Club and an Honorable Mention from the Art Club of Philadelphia. The following year, the Art Institute of Chicago bestowed upon Wiggins the prestigious Norman Wait Harris Bronze Medal and the Pennsylvania Academy gave him an Honorable Mention.

Wiggins continued to receive numerous honors throughout his career. In 1929, he won the Grant Prize from the New Rochelle Art Association and four years later was awarded with the Athenaeum Prize by the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts. The artist enjoyed enormous commercial success during his lifetime. His paintings were highly prized among such prominent institutions as the White House, which since 1959 has acquired two of his snowscapes.² Wiggins was especially noted for his snow scenes of New York City. As evidenced in *Columbus Circle*, Wiggins imparts upon the urban environment a pristine and tranquil quality on the normally bustling hub of that one would instead expect to find in a natural landscape. He depicts Gaetano Russo's (b. 1852) 1892 monument designed to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas in a shimmering curtain of blue-grey atmosphere while capturing the dynamic movements New York City.

¹ Walt, Adrienne L., "Guy Wiggins: American Impressionist," *American Art Review*, December 1977, Volume IV, No. 3: 102.

² Walt, 113.