



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

ALFRED T. BRICHER (1837-1908)

Lake Maggiore, Italy, 1858

Oil on canvas

27 x 34 inches

Signed lower left

*What memory is to the servile copyist, imagination is to
the true artist.*

—Alfred T. Bricher

Alfred T. Bricher was born to Elizabeth Muir and William Bricher on April 10, 1837 in Portsmouth New Hampshire, though he grew up and attended school in Newburyport, Massachusetts. By 1858, Bricher announced himself a professional painter, though he was mainly self-taught, and set up a studio for himself in Newburyport. Within a year, he had relocated to Boston.

Bricher's subtle and serene style classified him as a premier painter of seascapes and ranked him among such other notable luminists as Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904)—with whom he shared a studio building in Boston—and John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872). Bricher was known especially for his coastal scenes painted in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island and Long Island between 1870 and 1890. In 1868, Bricher moved with his new wife to New York City, where he exhibited for the first time at the National Academy of Design. As he gained a foothold in the New York art scene, Bricher exhibited regularly at the National Academy (elected an Associate in 1879), the American Society of Painters in Water Colors (of which he became a member in 1873), and the Brooklyn Art Association. During his lifetime, Bricher also exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, The Art Institute of Chicago, the Boston Athenaeum, and the Boston Art Club, among others. Today, one can see paintings by Bricher at such institutions as the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Due to its very early date, and because—unlike his contemporaries—Bricher never studied abroad (indeed, for an artist of this time period he traveled very little) *Lake Maggiore, Italy*, was probably painted from reference material. Here, Bricher depicts the town of Baveno—identified by its distinctive Al Campanile bell tower—a small town nested in the Alps of Northern Italy. Imposing Alpine peaks rise in



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the distance, executed in mutable tones of pink and purple that add atmosphere and grandeur to the scene. *Lake Maggiore* displays none of the inexperienced hand one might expect from an artist who had only recently declared his intention to be a painter. Rather, it underscores the inherent talent and tapped potential that Bricher, a self-taught artist, would only further reveal in years to come.