



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Paul Cornoyer (1864–1923)

Rainy Day, Madison Square Park, New York City

Oil on panel

5 ¾ x 7 ¾ inches

Signed lower left

Provenance: Ella Meyers, Millburn, Mass., by 1960; By descent in family of the above until 2011.

Paul Cornoyer is known for his Impressionistic vignettes of New York City painted around the turn of the century. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Cornoyer began his artistic training at the St. Louis School of Fine Arts in 1881. He went on to study in Paris at the Académie Julian with Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911) and Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant (1845–1914), and remained in the artistic capital of Europe until 1894, when he returned to St. Louis. With the encouragement of the Impressionist painter, William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), who owned a number of canvases by the artist and admired his particular strength in painting urban subjects, Cornoyer moved to New York City in 1899.¹ He began teaching at the Mechanics Institute and passionately recording the ambience of the city, becoming known for his gifts in both pursuits.

Cornoyer was a member of and frequent exhibitor at the National Academy of Design, the Salmagundi Club (which awarded his paintings prizes on three occasions), the Allied Artists of America, and the National Arts Club, all in New York; the Newark Art Association in New Jersey; Gallery-on-the-Moors in East Gloucester, Massachusetts; and the Society of Western Artists. He also exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Philadelphia Art Club, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Boston Art Club, the Corcoran Gallery, and the American Art Association of Paris (where he won a medal).

Today, his works can be found in the collections of museums throughout the country, including the Museum of the City of New York, the Newark Museum, the Yale University Art Gallery, the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Pennsylvania, the St. Louis Art Museum, the Kansas City Museum of Fine Arts, the Joslyn Museum of Art in Nebraska, the Butler Institute of American Art in Ohio, the High Museum of Art in Georgia, and the Seattle Art Museum, among others.

Rainy Day, Madison Square Park, New York City, depicts the East Side hub swathed in the silvery tones of a damp, overcast day. People, trees and buildings are reflected in the mirror of the wet pavement,

¹ William H. Gerdts, *Art Across America: The Plains States and the West* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1990), 53.



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creating a sense of the city in a state of flux. Named for James Madison, fourth President of the United States, Madison Square opened as a public park in 1847, but was re-landscaped in 1870 by William Grant and Ignatz Pilat, former assistant to Frederick Law Olmsted. In the late 19th century, Madison Square was the heart of one of Manhattan's most elite neighborhoods, replete with fashionable residences and hotels. Cornoyer returned frequently to the subject of Madison Square, with other examples to be found the Dallas Museum of Art, the Orlando Museum of Art, and the North Carolina Museum of Art.