



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

JERVIS MCENTEE (1828–1891)

View of the Catskills at Rondout, New York, 1870

Oil on canvas mounted on board

7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

Signed and dated August 12, 1870, lower right

PROVENANCE: Jackson's Auctioneers & Appraisers, Lot 863, 2008.

Jervis McEntee was born in the Hudson River Valley, in Rondout, New York, in 1828. Little is known of his childhood, except that he was much impressed by the poet, Henry Pickering, who boarded with the McEntee family and introduced the young boy to fine art, poetry, and literature. At the age of twenty-two, McEntee studied for a year with Hudson River School master, Frederic E. Church, in New York City. He then worked briefly in the flour and feed business, before deciding, in 1855, to devote himself entirely to painting. He took up a studio at the legendary Tenth Street Studio Building, where artists such as Winslow Homer, Albert Bierstadt, and Church himself worked and exhibited. In 1858, McEntee had an additional studio built next to his father's home in Rondout, where the artist spent many summers painting the nearby Catskill Mountains. He was elected an associate member of the National Academy in 1860, and became a full member the following year. During the Civil War, he fought with the Union Army.

During his lifetime, McEntee's work was shown at such venues as the National Academy of Design, the Brooklyn Art Association, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Boston Art Club, the Boston Athenaeum, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Royal Academy in London, and the Paris Exposition of 1867. McEntee's belief in the capacity of the natural landscape to arouse profound emotions often inspired him to exhibit his paintings with passages of poetry. His austere autumnal landscapes, with subdued tones and a pensive, at times melancholy, mood, set him apart from those Hudson River artists who preferred sublime topography and vivid colors. Today, McEntee's works are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., and the Cleveland Museum of Art, among others.

View of the Catskills at Rondout, New York represents one of McEntee's favored subjects, as well as his penchant for the sober phases of nature. Dense foliage sits heavy at the bottom of the painting, and its separated from the empty, gray sky by a delicate band of undulating mountains, all



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rendered with great clarity and economy in this oil sketch. As the sun disappears behind dark, heavy clouds, the solemn moment of twilight descends upon this still, August landscape. Indeed, key biographer of American Artists, Henry T. Tuckerman observes that McEntee's paintings “not only give the sensation but awaken the mood appropriate to the time they respectively delineate and suggest.”¹

¹ Henry T. Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists: American artist life comprising biographical and critical sketches of American artists: preceded by an historical account of the rise & progress of art in America* (New York: James F. Carr, 1967), 543.