



HAWTHORNE  
Fine Art

**WALTER LAUNT PALMER** (1854–1932)

*The First Snow*, 1898

Oil on canvas

16 x 24 inches

Signed lower right

**PROVENANCE:** Private Collection, Texas.

**REFERENCES:** Maybelle Mann, *Walter Launt Palmer: Poetic Reality* (Exton, PA: Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 1984), no. 303.

Born into an artistic milieu, Walter Launt Palmer was perhaps destined to become a talented artist in his own right. As the son of master sculptor Erastus Dow Palmer, he was influenced artistically not only by his father, but also by the many painters who visited the Palmer home in Albany, including Frederic Church, J. F. Kensett, and Jervis McEntee.

Palmer began his formal artistic training under Charles Loring Elliot. In 1870, he was placed under the tutelage of Frederic Church at Olana, Church's famed estate near Hudson, New York. In 1873, Palmer made one of many trips abroad in order to work with Carolus-Duran. It was at this time that he met one of Carolus-Duran's other young students, John Singer Sargent, whose work Palmer very much admired. The artist continued to take frequent and lengthy trips to Europe, and acquired a growing interest in French Impressionism as well as an enduring attraction to Venetian subjects. When Palmer returned to the United States, he spent most of his time in Albany, where artists like William and James Hart, Homer Dodge Martin, and Edward Gay also painted. He also spent some time working out of New York City at the well-known Tenth Street Studio Building.

Palmer was the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including a prize from the National Academy of Design in 1887, a medal at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, a gold medal from the Philadelphia Art Club, and a prize at the Paris Exposition of 1900. Today, Palmer's work is in the collections of the Smithsonian's American Art Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of the Fine Arts, Boston, and the Butler Institute of Art, to name just a few.

*The First Snow* is an early and excellent example of the magical snow scenes for which Palmer became so well-known. His use of blue in the rendering of shadows on snow was revolutionary



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and very influential. A true colorist, Palmer also employs pinks and lavenders to convey the sun's effects on the snow, while still maintaining a sense of its pure whiteness. Using tonal contrasts, he builds a chiseled sculpture out of the fallen snow. The artist would go on to paint numerous winter landscapes, each simultaneously conveying the snow's softness and its grandeur.