



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Charles H. Chapin (1830-1889)

Charles H. Chapin painted landscapes that conveyed the drama and emotional heights characteristic of 19th-century American landscape painting. His often bold and panoramic compositions captured the contemporary excitement over the wonders of nature seen in subjects such as the Grand Canyon and Adirondack Mountains.

Chapin had studios in Boston, New York City, New Orleans, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Constantly changing locations, he had an itinerant career as an illustrator, art teacher, and painter of portraits and landscapes in oil and watercolor. Many of his illustrations of Civil War scenes were published in *Harper's Weekly* in 1864.

He was a founder of the Lotus Club in New York City, and then headed to California, where he was in San Francisco from 1876 to 1877 and exhibited with the San Francisco Art Association. He then moved south from 1882 to 1885, where he was active in New Orleans working as a portrait and landscape artist as well as a painting teacher.

In the 1880s, Chapin also painted on several winter visits to Florida, where he focused primarily on the central and southern Gulf coast including the Everglades. These landscapes are distinct from his Louisiana paintings in their beautifully rendered tropical foliage.

Chapin also traveled west, painting *Lower Falls, Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River* in 1886, which is now in the collection of the First National Bank of Chicago. He was also noted for his portrait of Polish actress Helena Modjeska, dressed for her role as Mary Queen of Scots.

One of Chapin's best known works, *Storm in the Adirondacks*, is praised as a triumph of the Hudson River School style. Its dramatically darkening sky impending on a gently setting sun of delicate pinks and oranges tells a riveting story of impending, uncontrollable change. The painting's stunning detail and sweeping view are a virtuoso ode to the American landscape and its deepening metaphorical potential for a young nation.