



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

EDWARD GAY (1837-1928)

Born near Mullinger, County Westmeath, Ireland, Edward Gay was a highly successful landscape painter. At the age of eleven, during the Irish potato famine of the 1840s, he left Ireland, accompanying his family to Albany, New York. As a young man, Gay gained the friendship of the well-known landscape painter, James MacDougal Hart, and joined Hart and fellow artists on sketching trips to Lake George. He also associated with other notable talents, including Homer Dodge Martin, Erastus Dow Palmer, and George Boughton. At the early age of twenty-one, he began exhibiting at the National Academy of Design, where he would remain a frequent exhibitor throughout his career.

Following in the footsteps of the Hart brothers, Gay pursued art instruction in Germany, focusing on the study of landscape. Using revenue gained from successful sales of his paintings, he was able to train in Karlsruhe under Wilhelm Schirmer, who also taught Worthington Whittredge. After visiting his homeland, Gay studied and was inspired by the paintings of John Constable in England and the work of the Barbizon painters in France.

Back in America, Gay enjoyed great critical success. In 1885, he won medals at the Midwinter Exhibition of San Francisco and at the New Orleans Exposition. In 1887, he won second place in the Prize Fund Exhibition and had one of his paintings presented to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He subsequently won a medal at the St. Louis Exposition (1904) and prizes at the American Artist's Association (1887) and the Society of American Artists (1903). Gay received a gold medal from the National Academy, a tremendous honor. Gay's paintings can now be found in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, New York Historical Society and Nelson–Atkins Museum of Art.