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## Themistokles Von Eckenbrecher, (1842-1921), Norwegian Pine Forest, 1901 / - The Glow Of The Tree



980 EUR

Signature : Themistokles von Eckenbrecher (1842-1921)

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Paper

Length : 22 cm

Height : 30 cm

### Description

Themistokles von Eckenbrecher (1842 Athens - 1921 Goslar), Norwegian pine grove, 1901.  
Watercolor on blue-green paper, 30 x 22 cm.  
Signed, dated and inscribed in his own hand  
"TvE. Fagermes [i.e. Fagermes]. 26.6.[19]01."

- Slight crease throughout at left margin,  
otherwise in good condition.

- The inner glow of the trees -

Themistokles von Eckenbrecher often traveled to Norway to study the nature that fascinated him there. On June 26, 1901, near the southern

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Norwegian town of Fagernes, in the summer evening sun, he saw a small pine grove, which he immediately captured in a watercolor. He exposed the trees growing on a small hill in front of the background, so that the pines completely define the picture and combine to form a tense motif. The tension comes from the contrast of form and color. The trunks, growing upward, form a vertical structure that is horizontally penetrated by the spreading branches and the pine needles, which are rendered as a plane. This structural tension is further intensified by the color contrast between the brown-reddish iridescent trunks and branches and the green-toned needlework.

Themistokles von Eckenbrecher, however, does not use the observed natural scene as an inspiring model for a dance of color and form that detaches itself from the motif and thus treads the path of abstracting modernism. Its inner vitality is to be brought to light and made aesthetically accessible through the work of art.

It is precisely in order to depict the inner vitality of nature that von Eckenbrecher chooses the technique of watercolor, in which the individual details, such as the needles, are not meticulously worked out, but rather a flowing movement is created that unites the contrasts. The trees seem to have formed the twisted trunks out of their own inner strength as they grew, creating those tense lineations that the artist has put into the picture. The inner strength continues in the branches and twigs, culminating in the upward growth of the needles. At the same time, the trunks, illuminated by the setting sun, seem to glow from within, adding an almost dramatic dimension to the growing movement.

Through the artwork, nature itself is revealed as art. In order to make nature visible as art in the work, von Eckenbrecher exposes the group of trees so that they are bounded from the outside by an all-encompassing contour line and merge into an areal unity that enters into a figure-ground relationship with the blue-greenish watercolor

paper. The figure-ground relationship emphasizes the ornamental quality of the natural work of art, which further enforces the artwork character of the group of trees.

With the presentation of Themistokles von Eckenbrecher's artistic idea and its realization, it has become clear that the present watercolor is not a study of nature in the sense of a visual note by the artist, which might then be integrated into a larger work context, but a completely independent work of art. This is why von Eckenbrecher signed the watercolor. In addition, it is marked with a place and a date, which confirms that this work of nature presented itself to him in exactly this way at this place at this time. At the same time, the date and place make it clear that the natural work of art has been transferred into the sphere of art and thus removed from the time of the place of nature.

#### About the artist

Themistocles' parents instilled a life of travel in their son, who is said to have spoken eleven languages. His father, who was interested in ancient and oriental culture, was a doctor and had married Francesca Magdalena Danelon, an Italian, daughter of the British consul in Trieste. During a stay in Athens - Gustav von Eckenbrecher was a friend of Heinrich von Schliemann and is said to have given him crucial clues as to the location of Troy - Themistokles saw the light of day in 1842.

After an interlude in Berlin, where Themistokles was educated at the English-American School, the journey began again. From 1850 to 1857 the family lived in Constantinople, after which the father opened a practice in Potsdam, where Themistokles, who wanted to become a painter, was taught by the court painter Carl Gustav Wegener.

In 1861 the von Eckenbrechers left Potsdam and

settled in Düsseldorf. There Themistokles received two years of private tuition from Oswald Aschenbach, who greatly admired the talented young artist. After his artistic training, he undertook extensive travels, often accompanied by Prince Peter zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, which took him to northern and eastern Europe, but above all to the Middle East and even to South America. The paintings that resulted from these journeys established his artistic reputation and led to his participation in large panoramas such as the 118 x 15 metre Entry of the Mecca Caravan into Cairo, painted for the City of Hamburg in 1882. 1882 was also the start of a total of 21 study trips to Scandinavia, most of them to Norway, and the unique Norwegian landscape with its rugged fjords became a central motif in his work. Along with Anders Askevold and Adelsteen Normann, Themistokles von Eckenbrecher became one of the most sought-after artists in this field of landscape painting. Although Düsseldorf had been his home until then, von Eckenbrecher moved to Potsdam in 1887 and to Berlin in 1889, where he taught for a time at Conrad Fehr's art academy. In 1919 he moved to Goslar, where he founded the local art association, after having been a member of the Düsseldorf Malkasten from 1861-1887 and of the Verein Berliner Künstler from 1889-1921. On the occasion of Themistokles von Eckenbrecher's 100th birthday in 1942, the city of Goslar organised a commemorative exhibition showing 130 of his works.