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Emile Stahl (1847-1938) "landscape With A Rainbow" -- Alsace -- Schiltigheim -- Strasbourg



990 EUR

Signature : Emile STAHL (1847 - 1938)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 58,5cm

Height : 44,5cm

Description

Emile Stahl Schiltigheim, 1847 - 1938,
Schiltigheim« Paysage à l'arc-en-ciel » Oil on
canvas, 44,5x58,5cmSigned lower leftThis
delicate oil on canvas by Émile Stahl exemplifies,
with remarkable sensitivity, the tradition of
Alsatian landscape painting at the close of the
nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth
century. Faithful to his predilection for expansive
horizons and tranquil countryside, the artist
captures a fleeting moment in which nature seems
to hold its breath: the last clouds of a passing
shower drift away while a rainbow illuminates the
plain. This encounter between the elements
elevates the composition beyond a simple
observation of nature, transforming it into a
profoundly poetic evocation. The viewer's eye is
naturally drawn toward the luminous arch that

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discreetly emerges on the horizon. Rather than occupying the center of the composition, the rainbow appears as an almost secret apparition, delicately suspended between earth and sky. This compositional choice reveals Émile Stahl's subtle artistic sensibility, for he deliberately avoids theatrical effect in favor of suggestion. The atmospheric phenomenon does not dominate the landscape; instead, it becomes its silent soul. The foreground is animated by luxuriant vegetation, where tall grasses, reeds, and shrubs are rendered with fluid, vibrant brushstrokes. A tranquil stretch of water reflects the breaks in the clouds and introduces a moment of calm within the richness of the surrounding landscape. Beyond, meadows extend toward a gently undulating horizon, where wooded masses quietly close the composition without ever weighing it down. The entire work breathes the balance and harmony of an unspoiled rural landscape. The palette demonstrates the artist's refined mastery of color. Deep greens of the marshland converse with the warm ochres and browns of autumn grasses, while the sky unfolds in subtle gradations of bluish greys, pearly whites, and delicate silvery reflections. This shifting light, so characteristic of landscapes after rain, envelops the scene in a moist atmosphere where every leaf appears laden with the final drops of the passing shower. The brushwork remains supple and restrained, never sacrificing spontaneity to excessive finish. It is above all the rainbow that lends the painting its symbolic depth. Since Antiquity, this natural phenomenon has occupied a privileged place in the imagination of civilizations. In Greek mythology, it marks the path of Iris, the divine messenger who connects Mount Olympus with the world of humankind. In Norse tradition, it becomes Bifröst, the radiant bridge leading to the realm of the gods, while numerous cultures throughout Asia, Africa, and the Americas have interpreted it as a passage linking the earthly and the spiritual worlds. Biblical tradition invests it with equally profound significance. Following the Great

Flood, the rainbow becomes the sign of God's Covenant with humanity (Genesis 9:8-17), a promise of peace and reconciliation. This symbolic reading harmonizes perfectly with Émile Stahl's painting. Here, the rainbow appears precisely after the storm: it is not merely a meteorological phenomenon, but the herald of returning light, serenity, and renewal. Yet this spiritual dimension remains perfectly integrated within the landscape itself. Nothing is overtly demonstrative. Nature alone seems to convey the message. The restored calm of the waters, the gentle meadows, and the renewed clarity of the sky together form a genuine hymn to the permanence of nature's cycles. Within this deeply humanistic vision, humanity is physically absent, yet implicitly present through the cultivated landscape, carefully shaped with respect, where nature and human activity coexist in harmonious equilibrium. Through its delicacy of execution, this painting belongs to the great tradition of French Naturalist landscape painting while preserving a distinctly Alsatian sensibility. At a time when many artists were exploring Impressionist investigations into light, Émile Stahl remained faithful to an art of close observation, enriching the truthful depiction of nature with a discreet poetic resonance. His aim is not to reproduce a specific location with topographical precision, but rather to convey an emotion--the fragile, ephemeral moment when sunlight returns after the rain. Rarely encountered on the art market, this composition admirably illustrates the qualities that define Émile Stahl's distinctive artistic legacy: an exceptional sensitivity to atmosphere, a palette of remarkable subtlety, and the ability to transform a simple landscape of the Alsatian plain into a silent meditation on nature, time, and hope. The rainbow, a fragile bridge between earth and sky, becomes here a universal symbol of reconciliation, inviting the viewer not only to contemplate the beauty of the landscape but also to reflect upon its deeper meanings.

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