



PROANTIC
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The Footbridge - Henri Ottmann (1877-1927)



5 760 EUR

Signature : Henri Ottmann (1877-1927)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 46.2cm

Height : 38.2cm

Description

Provenance Bernard Toublanc-Michel Collection

Literature Henry Ottmann Catalogue Raisonné, Bernard Toublanc-Michel, 2020, Lelivredart, p.234 This work is one of Ottmann's later pieces, demonstrating his artistic development. In contrast to his earlier pieces, it is much more Impressionist in nature, utilising broad brushstrokes and non-naturalistic colour to a greater extent than his earlier works that took a more detailed approach. In particular, the use of colour hints at Ottmann's experimentation with Fauvism - if he had not died so young in such a tragic accident, who knows where this experimentation could have led the artist in his mature career. Henri Ottmann Born in Ancenis in Loire-Atlantique in 1877, Ottmann began his

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artistic career as a painter and printmaker in Brussels at the beginning of the 20th century. He began his studies in 1896 at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, but was interrupted the following year when mandatory military service in the 64th Infantry Regiment forced Ottmann to return to Ancenis. Abhorring military life, Ottmann faked his own drowning in the Loire. Whilst on the run, he survived by painting and selling unsigned work. It was also during this fugitive period that he met and married Marianne Capron, with the two of them fleeing to Belgium. It was in Brussels that Ottmann's first exhibition took place, at the Salon La Libre Esthetique in 1904. Shortly after this, Ottmann and his wife did return to France, where he subsequently participated in prestigious exhibitions such as the Salon des Independants in Paris from 1905, the Salon d'Automne, the Salon Societe Nationale des Beaux-Arts and the Salon des Tuileries. Despite this success at the Salons, Ottmann's early career was marked by extreme financial difficulties. As a result, his formative years as an artist were spent painting works that appealed to collectors and commercial galleries, rather than developing his own distinct style. As he gained more success, this individual style did develop, particularly in relation to still life paintings which, alongside nude paintings, are the subject matter Ottmann is most renowned for. Ottmann's oeuvre before the First World War was heavily influenced by the French Impressionist movement, particularly the works of Renoir, and he often exhibited within this artistic circle of Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, and Fauves. In 1911 and 1912, Ottmann exhibited at the Artiste de la Société Moderne at the Gallery of the French art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel. Durand-Ruel represented many prominent French Impressionist painters, including Armand Guillaumin and Henri Lebasque. In 1912, he also exhibited at the Galerie of Eugene Druet, a French photographer and art dealer whose gallery had exhibited works from Georges Pissarro,

Charles Camoin, Albert Marquet, Maurice Denis and Paul Cezanne. At the outbreak of the war, Ottmann was registered as a conscientious objector. Instead of a combatant role, he worked as a nurse for a military hospital in Ancenis - intriguingly, many of his fellow nurses were his portrait clients and patrons. During the years of conflict, he continued to produce art and hosted an exhibition at Druet's gallery in 1917. From 1919, Ottmann was involved in creating woodcut illustrations for the 'Drawings and Signed Wood' section in the Nantes-based literary and artistic magazine *La Gerbe*. These illustrations were displayed among others by Impressionist artists such as Paul Signac and Henriette Tirman. In the early 1920s, Ottmann exhibited at the Marcel Bernheim Gallery and the Exposition du Cercle Artistique de Bruxelles, with the latter exhibition displaying his works alongside those of Charles Guerin, Henri Matisse, Paul-Abert Besnard and Andre Lhote. Ottmann continued to exhibit to great success, enjoying shows at L. Dru and La Palette Francaise in 1926, and the Galerie Armand Drouand in 1927. His works were even exhibited as far away as Beirut, New York, Detroit, Buenos Aires, and Tokyo. Tragically, Ottmann's life was cut short in a car accident in Vernon in 1927. Driving to an exhibition of his works in Rouen, a burst tire caused his car to roll over in which Ottmann suffered a fractured skull and spine. After being transported in a coma to a clinic in Vernon, Ottmann tragically passed from his injuries at the young age of 49 years old. If Ottmann had not been involved in this tragedy, it is likely that his artworks and distinct style would have earned him a deservedly high reputation. Nonetheless, Ottmann's works can be found in many French Museums, including the Modern Museum and the Luxembourg Museum in Paris. A number of his works were destroyed during the Second World War, particularly his works in collections in Berlin, Hamburg and Nagasaki. Subsequently, the conflicts in the Middle East destroyed a large portion of

Ottmann's oeuvre, held in Beirut by collector Mr Charles Corm. Ottmann's surviving works are largely in private collections, and are very rarely seen or sold.