Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Rudolf Sauter (1895 - 1977)

Sun Through a Thin Mist

Pastel.

128 x 153 mm. (5 x 6 in.)

This small pastel may be dated to the spring of 1916, on one of the visits the young Rudolf Sauter made to his uncle John Galsworthy at Wingstone, his rented farmhouse home in the small village of Manaton on Dartmoor. As the artist later recalled, 'It was no ordinary or sentimental love of Nature which this spot evoked. Here, the rain and the sun and the scent of the land entered in and became so much of my uncle's own nature that he could never for long thereafter be quite happy apart from them…Even the enclosing fog, though it brought bronchitis to my aunt, made the wood fire and candles seem brighter and the little, low whitewashed rooms more comforting...At night there was a quality of stillness in the place, almost unknown in our present engine-dominated age…'

The present sheet is one of a small group of pastel landscapes, three of which were dated May 1916, loosely placed in a folio – inscribed with a handwritten label which read 'Designs, studies and ideas for pictures' – found among Sauter's effects long after his death.

Literature:

Jeffrey S. Reznick, War and Peace in the Worlds of Rudolf H. Sauter. A Cultural History of a Creative Life, London and New York, 2022, p.43.

Artist description:

Born in Bavaria, Rudolf Helmut Sauter was the son of the German artist Georg Sauter, who had settled in London in 1894 and there established a career as a portrait painter and landscapist. Raised in England and educated at Harrow, the young Sauter studied art in London and Munich, and exhibited his work at the Royal Academy, the Royal West of England Academy and the Paris Salon. Towards the end of the First World War Sauter was interned at Alexandra Palace in London and in Frimley in Surrey, where he produced a number of drawings illustrating life in the camp. (His letters describing the conditions in the camp, written to his wife in 1918 and 1919, are today in the collection of the Imperial War Museum in London.) Sauter was the nephew and heir of the writer, dramatist and poet John Galsworthy, and illustrated an edition of his complete works, as well as painting portraits of the writer

and his wife Ada. (In 1967 he also published a memoir about Galsworthy.) Sauter developed a particular skill as a pastellist and showed his work at the Pastel Society. He also exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours and the Royal Society of British Artists, and produced a number of lithographs of landscape subjects.

Sauter travelled extensively, often with the Galsworthys, and over his career exhibited landscapes and views of England, South Africa, Italy (particularly Venice and Sicily), Morocco and the westerns states of America, notably views of the Grand Canyon. Apart from showing at the Salons in Paris, he also had one-man exhibitions in New York (at the C. W. Kraushaar Galleries in 1928) and South Africa. His work was exhibited with less frequency after Galsworthy's death in 1933, perhaps partly due to the fact that, as the novelist's heir and executor, he was better able to support himself financially. Much of Sauter's work was destroyed in a fire in the 1980s, shortly after his death, and relatively few works by him survive today.