Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Edwin John ALEXANDER (Edinburgh 1870 - Edinburgh(?) 1926)

Grasses and a Small Heath Butterfly

Watercolour, heightened with gouache, on coarse grey paper washed brown.
Signed with the artist's initials E A at the lower left.
349 x 222 mm. (13 3/4 x 8 3/4 in.)

Watercolours by Edwin John Alexander are in the collections of the Courtauld Gallery and Tate in London, and elsewhere.

Provenance:

Private collection
Anonymous sale ('Victorian Watercolours & Illustrations from a Private Collection'), London, Bonham's Knightsbridge, 19 November 2008, lot 144
Private collection.

Artist description:

The son of the painter Robert Alexander, the Scottish artist Edwin John Alexander studied at the Edinburgh School of Art. In 1887 he visited Morocco with his father and the painter Joseph Crawhall, whose work was to prove highly influential on his own style. In 1892, following a period of study in Paris, Alexander travelled to Egypt, where he remained until 1896, living on a houseboat on the Nile. He made

numerous watercolours of Bedouin encampments and animals, as well as desert landscapes and studies of grasses along the Nile. Alexander eventually settled in Inveresk, on the west coast of Scotland, from which he made sketching trips and taught at the Edinburgh College of Art. He became best known for animal and bird paintings, as well as for his delicate studies of flowers and grasses, inspired by the restrained manner of Crawhall's work, as well as Japanese woodcuts. Alexander employed an unusual technique, often working on rough paper or cardboard, as well as silk or linen. He exhibited at the Royal Academy, the Royal Scottish Academy, The Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, the Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts and the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Water Colours. After suffering a stroke in 1917, however, Alexander produced little work.