Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Gisbert COMBAZ (Antwerp 1869 - Saint-Gilles 1941)

Wisteria

Pen and black ink and watercolour, on buff paper laid down on board.
Signed with the artist's monogram and dated 1911(?) at the lower left.
433 x 583 mm. (17 x 22 7/8 in.) [sheet]

This large watercolour was once part of the remarkable collection of late 19th and early 20th century Belgian graphic art assembled by Louis and Berthe Wittamer-De Camps in Brussels. The work was included in an exhibition of works from their collection (La Belle Epoque: Masterworks by Combaz, Léo Jo and Livemont. A Loan Exhibition from the Collection of L. Wittamer-De Camps) which travelled around America in 1980-1981.

Provenance:

Louis and Berthe Wittamer-De Camps, Brussels.

Exhibitions

San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, and elsewhere, La Belle Epoque: Masterworks by Combaz, Léo Jo and Livemont. A Loan Exhibition from the Collection of L. Wittamer-De Camps, 1980-1981, no.40.

Literature:

Yolande Oostens-Wittamer, La Belle Epoque: Masterworks by Combaz, Léo Jo and Livemont, San Francisco and elsewhere, 1980-1981, p.35, no.40 (not illustrated).

Artist description:

The leading Belgian Art Nouveau artist, Gisbert Combaz began his career as a lawyer, but in 1893 abandoned the legal profession to devote himself to art. He studied briefly at the Royale Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels before leaving in search of a teaching position to finance his new career as an artist. His first post was at the Institute Agricole in Gembloux, where between 1895 and 1900 he

instructed students of engineering, chemistry and agriculture in drawing. Much influenced by the work of the Belgian artistic and literary group known as Les XX, Combaz exhibited with the group's successor, La Libre Esthétique from 1897 onwards, and designed many of its exhibition posters. Known mainly for his poster designs and postcards, he was also active as a painter, lithographer, illustrator and furniture designer, and was a leading scholar of Oriental art. Yet although he exhibited between 1897 and 1914 at La Libre Esthétique, and also with L'Estampe, Combaz was never given a one-man show during his career, and only one brief article about his work was published in his lifetime. For over forty years Combaz taught decorative composition at the Ecole des Arts Industriels et Décoratifs in Ixelles, and later at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, where among his pupils was René Magritte.