

SA1169145

Circle of Walter Greaves
(1841-1930) - A Small
Nocturne. Oil on Board.

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA1169145

Date of manufacture: 19th Century

Dimensions

Height = 36 cm (14.2")

Width = 30 cm (11.8")

Depth = 1.2 cm (0.5")

Description

A charming moonscape of small proportions, signed 'W. Greaves' to the lower left. Circa. late 19th century. Walter Greaves (1841-1930) was the son of a Chelsea boatbuilder who had rowed Turner on the Thames. The American painter James McNeil Whistler (1834-1903) met him Greaves in 1863 and they became close friends, Greaves rowing Whistler out on painting trips at night and also assisting in the studio. Before going out on the river, they prepared his canvases and set out the colours. Out in the boat, they would observe the ephemeral effects of the lights, the subtle textures and muted tones, and absorb them totally, and then, the moment Whistler got back to his studio and before going to bed, he would paint his famous 'Nocturnes' quickly in one sitting, aided and abetted by Greaves, and left them outside on his hedge to dry. He worked from memory in the studio, rather than outdoors directly from nature. These paintings were intended to evoke mood, like a piano piece by Chopin. By the late 1870s, Whistler had dropped Greaves, perhaps because of the increasingly not-so-humble boatman's presumption (at one point he claimed that he had invented the Nocturne), and his hopes...

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