

Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith

Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C, 1909

watercolour on paper
12.6 cm x 16.3 cm

Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund
VAG 96.28.2



Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith

Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C, 1909



Image source:

http://www.elliottlouis.com/dynamic/artists/Frederic_Marlett_Bell_Smith.asp

Artist's Biography

Nationality: British-born Canadian

Born: 1846-09-26, London, England

Died: 1923-06-23

Born the son of an artist in London, England, Bell-Smith first studied art at the South Kensington Art Schools in London. He came to Canada in 1867, and worked in the large cities of the East as a newspaper illustrator, and later as the art director of Alma College in St. Thomas, Ontario. In 1895, he went to England to prepare a series of pictures on the death of the Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John Thompson. He was also engaged at this time to paint a portrait of Queen Victoria, an honor he referred to in subsequent works. He received further art training in 1896, when he attended the Colarossi Academy in Paris, and worked with such teachers as Curtois, Dupain, and the watercolorist, Alexander Harrison. Bell-Smith was a founding member of the Society of Canadian Artists in 1867, and was elected to the Royal Canadian Academy in 1886. His pictures appeared in a number of exhibitions, and his landscapes became particularly famous and praised. Bell-Smith was well known on the West Coast where he presented several exhibitions of his work in local galleries. He died in Montreal in 1923, an important contributor to the development of the arts in Canada.

Source: unattributed notes in Vancouver Art Gallery Library Permanent Collection Files

Artistic Context

Nationality: British-born Canadian

Training: South Kensington Art School, London; Colarossi Academy, Paris

Peers: Paul Peel; Allan Edson; Eugene Hamel

Group: Society of Canadian Artists; Royal Canadian Academy; 19th century; 20th century

Provenance: purchased from Heffel Fine Art Auction House in 1996

Subject: landscapes; Rocky Mountains; London and Paris street scenes; historical subjects

Other Works in the Vancouver Art Gallery Collection.

Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith
Mists and Glaciers of the Selkirks, c.1911
oil on canvas and hardboard
Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund
VAG 96.2

Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith
Cascade Near Glacier, B.C., unknown
watercolour on paperboard
Gift of Dr. Rodrigo Restrepo
VAG 2002.40.1

Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith

Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C, 1909

Further Reading

Boulet, Roger H.. *Fredric Marlett Bell-Smith (1846-1923)*. Victoria: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1977.

To the Totem Forests. Victoria: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1999.

Exhibition History

Exhibitions at the Vancouver Art Gallery

Colouring the West. July 1, 2000 - February 10, 2002.

This Place. June 29, 2002 - January 2003.

75 Years of Collecting: First Nations: Myths and Realities. May 6, 2006 - August 27, 2006.

Description	Condition	Committee Disposition	Acquisition Recommendation	Board Approval
1. <i>Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C., 1909</i> Watercolour, 5" x 6 1/2" Artist: Frederick Marlett Bell-Smith Vendor: Purchased at Heffel Auction	Excellent	Accepted Unanimously	Accepted Unanimously	NOV 27 1996
2. <i>Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C., 1909</i> Watercolour, 5" x 6 1/2" Artist: Frederick Marlett Bell-Smith Vendor: Purchased at Heffel Auction	Excellent	Accepted Unanimously	Accepted Unanimously	NOV 27 1996

Archival History

Board Minutes

Acquisition Record
1996-11-26

[transcription of excerpt]

SCHEDULE "A"

Works Recommended for Acquisition

PURCHASES AT AUCTION

5. *Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Islands, 1909*
Watercolour. 5" x 6 1/2"

Artist: Frederick Marlett Bell-Smith

Vendor: Purchased at Heffel Auction

An important study for Bell-Smith's canvas of Alert Bay of the same site visited by Emily Carr, Gordon Smith and Jack Shadbolt. This will provide an important example of the artist's work with aboriginal subject matter.

Conditions: Purchased with Director's Discretionary Fund

Curatorial Comments:

Committee Disposition: Accepted Unanimously

Board Approval: NOV 27 1996 [in blue ink]

Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith

Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C, 1909

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY
CONDITION / TREATMENT REPORT

ARTIST: Bell-Smith, Fredrick Marlett ACC.NO: 96.28.2
TITLE: Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound BC
MEDIUM: Watercolor on paper DIMENSIONS: 12.8 X 16.5
MARKS: Signed BLC "FB Bell Smith"

SUPPORT:
Heavy weight water color type paper. Good condition.
Support is adhered to backing of acidic card. Adhesive joining card to support appears to be water soluble. Acidic card should be removed from reverse of work.

IMAGE:
Watercolor. Good condition. Possibly some slight fading of colors. Texture of paper slightly visible in sky area.

TREATMENT REPORT:
Attempted to remove work from acidic support using Gortex humidification. Although the adhesive is water soluble it was not effectively softened using this method. It was decided to remove the backing by thinning it down as much as possible mechanically and removing the last bits of paper backing with a poultice of methyl cellulose in distilled water. Stains from the brown adhesive of the backing paper are still visible on the reverse of the work.
The work was refiattened after the backing removal by placing it between two sheets of Gortex (shiny side towards art) followed by light misting of deionized H2O on the top sheet of Gortex. After 10 min. of humidification the work was pressed between blotters and allowed to dry for 24hrs under weights.
Work was hinges with methyl cellulose and matted in an acid free mat.

Report By: Monica Smith
Date: July 7, 1997

Condition/Treatment Report

Conservation
1997-07-07

[transcription]

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

CONDITION / TREATMENT REPORT

ARTIST: Bell-Smith, Fredrick Marlett

ACC.NO: 96.28.2

TITLE: Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound BC

MEDIUM: Watercolor on paper

DIMENSIONS: 12.8 X 16.5

MARKS: Signed BLC "FB Bell Smith"

SUPPORT:

Heavy weight water color type paper. Good condition.

Support is adhered to backing of acidic card. Adhesive joining card to support appears to be water soluble. Acidic card should be removed from reverse of work.

IMAGE: Watercolor. Good condition. Possibly some slight fading of colors. Texture of paper slightly visible in sky area.

TREATMENT REPORT:

Attempted to remove work from acidic support using Gortex humidification. Although the adhesive is water soluble it was not effectively softened using this method. It was decided to remove the backing by thinning it down as much as possible mechanically and removing the last bits of paper backing with a poultice of methyl cellulose in distilled water. Stains from the brown adhesive of the backing paper are still visible on the reverse of the work.

The work was refiattened after the backing removal by placing it between two sheets of Gortex (shiny side towards art) followed by light misting of deionized H2O on the top sheet of Gortex. After 10 mm. of humidification the work was pressed between blotters and allowed to dry for 24hrs under weights.

Work was hinges with methyl cellulose and matted in an acid free mat.

Report By: Monica Smith

Date: July 7, 1997

Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith

Indian Village, Queen Charlotte Sound, B.C, 1909

Terms and Conditions

The images, texts, documentation, illustrations, designs, icons and all other content are protected by Canadian and international copyright laws. The content may be covered by other restrictions as well, including copyright and other proprietary rights held by third parties. The Vancouver Art Gallery retains all rights, including copyright, in data, images, text and any other information. The Gallery expressly forbids the copying of any protected content, except for purposes of fair dealing, as defined by Canadian copyright law.