



FREDERICK FRIESEKE (1874-1939)**Afternoon Tea on the Terrace**

Signed lower right, "F.C Frieeseke"

oil on canvas

55 x 57 in. (65 1/4 x 66 x 4 in.)

1905-1906

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PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by the Shelburn Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey

David David Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sothebys New York, May 1986

Sothebys New York March 1995

Private Collection, Midwestern United States

Private Collection, Dallas, Texas 2007

EXHIBITION:

Richmond, Virginia, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, "A Special Exhibition Sponsored by the Confederation International des Negociants en Oeuvres d'Art," April-June 1983

LITERATURE:

"L'Art Decoratif," Revue Mensuelle d'Art Contemporain, July-December, 1906.

T. LeClere, La Decoration d'Un Hotel American, p. 195-200

The International Studio, March-June 1911, vol. XLIII, nos. 169-172

E.A. Taylor, The American Colony of Artists in Paris, p. 263-280, illustrated

Afternoon Tea on the Terrace (1905-1906) was commissioned by Rodman Wanamaker as part of a mural for the Grand Deluxe Shelburn hotel in Atlantic City. The mural was later divided into seven pieces that were displayed in the hotel dining room. Frieeseke's earliest mural work was for his patron, Rodman Wanamaker. Other commissions included mural decorations that were installed in Wanamaer's New York department store in 1904 and 1907, the Rodman Wanamaker Hotel in 1905, and the Amphitheater of Music in New York in 1908. Art historians credit Wanamaker's constant commissions as being the sole reason Frieeseke was able to devote himself to painting.

Frederick Frieeseke was born in Owosso Michigan in 1874. He studied art at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1893 and then at the Art Students League in New York City in 1897. He moved to Paris in 1898 and studied at the Academie Julian and then for a short period at the Academie Carmen with James Abbott McNeill Whistler. Frieeseke's early work, consisting of images of women in interior settings, with their fairly close tonalities, reflects Whistler's influence on him. However, once he and his wife moved to the art colony in Giverny in 1906, where Claude Monet resided, Frieeseke came into his own aesthetic. In Giverny, they rented a house and cultivated a colorful garden that became the backdrop to many of Frieeseke's paintings. During his time in Giverny, Frieeseke mostly painted images of women, posed in either domestic settings or sun-filled outdoor settings. His main focus in all of his paintings was on the sunlight.

Unlike the artists that preceded him, Frieeseke's impressionism was an unreal construct; his sunlight and color were entirely synthetic. The parasol became a frequent motif in Frieeseke's work, both protecting his female models and further emphasizing their position as articles of beauty and the recipient of the viewer's gaze. Like many Impressionists, Frieeseke often positioned his female figure on a threshold between the interior and the outdoors, between the shadows and the sun. After World War I, Frieeseke and his family moved to Normandy because he felt France offered more freedom of expression than the US.

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Despite winning many awards for his work, which was acquired by a variety of museums, there was a decline in Frieeseke's popularity after World War I. Critics saw his work as outdated and overly conservative. It was during this same time that the mood of Frieeseke's paintings became more contemplative, his colors muted and somber, and his composition more static.

Today, his artwork is in major public and private collections around the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Musée des Impressionnismes in Giverny, and the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid.

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