



FRANK TENNEY JOHNSON (1874-1939)

Scouting

oil on canvas

13 1/2 x 17 in. (23 3/4 x 27 3/4 x 3 1/4 in.)

34.29 x 43.18 cm (60.33 x 70.49 x 8.26 cm)

44381

PROVENANCE:

Biltmore Galleries, Scottsdale, Arizona

Private Collection, acquired from the above, March 13, 1986

Frank Tenney Johnson (1874-1939) was a painter of the American West, and he popularized a style of painting cowboys which became known as "The Johnson Moonlight Technique". Somewhere on the Range is an example of Johnson's moonlight technique. To paint his paintings he used knives, fingers and brushes.

Johnson was born in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, on his family's farm along the old Overland Trail near a town then called Big Grove and now known as Oakland. Johnson's mother died in December 1886, and by 1888 the family had moved to Milwaukee. There, in 1893, he enrolled in the Milwaukee School of Art (absorbed by Milwaukee State Normal School in 1913), where he studied with a well-known painter of western subjects, Richard Lorenz. In 1895 he moved to New York City where he studied with John Henry Twachtman at the Art Students League of New York. In his early career, he was primarily an illustrator for Field & Stream magazine. He lived permanently in New York from 1904 until 1920, making numerous trips to the west to gather source material for his works that were completed in his New York studio. He lived on a ranch in Colorado for a while, later he went southwest to work on painting Native Americans. In 1920, he moved to 22 Champion Place in Alhambra, California where he shared a studio with Clyde Forsythe. At this point his easel paintings became more popular than his illustrations so he concentrated in this medium. Together they founded the Biltmore Art Gallery at the Biltmore Hotel. Between 1931 and 1939, he spent much of his time at his studio in Cody, Wyoming, just outside Yellowstone National Park. Many of his paintings were done there from studies inside the park. In addition to Field & Stream, he also contributed to Cosmopolitan and Harpers Weekly magazines.

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