



**JESSIE ARMS BOTKE (1883-1971)****Two White Peacocks**

Signed lower right, "Jessie Arms Botke"

oil on board

29 1/4 x 24 1/2 in. (39 3/8 x 34 1/2 x 2 in.)

74.3 x 62.23 cm (100.01 x 87.63 x 5.08 cm)

c. 1925

45987

**PROVENANCE:**

Papilion Gallery, Los Angeles

Private Collection, acquired from above, 1989

**EXHIBITION:**

Ketchum, Idaho, Sun Valley Museum of Art, *Uncovered and Recovered: Women Artists in the Modernist Tradition*, February 12 - March 22, 1999

**LITERATURE:**

Kristin Poole, *Uncovered and Recovered: Women Artists in the Modernist Tradition*, Ketchum, Idaho, 1999 (illustrated pg. 24)

Jessie Hazel Arms Botke was an American female artist who hold a high place in the California School of Impressionism. She was born in Chicago in 1883, and became known for her exotic, highly decorated bird studies -- most often, they are pictures of birds, a large variety including white peacocks, blue peacocks, cockatoos, ducks, swans, geese, pheasants, and toucans, among others. The birds are shown in natural settings accompanied by carefully painted flora, her paintings are richly adorned with an abundance of detail. She also did other subjects including Indian figures, genre, and desert landscapes, and usually painted in oil but worked in watercolor and gouache and frequently used gold and silver leaf in backgrounds.

She received art training at the Chicago Art Institute from John Johanson and spent a summer with Charles Woodbury in Ogunquit, Maine. She traveled in Europe and in 1911 moved to New York City where she became a student of Albert Herter and worked at Herter Looms until 1915, becoming a specialist in tapestry cartoons. She also worked with Herter doing all of the birds on a mural for the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco and with Herter's wife as a private home decorator.

Returning to Chicago, she married Dutch-born Cornelius Botke, and they worked on murals together in Chicago for the Kellogg Company and the University of Chicago, Noyes Hall. By 1906, Botke had arranged an exchange of her paintings for a trip West on the Santa Fe Railroad to Arizona and California, and the Railroad acquired works titled "Hopi Indian Life" and "California Missions". She exhibited some of these western-subject paintings at the Art Institute of Chicago.

The Botke's first visited California in 1918, and in 1919 the they decided to move to

Carmel, California. Later in 1927 after an extended trip to Europe, they settled on a ten-acre ranch in Wheeler Canyon near Santa Paula, California. She lived there until her death in 1971.

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"Jessie Arms Botke is a unique figure among American decorative painters. She paints panels filled with white peacocks, geese, pelican and fish, with a rare combination of glowing imagination, exact and loving observation and meticulous craftsmanship." Arthur Miller, art critic of Los Angeles Times and Art Digest.

She was a member of the California Art Club, the California Water Color Society, and the Foundation of Western Art. She won numerous prizes including high distinction from the Chicago Art Institute.

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