

Basic Detail Report



Title: Sunrise

Date: c. 1870

Primary Maker: com.gallerysystems.emuseum.core.entities.RecordXPerson@3f85b

Medium: Oil on canvas

Description: Bricher roamed and sketched on the beaches of the East Coast from New Jersey, New York and Long Island, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine to Mount Desert and Grand Manan, New Brunswick. Beginning in the early 1860s he explored the effects of light and weather at different times of day in views looking over waves toward the horizon. During the first half of the 1870s he created a coherent group of these views, primarily along the shores of Narragansett Bay, using a silvery Luminist manner or with the warmer palettes of dawn and sunset. He took up the subject again from the 1880s until 1892. After 1881 Bricher maintained a home at Southampton, on the eastern end of Long Island, and for a decade painted the environs--perhaps the source of Sunrise. The artist's focus, however, on the effects of light and weather was not dependent on place, and the occasional reference to a location in a title may have had more to do with the marketing of a souvenir of a summer experience than with the depiction of a specific site. In Sunrise the mood of serenity is enhanced by the velvety stillness of the morning sky. As is characteristic of his work of the 1880s, Bricher's touch is

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painterly and his palette sensitive to nuances of color when treating the surf, sky, and reflections. A constant observer of the effects of winds, weather, and tide, he could catch the movement of surging waves and sea foam propelled by the breeze toward the shore or against the direction of waves and currents. The artist's scrapbook containing published illustrations of his work includes only two line-drawing illustrations of this type of subject: A Foamy Wave, a canvas at the National Academy of Design in 1888, and a watercolor entitled Sunrise shown at the American Watercolor Society in 1889. Similar to the New Britain oil, the watercolor shows a three-masted schooner to the right of center on the horizon and the sun rising into the sky with diagonal bands of clouds. JRB Bibliography: Alfred Thompson Bricher Papers, 1860-1892, microfilm, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Jeffrey R. Brown and Ellen W. Lee, Alfred Thompson Bricher, exhib. cat. (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1973); Daniel Edward Sachs, "Alfred Thompson Bricher and the Social Implications of Romantic Images of the American Victorian Summer Watering Place," Ph.D. diss, Case Western Reserve University, 1996. Dimensions: Frame: 28 3/4 x 38 3/4 in. (73 x 98.4 cm) Image: 22 x 32 in. (55.9 x 81.3 cm)