

WILLOW GALLERY



Wild Roses

Edward Cucuel (1875 - 1954)

Oil on canvas, signed.

Canvas size: 39.5 x 35.5in / 100 x 90cm

Frame size: 47 x 43in / 119 x 109cm

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, France

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Edward Cucuel was an American illustrator and landscape painter. Born in San Francisco, he attended the local academy of arts at the early age of fourteen. Three years later, after a short time working as an illustrator at 'The Examiner' newspaper, he went to Paris. There he entered the Academie Julian and the Academie Colarossi, later studying under Gerome at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts.

In 1896 Cucuel went back to the USA but he soon returned to Paris and worked as a freelance illustrator. After two years in the city, he travelled through Europe to study the old masters, settling in Germany in 1899, and working as an illustrator in Leipzig and Berlin. These were fruitful years for Cucuel's career, working for several papers and books in Germany, as well as other publications all over Europe, including the Illustrated London News.

Ever the curious traveler, in 1904 Cucuel decided to take a trip around the world. After reporting on the World Fair in St Louis, he went on to Japan, China, Sri Lanka, and the Mediterranean before returning to Paris. After a final trip to San Francisco in the wake of the earthquake in 1906, he returned to Munich. Aged thirty-one, he was ready to take stock of his life and career and decided to concentrate on painting.

Initially, Cucuel was heavily influenced by the early German Expressionists. He joined the artists' group 'Die Scholle', which was dominated by the leading artist Leo Putz and took part in the exhibitions of the 'Secession' in Munich. Cucuel's association with Putz caused him to adopt a more Impressionistic style, which combined with his love of Expressionism led to his distinctive imagery. Putz and Cucuel spent five summers living by the Chiemsee lake in Bavaria, where they painted nudes 'en plein air', which set the tone for his later work. In 1912 Cucuel successfully exhibited some of his works in Paris, one of which, 'The Tub', was also exhibited in Pittsburg, Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, and New York. In 1913 he became a member of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts and of the Salon d'Automne. In 1915 his paintings were exhibited at the Expo in San Francisco.

During World War I he lived in Holzhausen by Lake Ammer and later he owned a similar place at Lake Starnberg and had studios in Munich. For a painter of young beauties it was the ultimate environment to unite the sensuality and beauty of young women, enhanced by the sweeping waves of the lake, very often with boats, flowers and trees.

In 1921 he had a group exhibition at the Howard Young Gallery in New York and the New York Press was very enthusiastic about his paintings. In the following year the Grosvenor Gallery and the Fine Arts Society in London, the Walker Galleries in Liverpool and the Birkenhead Museum exhibited his work. The painting "Das Picknick" is still part of the collection at the Williamson Art Gallery and

Museum in Birkenhead. Exhibitions in Holland, Sweden and Denmark further established his immense popularity.

In the mid-twenties he went back to New York, but returned to Germany each summer.

The outbreak of World War II forced him to leave Germany to return to the USA permanently. Cucuel settled in Pasadena, California, where he remained until his death in 1954.

His work is represented at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburg; the Art Institute, Chicago; the Detroit Museum of Arts; the Toledo Museum; Rochester Museum in Toronto; the National Academy, New York; and many other important collections.

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Monday - Friday 9:30am - 6pm or by appointment

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