

JEAN-FRANÇOIS HEIM

FINE ARTS

BERTHE MORISOT

Bourges 1841 - Paris 1895

École française

IN THE WOODS, PARIS

Watercolour on paper

H. 170 mm; W. 234 mm

Signed lower left: *Berthe Morisot*

Several labels on the back, including one handwritten one: *donné à / J.J. (?) Journet / 10 mai 1960 / G. (?) Menier*

DATE: 1876

PROVENANCE:

Georges (?) Menier Collection

Given by him to J. J. (?) Journet, on 10 May 1960

Private collection, France

EXHIBITED:

Berthe Morisot (Madame Eugène Manet): exposition de son œuvre, 5 to 21 March 1896,

Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1896, possibly p. 38, no. 305, *Au Bois*.

Jardins d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, Galerie Guy Stein, Paris, 16 February to 2 March 1934, no. 60.

Having been taught plein air painting by Camille Corot at the start of the 1860s, Berthe Morisot became friendly with Henri Fantin-Latour who introduced her to Edouard Manet, for whom she modelled and whose younger brother, Eugène, she married in 1874.

Throughout her career, Berthe Morisot worked with watercolour, “the most triumphant watercolour of Impressionism”, where, according to Roger Marx, “she gave the best measure of her talents.”¹ Watercolour quickly stood out as a favourite technique for which her immense talent was recognized. In 1871, Degas bought the watercolour *Dans un Pré* and recognized in it the work of an artist who had reached maturity.² Shortly afterwards, Degas invited her to participate in the first impressionist exhibition which was organized in 1874, at the studio of the photographer Nadar. Among the works she exhibited were three watercolours that are similar to ours.³ Considered an equal by her colleagues, Berthe Morisot participated in all the Impressionist exhibitions, except in 1879, shortly after her daughter Julie was born. Berthe Morisot stood out for the confidence of her compositions and a quality of drawing, without sacrificing anything of an apparent spontaneity. The lightness of her handling recreates the feeling of an instant captured on the fly.

¹ Roger Marx, “Les femmes-peintres et l’impressionnisme. Berthe Morisot”, *La Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, décembre 1907, p. 496; cited in exh. cat. *Berthe Morisot 1841-1895*, Lille and Martigny, 2002, p. 116.

² Marianne Mathieu, “Aquarelles, pastels, dessins dans l’œuvre de Berthe Morisot”, *Berthe Morisot 1841-1895*, exh. cat., Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris, 2012, p. 25.

³ Exh. cat. *Berthe Morisot 1841-1895*, Lille and Martigny, 2002, p. 116.

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