

Impressionist landscape, Chateau in the Loire Valley

Eric Bruce McKay

\$4,500



REF: 2375

Height: 71.09 cm (28")

Width: 101.56 cm (40")

Description

Eric Bruce McKay (1907-1989)
French Château on the Loire River
Oil on board, circa 1960-1970
Signed lower right

Eric Bruce McKay was a distinguished British landscape painter whose luminous interpretations of France, Italy and the English countryside earned him a devoted following during the mid-twentieth century. Educated at the Hampstead School of Art, McKay travelled extensively throughout Europe, capturing the architectural beauty and tranquil atmosphere of historic towns, rivers and villages with a vibrant Impressionist-inspired palette. A regular exhibitor at leading British institutions, including the Royal Institute of Oil Painters, his work reflects a deep appreciation for light, colour and the enduring charm of Europe's architectural heritage.

This captivating composition depicts an elegant French Renaissance château rising above the calm waters of a broad river, most likely inspired by one of the magnificent estates of the Loire Valley. The imposing château, with its steep slate roofs, ornate dormers and elegant turrets, dominates the left of the composition, while a graceful multi-arched stone bridge carries the eye towards a picturesque cluster of riverside cottages and mill buildings beyond. A lone figure rows quietly across the reflective water, introducing a gentle narrative and reinforcing the peaceful character of the scene.

McKay's confident, expressive brushwork and brilliant handling of colour reveal the influence of the French Impressionists. Broad passages of broken paint animate the expansive sky, where drifting clouds catch the changing light, while shimmering reflections dissolve into the gently rippling river below. Soft greens and warm ochres balance the cool blues of the water and sky, creating a harmonious palette that perfectly conveys the warmth of a summer's day in rural France.

Rather than producing an exact topographical record, McKay sought to capture the spirit and romance of the French landscape. His paintings celebrate the timeless relationship between architecture and nature, combining careful observation with a painterly freedom that gives each work its distinctive vitality. The result is an image that evokes the idyllic atmosphere of the Loire Valley, where medieval bridges, Renaissance châteaux and tranquil waterways have inspired artists for generations.

Beautifully presented and executed with the confident technique for which McKay is admired, this fine oil on board represents an excellent example of the artist's mature European landscapes. It offers both decorative elegance and enduring appeal, making it an exceptional addition to any collection of twentieth-century British painting or Impressionist-inspired European landscapes.