



Carl E. Lawless (1894 - 1964)

Summer Bouquet, circa 1920

signed "Carl Lawless" lower right

oil on canvas

18" x 18"

Carl Lawless, a native of Illinois, studied at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts prior to World War I. As a recipient of the Cresson traveling scholarship from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, he studied in Europe after the war's end. Upon his return he relocated to Pennsylvania. He became enchanted by the shore town of Mystic, Connecticut when visiting a married couple with whom he had studied in Europe. He later purchased a home in Mystic in 1925 and immediately became an active member in the budding local art association (1).

He developed his own distinctive landscape and still life style, profiting from the friendship and aesthetics of Charles Harold Davis (1856-1933). Davis, too, is well known for his richly hued compositions with an emphasis on the effects of natural light. *Summer Bouquet* displays an assured virtuosity in paint application, rendering, and composition. Lawless employs a deft touch, giving the blossoms a charming spontaneity. The colors used in the floral arrangement contrast harmoniously against a white base. Highlights and shadows make eloquent use of light, flooding the room from an unseen window, and the composition possesses a wonderful sheen.

Over the course of his career, Lawless was awarded prizes in exhibitions at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, the Connecticut Academy of Fine Art, the National Academy of Design, and the New Haven Paint and Clay Club. He exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery, the MacBeth Gallery, Grand Central Galleries, the New Haven Paint and Clay Club, and the Wadsworth Athenaeum. In addition to the Mystic Art Association, Lawless was a member of the New Haven Paint and Clay Club and the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts (2).

Provenance: From auction to the gallery.

Bibliography:

1. Priscilla W. Pratt and Lois H. Constantine, "Carl Lawless" in *News and Views* (1998), 7.
2. Peter Hastings Falk, ed., "Who Was Who in American Art." Vol. 2 (Madison: Sound View Press, 1999), 1976.

