

Wiggins, Guy C. (1883 - 1962)

Winter, Washington Square, circa 1935

Signed lower right

Oil on canvas

25" x 30"

Wiggins Goes to Washington (Square)

Guy Wiggins built his fame on Impressionist winter scenes of New York. He painted throughout the city, from Central Park down to Wall Street, often seeking out an elevated view from which he could capture a panoramic sense of the urban landscape. But of all his New York subjects, Washington Square was among his most favored. From the late 1930s to the early 1940s, he kept a studio on Washington Square South, and he “painted every angle of the Square from that window, at all hour and in all kinds of weather, as well as at all seasons of the year” (1).

Wiggins’ fascination with winter scenes began about 1921, when he painted a small view of Washington Square for an exhibition in Richmond, Virginia. His winter paintings sold rapidly and provided him with a relatively reliable source of income. *Winter, Washington Square* is a classic Wiggins composition, built on a combination of architecture, bustling crowds, and automobiles or public transportation. These elements reflect the city’s vitality, even in the coldest months, and contribute to his persistent appeal.

Wiggins learned to paint by observing his father, Carleton Wiggins (1848-1932), the eminent American Barbizon school and Tonalist painter. Carleton exposed his son to a variety of landscapes, from the English seaside, to New Jersey marshes, to the rolling hillsides of Lyme, where the elder Wiggins was a founding member of the Lyme Art Colony. Lyme would become Wiggins’ home away from New York. While his landscapes of meadows and forest interiors display the same technical mastery as his city scenes, Wiggins in winter is the artist at his best.

-JFN

Provenance: From a private Connecticut collection to the gallery.

Presentation Notes: In a 5” Arts & Crafts reproduction gilt frame. Expertly cleaned and lined.

Bibliography:

1. Anne Cohen DePietro, *Wiggins, Wiggins & Wiggins* (New York: Joan Whalen Fine Art, 1998), 8.