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Panneaux Décoratifs

Mark Murray breaks in his new space with stunning works from Walter Gay, Lockwood de Forest, Alfred Thompson Bricher and others

On view now

Mark Murray Fine Paintings

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To complement a new location in New York City, Mark Murray Fine Paintings is exhibiting a number of new pieces in its show *Recent Acquisitions*. Works by Walter Gay, Lockwood de Forest, Edwin Lord Weeks, Alfred Thompson Bricher, and many others are featured on the gallery's new walls off Manhattan's famous Lexington Avenue.

"We're thrilled at the new space, and equally as thrilled in these new pieces," owner Mark Murray says, adding that each one tells its own story about the artists and the subjects.

The exhibition's stars are undoubtedly the

two Gay pieces, each of which showcases his trademark style and subjects—evocative interiors, carefully furnished rooms with elaborate furniture and decorations, and his superb composition—as well as his delicate use of light and ambience. One of the pieces, *Panneaux Décoratifs*, came from an unlikely source, a small auction house in Portugal.

"Walter Gay was an American expat artist living in Paris, so it's not entirely surprising that his works would be found in that particular corner of the world, but it was certainly a pleasant discovery," Murray says. "We have not identified the room he has painted in the work, and we have also not seen another painting of it from a different view. Usually with Walter Gay, it's pretty well-documented where he was painting, either with an old inscription or label on the back of the painting. But once that's gone, it's gone for good."

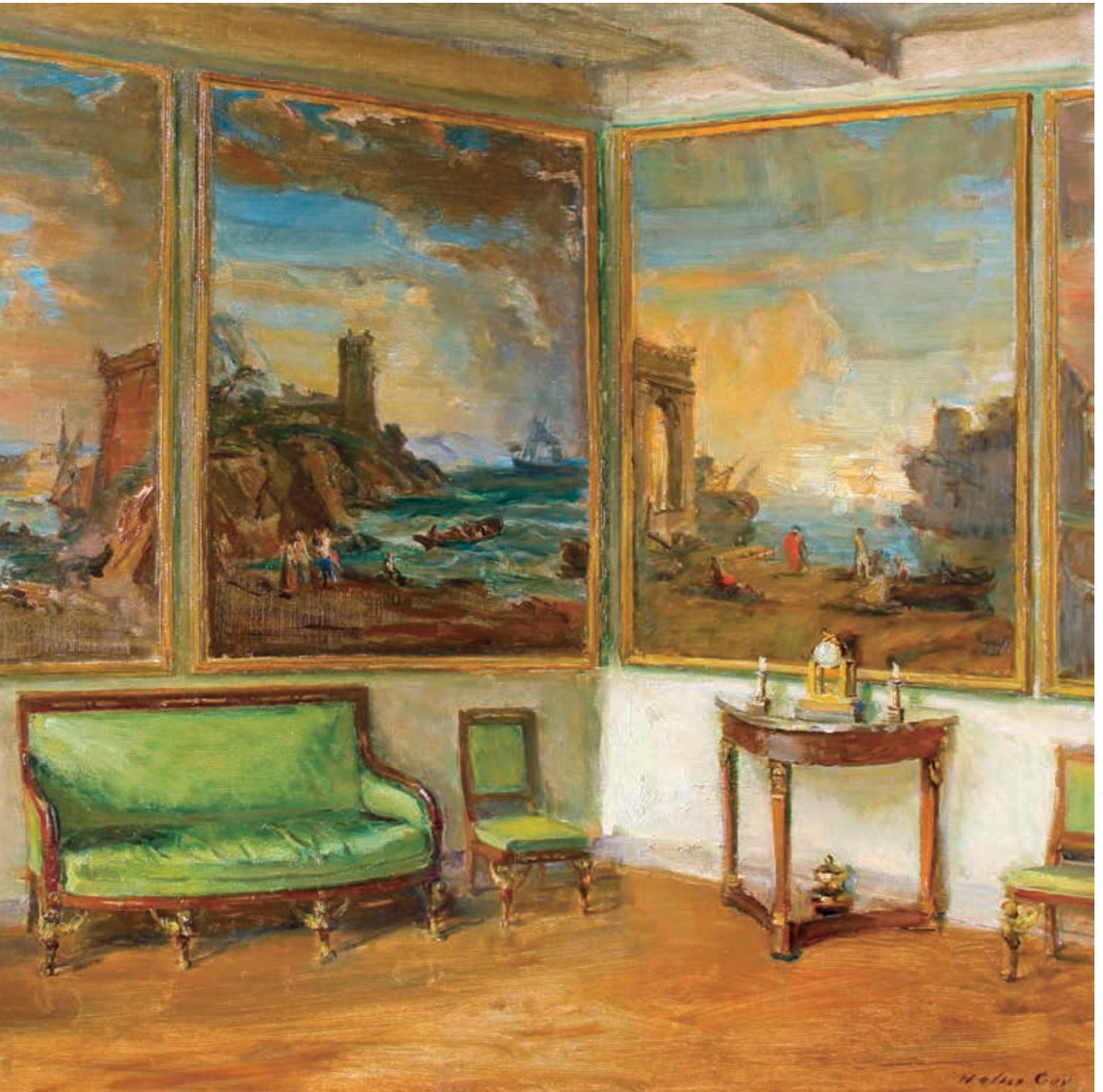
The other Gay piece, *Porcelains, Château du Bréau*, is quite obvious where it was painted: the artist's own home, Château du Bréau, a favorite subject of the Massachusetts-born painter. The home, with its lovely interior spaces and lavish decorations, was destroyed in World War I. "It was a tragic loss, but it was certainly well-recorded. It wasn't quite a palace, but close, and he painted every corner of it," Murray says. *Porcelains'* first big showing was during a Gay exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in the 1920s. It has been off the market and in private collections since then. It was only known about because of a book that was released at the time of the Met show.

Other works include Bricher's coastal landscape *Low Tide, Grand Manan Island*, which turned up in a provincial sale in England. "It's always interesting how an American painting of New Brunswick ended up in England 100 years later. It's evidence of the cross-current within

Paul César Helleu (1859-1927), *Winaretta Singer, Princesse Edmond de Polignac*. Color chalk on paper, 30 x 22 in., signed: 'Helleu'.



Walter Gay (1856-1937), *Panneaux Décoratifs*. Oil on canvas, 21¼ x 25½ in., signed: 'Walter Gay', also titled on label attached to frame.



collecting,” Murray says. “Bricher was quite prolific and had many of these landscapes. This is one of the nicest I’ve ever seen, with this vibrant light and sky. When you see it in the flesh, you really get the feel of the viewer and the distant hills, and also the sense of the wind, the clouds and the fast-moving sailboats in the distance. Interestingly, it is signed with his name and then copyrighted 1899. It suggests that maybe it had been used as an illustration for a publication. Our research continues.”

In de Forest’s *Sunburst, Santa Barbara*, the world-traveled painter and decorative arts designer—and distant nephew of Frederic E. Church—paints Santa Barbara’s skyline in sparse detail, but with an expert eye for the serene and peaceful. The work is remarkable because it was painted after de Forest had traveled the world painting,



Edwin Lord Weeks (1849-1903), *Interior of La Torre des Infantas, The Alhambra*. Oil on canvas, 10 x 12¼ in., signed: ‘E.L. Weeks’.



Lockwood de Forest (1850-1932), *Sunburst, Santa Barbara*. Oil on paper, 9¾ x 14 in., signed: ‘L de F/ July 18/ 1903’.



Alfred Thompson Bricher (1837-1908),
Low Tide, Grand Manan Island. Oil on
 canvas, 15 x 33 in., signed and dated:
 'AT BRICHER/copyright 1899'.



collecting and designing decorative objects, and venturing into several lucrative business ventures, including one with Louis Comfort Tiffany.

Another world traveler is Weeks, whose *Interior of La Torre des Infantas, The Alhambra* presents three figures in an ornate arched window. The work is a study of a larger piece. “One of the niches of the gallery is the Orientalists painters like Weeks, who came back with incredible diaries and stories of their travels. It’s interesting to compare this study with the final exhibited work, which is a magnificent large-scale piece he exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy in 1882,” Murray says. “Like Walter Gay, Weeks’ light is one of his great triumphs. He knew how to capture it, and we see it here in this fairly quick study. This was inspired by Washington Irving’s *Tales of the Alhambra*. Interesting to add, Weeks signed the study, and many of his studies are not signed, but that shows he was satisfied with the piece.” ■

Walter Gay (1856-1937), *Porcelains, Château du Bréau.* Oil on canvas, 21¾ x 18¼ in., signed: 'Walter Gay'.