



MAX ERNST

(Brühl 1891 - 1976 Paris)

Paysage de Corbières. Circa 1949.

Oil on panel.

Signed lower right: max ernst.

33 x 23.8 cm.

Provenance: - Galerie de l'Ile de France, Paris. - Dobiaschofsky Bern, Auction 90, 12 May 2000, no. 505. - Private collection, Switzerland, bought at the above auction and by descent to the present owner. Exhibitions: - New York 1970, Max Ernst, Byron Gallery, 28 October - 2 December 1970, no. 56 (with label on the reverse). - Turin 1971, Le sillabe mute dell'immaginazione, 12 maestri del surrealismo, Galeria Gissi, December 1971, no. 13 (with stamp on the reverse). Literature: Spies, Werner (ed.): Max Ernst Oeuvre-Katalog:

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Werke 1939-1953, Cologne 1997, p. 203, no. 2689 (with ill.). In 1943 Max Ernst and his girlfriend, the American painter, sculptor and writer Dorothea Tanning, travelled by car across the United States from New York to the Southwest, where the newly enamoured couple spent the summer in the middle of the desert mountains of Arizona. In 1946 the two settled near Sedona. In the middle of nowhere, the couple started to build a house. Inspired by the rich Native American culture, Ernst decorated the walls with a masked frieze and created fascinating sculptures. Well-known artists such as Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp, Yves Tanguy and the photographer Henry Cartier-Bresson visited Ernst in Capricorn Hill, as the secluded house was named. Ernst was also completely fascinated by the landscape, which appeared to him as if his own Surrealist paintings had come to life, such as "Europa nach dem Regen II" (c. 1941, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, USA, begun in Southern France, completed in New York). Using a completely new technique, he had created them a few years earlier as apocalyptic visions of war-torn Europe. Max Ernst painted the present work during this very significant creative period. This phase of the artist's output was heavily influenced by the combination of landscape and vegetation. As seen in this work, plants and their environment form a strange, dreamlike unification, further intensified by Ernst's well-mastered Surrealistic techniques of frottage, grattage, and decalomania. For the latter technique, the support is covered with a layer of pigment and then pressed with a smooth surface such as glass, resulting in a rich pattern similar to coral, rocks or imaginary creatures. As described in the text of the major Max Ernst retrospective at the Tate in 1991, "Decalomania was what might be termed an intersubjective method, comparable to the automatic writing, the dream protocols and the cadavres exquis of the late 1920s. Yet with Max Ernst, the game led to a marvellous expansion of his visionary world [. . .] employed with great sophistication and supplemented by interpretative additions by hand" (Max Ernst (exhibition catalogue), Tate Gallery, London, 1991, p. 230).

CHF 100 000 / 150 000

€ 103 090 / 154 640

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