

Koller Auktionen - Lot 3035

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FERDINAND HODLER

(Bern 1853-1918 Geneva)

Lake Geneva, seen from Chexbres. Circa 1911.

Oil on canvas.

Signed lower right: F. Hodler.

68 x 90.5 cm.

Provenance: - Galerie Neupert, Zurich, 26.11.1926. - Hermann Franck, Zurich, 2.12.1926. - G. & L. Bollag, Zurich, 23.10.1931, Los 76. - Arnold Mettler-Specker, St. Gallen, 1931. - Kunst & Spiegel AG., Zurich, 27.10.1932, ill. pl. 19. - Hans Leemann, Arlesheim, 1944. - Collection of Karl Steiner, from 1972. - Swiss private collection.
Exhibited: - Berlin 1928, Ferdinand Hodler, Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, 6.1928, no. 40, as 'Der Genevaersee, 1911', with ill. p. 5. - Zurich 1928, Ausstellung Ferd. Hodler,

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Galerie Neupert 1928, no. 47, 10.1928, as 'Genevaersee, 1914'. - Basel 1943, Kunstwerke des 19. Jh. aus Basler Privatbesitz, Kunsthalle Basel, 1.5.–4.7.1943, no. 369, as 'Genevaersee von Chexbres aus gesehen, 1905'. - Lausanne 1944, Les peintres du Léman, Musée cantonal des beaux-arts, 17.6.–24.9.1944, no. 185, as 'Paysage du lac Léman'. Literature: - Carl Albert Loosli: Generalkatalog in: Ferdinand Hodler. Leben, Werk und Nachlass, Suter 1921–24, (supplement to the general catalogue), 2.12.1926, no. 2374, as 'Genevaersee von Caux aus mit bewölktem Himmel, 1912'. - Werner Y. Müller: Die Kunst Ferdinand Hodlers. Gesamtdarstellung. Vol. 2. Reife und Spätwerke 1895–1918, Zurich 1941, no. 518, as 'Der Genevaersee (Bucht von Cully) von Chexbres aus, 1914 (Mühlesteinsche Fassung)'. - Jura Brüscheiler: Ferdinand Hodler, einige Werke aus der Sammlung Karl G. Steiner, Zurich, 1981, p. 76–96, ill. 13, as 'Genevaersee von Chexbres aus mit bewölktem Himmel, 1911'. - Guido Magnaguagno: Landschaften. Ferdinand Hodlers Beitrag zur symbolistischen Landschaftsmalerei, in: Exh. cat. Ferdinand Hodler, Berlin/Paris/Zurich 1983, p. 318, as 'Genevaerseelandschaft von Chexbres aus, 1911'. - Jura Brüscheiler: Ferdinand Hodler als Schüler von Ferdinand Sommer in: Exh. cat. Kunstsammlung Steffisburg; museo civico di belle arti, Lugano; Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny, 1984, p. 132, as 'Genevaersee, von Chexbres aus, um 1911'. - Jura Brüscheiler: Ferdinand Hodler. Sammlung Steiner, Zurich, 1997, p. 211, 214, ill. 71, as 'Genevaersee bei bewölktem Himmel von Chexbres aus, 1911'. - Oskar Bätschmann and Paul Müller: Ferdinand Hodler. Catalogue raisonné der Gemälde, pub. Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft, vol. II-2, Die Landschaften, Zurich 2012, p. 360, no. 430 (with ill.). Hodler first chose to represent the view across Lake Geneva from the village of Chexbres in 1895 on the occasion of his participation in the Concours Calame, which the Société des Arts had announced for its tenth landscape competition. This was followed by eleven additional versions of this motif, which — except for the version from 1898 — were created in short intervals during a first period in 1904-05 and a second period circa 1911. The present work from the important collection of Karl Steiner is "firstly of particular interest because it, as the last version, quite properly crowns Hodler's series of this motif" (Jura Brüscheiler 1981).

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It is the most radical work from the series of the Chexbres paintings and the only one in which Hodler has almost completely eliminated all staffage. Not one tree or structure disturbs the magnificent rhythm of the coastline, which separates the green of the narrow strip of landscape from the blue-grey of the lake and the sky. The view is freed to reveal an atmospheric, seemingly infinite landscape. Hodler knew the view and was conscious of the merit of the composition opening up before him, outlining it with fast brushstrokes in order to capture the mood of that cloudy day, likely in a short sitting and in one go. As expressed by Jura Brüscheiler, "This version of the famous motif stands out not only due to the liberating vastness of the deep view depicted in the landscape, through the clarity of the composition and the generosity of the brush — all characteristics that also appear in the earlier versions — but also due to the pictorial features that still appear to be unusual even for Hodler at that time: the rhythmisation of the strips of clouds almost to the point of abstraction and the reduction of the colour scheme to melancholic shades of grey, which are interwoven with gentle pink reflections of the evening sun. Hodler has eliminated everything postcard pretty that could have contributed to lending certain earlier versions of 'Lake Geneva, view from Chexbres' a slight anecdotal or predominantly decorative tinge (...) Thereover, the wavy lake surface with fine blue folds stretches to the horizon where it flows together with the grey-blue billows of the clouds. Hodler has also not applied the parallelistic design principle here with its sometimes all too simplifying consequence, but has instead contrapuntally modified it, the elliptical shore line not responding to a similar strip of clouds, but rather to the fugal repeated horizontals of distributed cloud strips. In this picture, Hodler's use of colour, which one is usually inclined to subordinate to his lines, finally attains equal importance due to expressive, harmonious and fine chromatic gradations." (Jura Brüscheiler 1981)

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