

ELLIOTT FINE ART

Nineteenth Century to Early Modern

Elena Luksch-Makowsky
(St Petersburg 1878 – 1967 Hamburg)

Two girls in white

Monogrammed and dated on the reverse: *ELM /1904*

Tempera on panel

10.2 x 9.8 cm. (4 x 3 ¾ in.)

Provenance:

From the artist's estate;

Thence by descent in the artist's family, Switzerland, until 2023.



This intriguing little panel depicting two girls dressed in white was never, as far as is known, exhibited during Luksch-Makowsky's lifetime, remaining with her descendants until recently. The enigmatic subject may have had some personal significance to the artist, though what that was, if indeed the case at all, remains unknown.

The panel was painted in 1904, by which point Luksch-Makowsky was already well-established in the Viennese art scene, having exhibited several times, and prominently, at various Successionist exhibitions from 1901 onwards.

The two girls stand on a steep hillside. The girl at the front, in a trance-like state, raises her arms, pointing to the distance. Behind her the second girl, mouth open, places a restraining hand on the other's shoulder, saving her from an abyss or a different fate of which the viewer is not aware.

A dream-like ambiance imbues the scene and indeed the leading girl may be in a state of somnambulism. Is the subject reflective of Luksch-Makowsky's state of mind or even related to a specific dream? Of course, this question cannot be answered but certainly turn-of-the-century Vienna, with Sigmund Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, provided a stimulating context for this type of theme.