

KYNANCE FINE ART

The Two Bridges, Venice

Edward Brian Seago RBA ARWS RWS (1910-1974)



REF:

Description

Oil on Board Signed 30.5 x 41 cms (12 x 16 ins)

Provenance P & D Colnaghi & Co Ltd, London

Edward Seago was born at 13 Christchurch Road, Norwich on 31st March 1910. He was the son of Francis, a coal merchant and Mabel, a governess. At the age of 7 he was diagnosed with a mysterious heart condition which rendered Seago confined to bed for most of his childhood years and which would cause him problems throughout his life. As a result, he had little formal education and past the age of 13 did not attend school. This early period of his life allowed him to draw, which he later referred to as being "spells of sheer delight". At the age of 14 he won an award from the Royal Drawing Society. Despite initial disapproval from his parents, this proved to be the turning point in deciding his future as an artist. Having learned that the artist Bernard Priestman had moved to Walberswick, Seago wrote to him and Priestman agreed to teach him. At a later date, he also approached Sir Alfred Munnings who helped to dispense practical and technical advice. This was the only formal training he ever received and therefore he was largely self-taught. As a young man he was fascinated by the circus and life of travellers. From the age of 18 to 23, Seago travelled with circuses in Britain and abroad. He wrote three illustrated books about the circus in the 1930's. During this period, he also had his first painting accepted by the Royal Academy for the summer exhibition and had his first one man show at the Sporting Gallery in 1933. In December 1939, despite his health problems, he enrolled in the Royal Engineers as a Second Lieutenant and developed camouflage. In 1944 he was invalided out of the army but was invited by Field Marshal Alexander to paint scenes of the Italian campaign as an unofficial war artist. His war pictures were exhibited in 1946 at the Norwich and Bristol Municipal Galleries. Reproductions of this work were published in book form in "With the allied armies in Italy 1945". Seago often gave his work to those with whom he served. When he left the army due to ill health, he was awarded the honorary rank of Major. Edward Seago is best known as a landscape artist, inspired by East Anglia, although he also painted seascapes, skyscapes, flowers and portraits. He is considered to be one of the leading British Post-Impressionists and he worked both in oil and watercolour. Seago saw himself as an heir to a long tradition of British landscape painting, artists stretching back to Cotman, Constable and Gainsborough, all of whom were born, like Seago, in East Anglia. He was a keen yachtsman and travelled throughout his life, often sailing in his own yacht, a ketch called Endeavour and later, Capricorn, a more sea-worthy vessel. This boat was his floating studio. Between 1951 and 1967, he made eight major trips to France. He would sail out of Yarmouth and up the Seine. En route he would stop and paint in Dieppe, Rouen and also the estuary town of Honfleur. In his memoirs, he mentions his first trip there as a moment he would treasure and how "his heart skipped a beat with excitement". Seago enjoyed aristocratic patronage. Early in his career, he had sought patronage from Lady Evelyn Jones, daughter of t...