



Inv. no. B 456

JENS FERDINAND WILLUMSEN (1863-1958)
THE MOUNTAIN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE IS COLOURED
RED BY THE SUN'S RAYS, 1901
WATERCOLOR ON PAPER

64.8 × 77.8 CM

After a trip to the United States where J.F. Willumsen failed to achieve the artistic breakthrough of which he dreamed, the late summer of 1901 saw him going for a hike in the Swiss Alps. His fiancée, the sculptor Edith Wessel (1875–1963), stayed in New York, and their correspondence reveals that she wanted Willumsen to find ‘a scene of an alpine glow over snowy mountains’ and paint it for her.¹

In this watercolour one sees Willumsen striving to fulfil her wish at a point when, in September, he visited the French town of Meillerie on the southern shore of Lake Geneva. There he found a scene of an alpine glow suffusing the mountains – albeit without snow. The watercolour incorporates a poem, written by Willumsen himself, in which he declares his love for Edith Wessel: *The blood rises in my cheek / for one last smile she sends. / ‘Darling girl, forsake me never! / Dark, melancholy, left behind, / tied forever to the spot, I stand.*

When Willumsen subsequently returned to Copenhagen, he continued working on the watercolour, painting several versions of it. J.F. Willumsens Museum owns a watercolour very similar to the version in The David Collection. The Hirschsprung Collection owns yet another

variant.

¹ Leila Krogh in Kjeld von Folsach and Nana Lund (eds.): *Dansk kunst i Davids Samling – fra Philipsen til Saxbo*, København 1995, p. 78.

Published in:

Nyare dansk Konst, Liljevalchs Konsthall, Stockholm 1919, cat. 392;
Willumsen udstillingen, arrangeret af Den frie Udstilling i Anledningen af Kunstnerens 60-Aars Fødselsdag, København 1923, 2. ed., cat. 169;
Erik Zahle: "Billedkunst" in *C.L. Davids Samling. Nogle Studier*, [1], København 1948, pp. 208, 262-263;
J.F. Willumsen: *Mine Erindringer fortalt til Ernst Mentze med biografiske Oplysninger, Noter og Kommentarer*, København 1953, pp. 137, 144;
C.L. David: *C.L. Davids Samling*, København 1960, p. 23;
Hanne Honnens de Lichtenberg: *Symbolismen i dansk kunst*, Nivaagaards Malerisamling, Nivå 1993, cat. 122, p. 14;
Leila Krogh in Kjeld von Folsach and Nana Lund (eds.): *Dansk kunst i Davids Samling – fra Philipsen til Saxbo*, København 1995, cat. 19, pp. 78-79;
Henrik Wivel: *Jeg er en anden: en biografi om J.F. Willumsen*, København 2024, Vol. 1, 1863-1914, fig. 142, pp. 198-200, 229;