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George "AE" Russell (1867-1935)

CONTEMPLATION

oil on canvas

signed in monogram lower left; titled on reverse; with handwritten label also on reverse [reads, "A wedding present from a Mr Hogg to Rev. Geo. Townshend, 1981"]
21¼ by 32¼in. (53 by 81cm)

Provenance:

with the Oriel Gallery, 1989;
Where purchased by the present owner's father;
Thence by descent

Exhibited:

'George Russell ~ AE... at The Oriel's 21st Anniversary', Oriel Gallery, Dublin, 13 November to 2 December, 1989, catalogue no. 32a

It was fitting that the Oriel Gallery should choose to highlight the work of AE for the gallery's 21st anniversary as it was with George Russell's work that it launched onto the arts scene in Dublin in 1968.

In the catalogue for the 1989 anniversary exhibition, Oliver Nulty writes,

"Given AE's awareness of the other world it is small wonder that he painted so many pictures of it and its inhabitants. Even his paintings of ordinary landscapes seem to be so influenced by it we often find it difficult to be certain whether the figures belong to this world or another, were it not for the fact that all those other worldly beings have colourful radiances coming from them. Of course there is no doubt about some of the poses - the half crouched or kneeling figures gazing with awe at some great being radiantly aflame. But others, such as those of children frolicking on a shore or playing in the water can recall some happy memories."

€5,000-€7,000 (£4,130-£5,790 approx.)