

KUNKEL FINE ART

Zeichnungen, Gemälde und Skulpturen
des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts

Othmar Brioschi

1854 Vienna – 1912 Rome

Othmar Brioschi was a member of an Austrian family of theatre painters. As family tradition dictated, he moved to Munich to train as a theatre painter but went on to complete his studies at the Munich Academy. On his return to Vienna he worked as an assistant to his father but in 1880 entered the master class in landscape painting at the Vienna Academy. In 1882 he was awarded the *Grand Austrian State Prize*. This enabled him to spend two years in Rome, where he settled permanently in 1885. His work was highly regarded in German-speaking artistic circles in the city. He was appointed professor at the Accademia di San Luca in Rome in 1905.

The Roman countryside and its unique painterly qualities are the central themes of Brioschi's *oeuvre*. His drawings are executed with extraordinary attention to detail. He usually worked on tinted papers and his handling of his preferred media – graphite combined with coloured crayon, delicate watercolour washes and gouache – produced lustrous, shimmering effects. His oil paintings are indebted to late Impressionism. They are characterized by short, parallel impasto strokes used to heighten colouristic vibrancy, where light becomes the primary expressive force. Many of Brioschi's compositions are devoid of figures and seem estranged from reality, despite his habitual regard for topographical accuracy. This estrangement is attributable to his love of elongated formats, unusual perspectives and unconventional subjects. His images evoke other-worldly, dreamlike landscapes filled with hidden symbolism and inviting meditative contemplation. One important example is the cycle of seventeen views of the park at the Villa d'Este in Tivoli. The cycle was commissioned by Archduke Franz Ferdinand and completed in 1898. It was to form the bedrock of Brioschi's reputation as one of the leading Austrian landscapists working in Italy.