

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Angelo Abrate (1900 - 1985)

The Matterhorn in the clouds, Val d'Aosta, Italy

oil on panel, 34 x 44 cm.

signed, inscribed on verso:

Il Colosso tra la nebbia (Cervino) Febbraio 1941

This is a classic 'plein air' Abrate painting and could only come from the hand of a *peintre-alpiniste*. From up at approximately 2,500 metres, this is the south face of the Matterhorn in winter seen from between Valtournenche and Breuil. Abrate inscribed in Italian on its verso: '*Giant in the fog*' but the clouds and the fog seemed to have morphed into one as they swirl about the 4,478-metre pyramid of gneiss rock.

The snowfields and glaciers were depicted in a subtle array of purple, yellow ochre and umbers mixed with lead white. The panel was primed for painting on with a pink ground, as seen in the patches of fleeting blue in the sky. The difference in the tonal values between the rocks in the foreground and the flanks of the Matterhorn skilfully reflect the sense of void over the valley.