

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



James Hart Dyke (b.1966 -)

The Ancien Passage

oil on board

42 x 42 cm.

signed and dated

£12,500

Catalogue p.58

Exh ref: MB20

Leslie Stephen wrote how he wished he could swap his pen for Loppé's brush. In this instance, James deftly translates Dr. Paccard's first impression of arriving at the Grand Plateau into paint:

'From here there is scarcely anything to be seen but snow, pure and of a dazzling whiteness, contrasting strangely with the almost black sky of these lofty regions. No living being is to be seen, no trace of vegetation; it is the adobe of frost and silence.'

The stark high-altitude landscapes lend themselves to a monochromatic palette. It imparts a timeless

and surreal sense of the place. James has always been interested in Gerhard Richter's black and white paintings and although this composition is mainly black and white, he injected some blue into the sky and tried to achieve a sense of distance and scale by using soft edges on the summit sliding to a hard edge on the Arête des Bosses. *Ancien Passage* is much more about the void, the space created and delineated by the mountain, than it is about Mont Blanc.