

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Jacques Fourcy (1906 - 1990)

Crevasses on the Glacier du Géant with the Tour Ronde in the distance, Chamonix, France

oil on panel

22½ x 30½in (57 x 77cm)

signed

Fourcy learnt to paint by himself. He relied exclusively on a palette knife generously loaded with paint to recreate the seracs, glaciers and couloirs so familiar to him as a peintre-alpiniste. His unusual technique proved highly successful; it meant too he could create blank areas of smoothed over paint broken up by thick layers and whorls of impasto. On close inspection, and with fingertips, the paint surfaces ripple with eddies and lines and yet it took considerable skill to avoid over saturating the colour and tone. Fourcy's experience from a lifetime's climbing gave him, like Loppé in particular, an advantage in calculating the strength of shadows at altitude; his foregrounds tend to juxtapose the receding composition perfectly. In this instance, the spiky Aiguille d'Entrèves and the Tour Ronde far off to the right seem an appropriately long way away across the tumbling ice-fields.

As an engineer by training, Fourcy had a successful career working for the French railway network before enlisting in the army. Despite losing an eye in WWII in 1940 and spending five years in a Rhineland prisoner of war camp, he was the longest active member of the Paris based Société des Peintres de Montagne, exhibiting every year from 1925 to 1990. His work erred towards drama rather than atmosphere.