

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Alexandre Calame (1810 - 1864)

Below the Eiger, Bernese Oberland, Switzerland

oil on canvas laid on panel

11¾ x 15¾ in. (30 x 40 cm.)

with a Vente Calame wax seal and inscription on the verso

This Bernese Oberland scene comes from the *Vente Calame* which was held in Paris's Hôtel Drouot a year after the painter died. The auction of all the contents of his studio was conducted over two days and included hundreds of oil sketches and drawings. Although Calame enjoyed an international success as the most important Swiss landscape painter of the early nineteenth century, he never sold his preparatory studies. As such, the studio sale revealed to what extent he had been devoted to working directly from nature -*en plein air* -as many of his sketches, or *modelli*, such as this one of the Eiger, were never converted into formal studio paintings. This speaks volumes about the difference between Calame the artist and Calame the studio entrepreneur who was already receiving more commissions by the early 1850s than he could carry out, see, for example our [*Mountain torrent below the Balmhorn*](#).