

# Emile Isenbart (1846-1921) - River bank in the Doubs

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*Oil on canvas signed lower right*

Dimensions : H. 54 cm x W. 72 cm (with frame: H. 80 cm x W. 99 cm)

At the end of the 19th century, Emile Isenbart is the Franche-Comté's finest landscape painter. A native of the Doubs region, Isenbart's paintings of the Besançon area and the French Jura are peaceful and beautiful. He became interested in painting at an early age. He was a pupil of Antonin Clément Fanart (1831-1903), an excellent realist painter whose works are as strong and fine as those of Gustave Courbet of the same period.

Isenbart painted a few mythological subjects, but his immense talent shone through in his mountain views and waterscapes. From 1872, the artist exhibited at the Paris Salon, and at the Salon des Artistes Français, of which he was a member in 1888. In 1897, he was made a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. Emile Isenbart exhibited landscapes of the banks of the Doubs and the heights of the Jura on several occasions in Vienna and Munich. He won medals at the 1889 and 1900 Universal Exhibitions.

Isenbart's touch is alert, realistic and at the same time impressionistic. His compositions are highly studied, and his technique for depicting rivers and torrents is quite simply remarkable: Isenbart is one of the French artist who best represented the reflections and ripples of water.

Works by this delicate painter are in the collections of several French museums, including a drawing entitled "Perspective de prairies avec des collines à l'horizon" held by the Musée du Louvre in Paris. Isenbart was also responsible for the frescoes adorning the walls of Besançon's Parliament building (built in 1582), now the city's Palais de Justice. He died in Besançon in 1921.

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~~Our painting is a luminous work in which Isenbart demonstrates his acute knowledge of nature. For this~~  
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painter, the important presence of the watery element is essential: In this composition, where the axis of the river provides the viewer's eye with an ideal vanishing line, the trees and vegetation are treated in an infinite number of shades of green. Here, Isenbart succeeds in reproducing a day in which sunlight pierces the clouds in places, creating skilful spaces of light and shadow. Here again, Isenbart offers us a vision of tranquil, restful nature, in which human bustle is absent.

