



John Singer Sargent (1856-1925)

Venice Sunset, 1902-1904

Watercolor

10 1/2 x 14 inches

26.67 x 35.56 cm

Inscribed on the reverse, not in the artist's hand: Fishing Boats, Venice

AG 5288

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Provenance:

Private collection

Literature:

Richard Ormond and Elaine Kilmurray, John Singer Sargent, *The Complete Paintings, Volume VI: Venetian Figures and Landscapes, 1898-1913* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), no. 1103, p. 153., illus. in color.

Alternative titles: *Fishing Boats, Venice; Fishing Boats, Venice, Sunset*

This is an indistinct, diffuse view of Venetian boats seen as if looking toward the stern of the artist's gondola. The bulbous objects in the foreground are the cushions at the back of the passenger seats, and behind them is the *forcola*, the oarpost. Two barges, possibly *caorline*, bow on, occupy the middle distance, with a sailing vessel beyond. The side of a third boat, with ropes and pulleys, is visible to the right of the gondola. The evening light turns the boats into a patchwork of soft browns and mauves. The pale sky is reflected in the water, where broad strokes of mauve and deep green define the ripples. This is Sargent at his most economical and suggestive. *Shipping Venice: The Gesuati* and *Venice, Sailing Boat* (nos. 1104 and 1105) are similar in style and composition.