



## George Russell ("A.E.")

### Date

1904

### Primary Maker

Count Casimir Joseph Dunin de Markievicz

### Medium

Oil on canvas

### Dimensions

60.9 x 50.8 cm

### Description

In 1903 Russell showed forty four pictures, mostly of Donegal landscapes at the Leinster Lecture Hall, Molesworth Street in a joint exhibition with Count and Countess Markievicz. Count Markievicz's paintings were

mostly of Polish landscapes and townscapes. A review of that exhibition described Russell's work as 'an absolutely unique attempt to interpret in colour the Celtic mood and the divine vision which he had already set forth in verse.' Through his involvement with the Co-operative Movement and as editor of The Irish Homestead, Russell espoused a better, albeit idealised, way of life for the small holder in Irish farming. His sympathetic alignment with rural life did not preclude him from voicing his support for the urban worker caught up in the turmoil of the 1913 lockout. The recent land struggles and gains made by Irish farmers in advancing their rights was a rural precursor to the class struggle now taking place in an urban context. In his 'Open Letter to the Employers' published in 1913, Russell castigated the new wealthy middle class as 'bad citizens' whose lack of philanthropic endeavours was in stark contrast to the generosity of merchant princes of other cities, and indeed that of Hugh Lane. As such, Russell was a great supporter of Hugh Lane and was on the original Modern Art Gallery committee. (JO'D)