

An abstract artwork featuring a layered composition. The top section is a dark, textured brown. Below it is a wide band of warm, textured colors in shades of orange, red, and yellow, with a jagged, torn-paper-like edge. The middle section is a lighter, textured brown with a network of white, vein-like lines branching across it. The bottom section is a solid, deep blue. The overall effect is one of depth and organic complexity.

A rediscovery
Roda Rosengarten
by Carl Johan Forsberg

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Contents

Introduction	p. 5
Roda Rosengarten	p. 8

Some time ago, we acquired this magnificent watercolor, initially presented to us as the work of an anonymous artist. And yet, from the very first glance, the quality of the painting transcended any question of attribution. There was an unmistakable harmony in the composition, a sensitivity in the handling of light and form, and a poetic intensity in the palette that compelled us to look more closely.

We did not know, at the time of acquisition, that the painting was signed. It was only when the work finally arrived in our hands in Paris that we made the discovery that would confirm our intuition. We were already captivated by the image: a vast and lyrical view of the Catinaccio massif, known in German as the *Rosengarten*, a name that evokes the legendary rose hues of these Dolomite peaks at sunset.

Drawn deeper into the landscape, eager to explore every nuance of pigment and gesture, we noticed something emerge from beneath the bluish washes in the lower part of the composition. A signature, veiled but unmistakable, began to reveal itself. And with it, the final confirmation of what we had already sensed: the work was by Carl Johan Forsberg.





Roda Rosengarten

This watercolor by Carl Johan Forsberg evokes with rare poetic intensity the fleeting moment when the Dolomites are set ablaze by the last rays of the sun—a phenomenon known as *enrosadira*. A rosy light caresses the rocky peaks, while the valleys gradually sink into the bluish shadows of evening. Through a subtle play of transparency, Forsberg succeeds in capturing the silent breath of the landscape and the suspended magic of the moment. Upon closer observation, the viewer is struck by the extraordinary precision with which the artist has rendered the mountain range. Every contour of the peaks is traced with clarity, inviting the eye to follow their undulating lines across the horizon. Along the slopes, Forsberg depicts the traces of landslides, like streams of silver cascading gently toward the valley below.

What distinguishes this work is above all its technique. The sky is enriched with golden accents that lend it a quiet glow, while the rocks are brushed with silvery highlights. Dense, dry applications of red pigment are layered over the more fluid washes of watercolor, creating subtle textural contrasts. Each line is firm, unique, and assured revealing an artist whose hand is both exact and deeply attuned to the forms of the natural world.

The work probably remained in the artist's collection until his death in 1938. It was then probably part of the collection of his son, Hans Forsberg, and his wife, Kerstin Ann-Marie Forsberg. Later, Kerstin Forsberg gifted the work to Stefan Hannon.

Carl Johan Forsberg (1871–1935) was a Swedish artist trained at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, where he studied architecture. He later attended the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen before gradually turning toward painting, eventually choosing watercolor as his preferred medium. A great traveler, he journeyed across Europe - particularly in Italy and France - drawing the landscapes he encountered with precise delicacy.

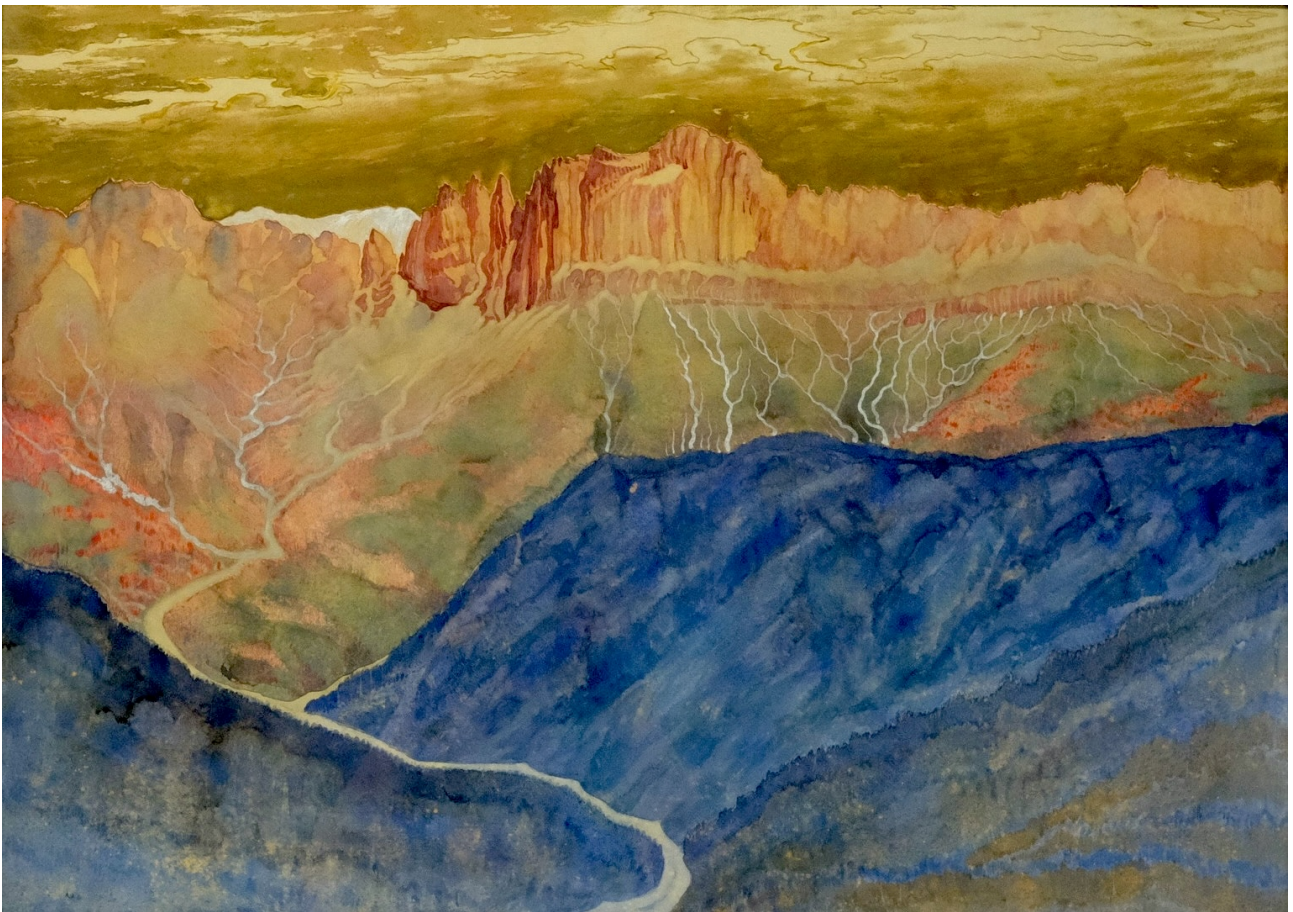
Long remaining outside the official art circles, Forsberg developed a deeply personal body of work, characterized by a near-topographical attention to nature and a remarkable sensitivity to color. Today, one of his works is held in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, a sign of the late but well-deserved recognition of this discreet artist, profoundly devoted to the beauty of the world.

Carl Johan Forsberg's Journeys in Italy

Italy held a lasting fascination for Carl Johan Forsberg, whose travels across the country left a clear mark on his artistic production. Between 1901 and 1907, Forsberg made several visits to the Italian peninsula, exploring both the northern lakes and central cities. In 1901 and again in 1907, he stayed in Sirmione, on the shores of Lake Garda, a setting that inspired him with its luminous skies and sweeping views of Monte Baldo. Other documented works from this period include views of Bagolino and Rome, dated and signed with care, attesting to his presence in these locations.

In 1904, Forsberg exhibited a series of Swiss and Italian motifs at the Konstnärshuset in Stockholm, confirming that his Italian experiences had already begun to filter into his public work. His watercolors from this time reveal a shift toward atmospheric rendering and a refined, almost architectural sense of structure-qualities likely informed by his earlier training and by his encounters with the Italian landscape.

These travels were not mere tourist excursions, but rather periods of immersion and observation, during which Forsberg absorbed the particular clarity of Italian light and the monumental rhythms of its terrain. From the soft profiles of alpine villages to the grandeur of Roman piazzas, Italy became, for Forsberg, both a subject and a sensibility.



Carl Johan Forsberg
Roda Rosengarten
circa 1920, watercolor on paper
52x73 cm

