

COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Eduard Frankfort
(Meppel 1864 – 1920 Laren)

Self-Portrait in Bedouin costume

Signed lower right: *ED. FR*
Watercolour on paper
29 x 22 cm. (11 ½ x 8 ½ in.)

Provenance:
Private Collection, Netherlands, until 2025.



Likely dating from the 1890s, this watercolour is a self-portrait by the Dutch-Jewish artist Eduard Frankfort. Though Frankfort is not known to have travelled to North Africa or the Middle East at this time, his historical roots in the Holy Land may have engendered an interest in exploring the 'Oriental' aspect of his heritage, as was the case with Maurycy Gottlieb, who depicted himself in Arab attire in 1887 (fig. 1). A photograph from 1903 of Frankfort in studio (fig. 2) shows the artist surrounded by carpets and textiles, many with an Eastern origin.



Fig. 1, Maurycy Gottlieb, *Self-Portrait in Arab Costume*, 1887, oil on canvas, 110 x 70 cm, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw

Fig. 2, Eduard Frankfort in his studio, 1903, Rijksmuseum

Frankfort (fig. 3) was born 1864 in Meppel and raised in Amsterdam. Trained first at Atelier Bing, he later studied with August Allebé at the Rijksakademie and briefly at the Royal Academy in Antwerp. Early in his career Frankfort focused on Jewish religious and community scenes, later expanding into portraits, landscapes and genre painting. His work balances careful atmosphere with a palette and brushwork that can shift from detailed to broadly expressive.

Active in Dutch artistic life, he belonged to Arti et Amicitiae and Pulchri Studio, receiving a gold medal from Arti in 1903. He spent 1905–1906 in South Africa painting portraits and local scenes, then returned to Amsterdam. In 1911 he married Klara Kloots; they had four children.

Frankfort died on 19 August 1920 in Laren. His paintings preserve facets of Dutch-Jewish life and exemplify a turn-of-the-century Amsterdam blend of realism and early modern sensibility, securing his place in the history of Dutch-Jewish art.



Fig. 3, Eduard Frankfort, *Self-Portrait with Pipe*, c.1900, oil on canvas, 50 x 30 cm, Jewish Museum, Amsterdam