

## Frederick Stone Batcheller

Frederick Stone Batcheller (1837-1889) is best remembered today for his still life paintings, but he was also an accomplished musician who played piano and violin.

Batcheller began his art career as an apprentice with Tingley Brothers Marble Cutters, a prominent Providence firm. After working as a marble cutter, Batcheller sculpted some marble busts, but turned to painting after 1855. He was a member of "the Group of 1855," the first organization of artists to promote the artistic and cultural development of Providence, which during the 19th century grew from a fledgling manufacturing town to a major industrial center and home to notable writers, artists and cultural institutions. Batcheller was a friend and colleague of painter Edward Bannister; the two artists had studios in the same building and both were among the founders of the Providence Art Club, the nation's second-oldest art club. Batcheller also shared a studio with James Lewin and John Arnold. Along with Stetson, Bannister, Whitaker, Lewin, and others, Batcheller exhibited at the Art Club, frequently showing landscape paintings.

He worked diligently at painting and enjoyed the respect of his colleagues, but during his career he never achieved the level of recognition acquired by his friends. He was prone to dark moods and painters George Whitaker and John Arnold commented on his habit of closeting himself in his studio for hours on end, playing the violin, when he was overcome by periods of "melancholy." Nevertheless, Batcheller's still lives are among some of the most accomplished and vibrant produced by the many painters of that genre, who flourished in Providence and nearby Fall River, Massachusetts.

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