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Jan Jacob Spohler

Nederhorst den Berg 1811 – 1866
Amsterdam

*A Dutch winter landscape with figures
on the ice*

Oil on panel 40.7 x 56.5 cm
Signed lower left

Jan Jacob Spohler

Jan Jacob Spohler was born in Nederhorst den Berg in 1811. He studied under Jan-Willem Pieneman (1779 – 1853), director of the Royal Academy in Amsterdam, and went on to specialise in summer and winter landscapes. His most popular works, however, were his typically Dutch ice scenes with skaters. At the age of 23 he married Catharina Wilhelmina Elisabeth Giethoorn of Amsterdam. The couple went on to have four daughters and three sons, two of whom also became painters. The eldest, Jacob Jan Coenraad (1837 – 1894), followed in his father's footsteps as a landscape specialist, but Johannes Franciscus (1853 – 1894) devoted himself to city views. Both were taught by their father, as was Willem Vester (1824 – 1895) from Haarlem. In 1845 Spohler senior was admitted as a member of the Royal Academy in Amsterdam, and he also exhibited at the Exhibitions of Living Masters in Amsterdam, The Hague and Leeuwarden.

The ice scene was a particularly popular theme with collectors in the nineteenth century. One of the great masters of this genre was Andreas Schelfhout (1787 – 1870): his winter landscapes were without equal. But his pupils Charles Leickert (1816 – 1907), Nicolaas Roosenboom (1805 – 1880) and Lodewijk Johannes Kleijn (1817 – 1897) also produced numerous fine works in the same vein. Although never taught by Schelfhout, Jan Jacob Spohler is their equal in name and fame.

The winter landscape pictured here is one of Spohler's best. It is finely and clearly crafted, and bursting with atmosphere. The cloudy sky is built up in thin transparent layers of paint and wonderfully thorough. There is plenty to see, too. On the left a house with meticulous details, such as the last vestiges of snow on its pitched roof. And, of course, all the characteristic elements of this genre: a horse-drawn sleigh, skaters, a windmill and a barge trapped in the ice. The red jackets of the human figures add a lively touch of colour.



Willem Roelofs

Willem Roelofs is one of the principal figures in the Hague School, the group of painters who introduced Impressionism to the Netherlands in about 1860. In his own career as an artist, Roelofs' style evolved immensely. He started out painting finely detailed Romantic landscapes, but ended his life as a true Impressionist.

In 1847, at the age of 25, Roelofs moved to Brussels. He soon found success in the Belgian capital, exhibiting two Dutch landscapes – one of Drenthe, one of Gelderland – at the Brussels Salon of 1848. The first won him the gold medal, the second was purchased by the King of Belgium. Many more awards and honours would follow. During his time in Brussels, Roelofs also made friends with the French painter François-Auguste Ortmans (1826 – 1884). It was probably through this friendship that the Dutchman first heard about Barbizon, the artists' colony outside Paris which would later become known as the cradle of Impressionism. Roelofs was one of the first Dutch painters to visit, an experience that would change his artistic direction for good.

He was deeply impressed by the French artists he met at Barbizon. Their freer style, natural subjects and preference for working outdoors all appealed greatly. Following their example, he adopted a more Impressionistic style and so became one of the pioneers of the Hague School.

Like the other members of this new movement, Roelofs tried to depict the landscape as realistically as possible, rather than idealising it. Above all, though, he focused upon sunlight and how it affected the ever-changing natural scenery. Although he had chosen to live in Brussels, he returned frequently to the Netherlands. He also preferred Dutch subjects, painting the heavily wooded regions of Drenthe and Gelderland, and in particular the landscapes of Utrecht and Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland with their abundance of water.

Unlike the majority of his work, this painting by Roelofs is in an upright format. It is a wonderful depiction of colour and light, with the landscape and the cattle created using confident, totally unhesitating brushstrokes. A perfect example of why Willem Roelofs is such a great name in nineteenth-century Dutch art.

Willem Roelofs

Amsterdam 1822 – 1897 Berchem (B)

A landscape with watering cows

Oil on panel 53.9 x 45.7 cm

Signed lower right

Provenance

Sale A. Mak, Amsterdam, 28 April

1919, nr. 84, as 'zomerdag'



**Lodewijk Franciscus Hendrik
(‘Louis’) Apol**

1850 – The Hague – 1936

Wandering along a snowy lane

Oil on canvas 70.2 x 54.6 cm

Signed lower left

Provenance

Sale Mak van Waay, Amsterdam,
24 May 1966, lot 12

Private Collection, Italy

Louis Apol

Few painters are as closely associated with the winter as Louis Apol. However, his winter scenes differ quite radically from those of his predecessors Andreas Schelfhout, Charles Leickert, Frederik Marinus Kruseman and Jacobus Franciscus Hoppenbrouwers, who worked in the Romantic tradition. Whereas these older contemporaries liked to lavishly decorate their winter views with skaters, sledges and refreshment stalls, human figures were much less important to Apol. His focus was nature itself, captured in all its grandeur with a particular feel for atmosphere and lighting. That makes Apol a true Impressionist, and one of the best-loved landscape painters of the Hague School.

Apol found most of his subjects around his birthplace, The Hague. His favourite by far was the woods of the Haagse Bos. It was not so much winter that inspired him, though, as snow. Almost all of his winter landscapes are in fact snowscapes, otherwise featuring nothing more than a bridge, a castle or a stone gate. Very occasionally, he includes a figure in the composition. Only rarely did Apol date his paintings, but his earlier works can be recognised from their finer brushstrokes and detail. Later ones are painted with in a wider, more fluent stroke.

What makes the painting shown here, *Wandering along a snowy lane*, so captivating is its wonderful ambience. Beside the snow-covered lane we can just see a large house, half-hidden by a couple of fir trees. Fresh tracks tell us that a cart has recently passed this way, and in the distance we see a man walking. You can almost hear the snow crunching under his feet. The landscape is all warm white and silver-grey hues, whilst the sky above is a soft blue. The snow shimmers in the sunlight. The whole scene is suffused with calm and silence. The only, subtle, colour accents are the green of the fence and trees.



Isaac Lazarus ('Isaac') Israels

Amsterdam 1865 – 1934 The Hague

A lady at the dressmaker's

Board laid down on panel

78.2 x 56.3 cm

Signed with studio stamp lower right

Provenance

Collection A.D. Hamburger, Utrecht
Sale Sotheby Mak van Waay,
Amsterdam, 15 April 1975, lot 63
as 'Dame in lichtgrijze japon bij de
kleermaker'

Kunsthandel Rob Noortman,
Hulsberg, 1975, stock.no. S 610, as
'een dame bij de kleermaker'
Private Collection, Belgium

Isaac Israels

Themes from the world of fashion play a prominent role in the oeuvre of Isaac Israels. He produced countless drawings, watercolours, pastels and oil paintings of the ateliers, fitting rooms and showrooms of leading fashion houses in Amsterdam and Paris. He was particularly fascinated by all the activity behind the scenes: the work of the nimble-fingered seamstresses and dressmakers, the rooms filled with colourful fabrics and the scattered trimmings. Israels was a keen observer, a master of the art of depicting what he saw in a just a couple of astute strokes of brush, without that ever detracting from our recognition of his subjects.

In this painting we see a dress being fitted on a female model.

A dressmaker, his furrowed eyebrows giving away his concentration, is putting the finishing touches to one of the sleeves. On the right-hand side is a table, on which we can just see the barest lines of a pair of scissors and some scraps of cloth. The entire composition displays a remarkable fluency of touch. The dressmaker's black-and-white suit, high collar and starched cuffs contrast wonderfully with the fluid hang of the dress and its soft, pastel-pink shades.

Israels has deliberately chosen to show only the barest of background details, so that our attention is not distracted from the two figures.

By contrast, he has carefully elaborated the fine features of the woman's face so as to do full justice to her beauty.

In 1882, a branch of the famous Brussels fashion house Hirsch & Cie opened in Amsterdam. Through a mutual friend, the portrait painter Thérèse Schwartze (1851 – 1918), herself a great lover of fashion, Israels made the acquaintance of founders Sylvain Kahn and Albert "Sally" Berg. These two heavyweights of their industry gave the artist permission to work in their fashion house and ateliers, and also introduced him to their illustrious colleagues at the *maisons* Drecoll and Jeanne Paquin in Paris. This opportunity prompted Israels to pay his first working visit to the French capital in 1903, an experience he so enjoyed that the following year he decided to give up his studio in Amsterdam and settle in Paris for a while.



Ferdinand Hart Nibbrig

Zoutelande is a pretty, authentic seaside resort in the province of Zeeland. It is beautifully situated on a bay not far from Domburg, where Ferdinand Hart Nibbrig regularly held shows of his work and sat on the local exhibitions committee. In 1910 he had a house built in Zoutelande, named "Santvlugt", and from then on spent his summers there. Hart Nibbrig produced a number of outstanding panoramic works in and around the village, depicting it from different viewpoints. Usually, he positioned himself atop one of the many high dunes along the coast. From here he could paint the red roofs of the houses, the green marram grass and the ever-changing blues and pinks of the sea and sky in countless variations. As the scenery transformed, so did the intensity of his palette: from delicate pastel shades to bright, expressive colours.

Ferdinand Hart Nibbrig

Amsterdam 1866 – 1915 Laren

A view of Zoutelande

Oil on canvas 40.5 x 80.5 cm

Signed lower right

To be dated 1910 – 1915

This work has been purchased circa 1925 by a private collector and has been in the same family until 2017.

Compare to a similar painting entitled 'View of Zoutelande on the Island of Walcheren', oil on canvas 80 x 159.5 cm, in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, stock nr. SK-A-2540

Hart Nibbrig frequently painted the sky and parts of the landscape using the Pointillist technique. By combining small dots of paint of complementary colours in dense patterns, the Pointillists created an optical effect whereby all the different hues combined to form one diffuse field of colour. The result was a purer, more intense chromatic impression. The painting shown here, from our own collection, is a fine example of Hart Nibbrig's use of the technique. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam owns a larger but otherwise almost identical version of the work, entitled *View of Zoutelande on the Island of Walcheren* (oil on canvas, 80 x 159.5 cm, inv. no. SK-A-2540).

Hart Nibbrig first encountered Pointillism during a stay in Paris in 1888, shortly after graduating from the Academy in Amsterdam. In the French capital he met Theo van Gogh, Vincent's younger brother, who was working for the famous art dealers Boussod & Valadon, and was introduced to the colourful works of such painters as Vincent van Gogh (1853 – 1890), Edgar Degas (1834 – 1917), Claude Monet (1840 – 1926) and Camille Pissarro (1830 – 1903). However, it took a good five years or more for their influence to seep visibly into Hart Nibbrig's own work.

Up until about 1894, Hart Nibbrig experimented furiously with colour, technique and choice of subject. His "discovery" in 1892 of the bulbfields around Hillegom and Bennebroek transformed his palette, making it brighter and lighter. He was also inspired by an exhibition in The Hague by Belgian Luminists, who applied Pointillism rather more freely in their work. Not that Hart Nibbrig was ever a strict adherent; he always combined his Pointillism with more Impressionistic brushstrokes. Still, together with Jan Toorop (1858 – 1928), Co Breman (1865 – 1838), Henk Bremmer (1871 – 1956) and one or two others, Hart Nibbrig was one of the few Dutch painters to use the technique at all.



**Johannes Jacobus Maria
(‘Jan’) Bogaerts**

’s-Hertogenbosch 1878 – 1962
Wassenaar

*A still life with cherries and
a green bottle*

Oil on canvas 40 x 45 cm

Signed and dated 1935 upper left

Provenance

Kunstzalen Bennewitz, The Hague

Jan Bogaerts

Jan Bogaerts is best known for his still lifes. Remarkably true to life, these often combine serenity with a certain intimacy, an effect achieved through the painter’s subdued and subtle use of colour as well as his arresting compositions. Bogaerts had a particular preference for painting everyday objects, kitchen utensils, food and antiques, such as silver-bound books, silver dance card holders, Chinese shoes and antique boxes. These came mostly from his own collection. He placed them against a carefully chosen background, be that elaborate wallpaper or a plain brick wall. His compositions are very varied, too. Although he usually positioned a vase of flowers, say, in the middle of his canvas, in the traditional manner, sometimes he opted for a modernist approach with the base half out of view. Or he would place his objects slightly off-centre and introduce diagonal lines and overlapping.

Bogaerts’ mastery in depicting materials is apparent from the still life reproduced here. We see an earthenware bowl full of cherries, a glass bottle and a spoon. The ripe red cherries, one hanging just over the edge of the bowl, look good enough to eat. Moreover, there is a subtle echo of their redness in the paper print hanging on the wall. But it is the transparent green bottle, with its cork and part of the wall visible through the glass, which really demonstrates Bogaerts’ technical skill. He has deliberately placed the bottle just out of the centre of frame so as to bring a certain tension to the scene.

Born in ’s-Hertogenbosch, as a student Jan Bogaerts came into contact with Antoon van Welie (1866 – 1956), a tutor at the local Academy of Art. Under his tutelage, Bogaerts painted figures, portraits, landscapes, parks, gardens and castle grounds in a Symbolist style. From 1899 he studied at the Antwerp Academy, where he was awarded a number of important prizes. Although he painted many commissioned portraits in the earlier part of his career, from the 1920s onwards he devoted himself more to still lifes. Compared with the work of his contemporaries, these are quite unique. Whilst painters like Jan Sluijters, Piet Mondrian, Dick Ket and Raoul Huynckes were working mainly in a Luminist, abstract, Expressionist or Magic-Realist style, Bogaerts purely focused on realism.

In 1978, to mark centenary of his birth, the Noordbrabants Museum in ’s-Hertogenbosch organised the first major retrospective of Bogaerts’ oeuvre. Today, almost forty years later, his works are bought by both Dutch and international collectors.

JAN ZOGAERTS - 1915 -



Wim Oepts

Willem Anthonie ('Wim') Oepts
Amsterdam 1904 – 1988 Paris

A house in Provence
Oil on canvas 49.8 x 60.7 cm
Signed lower right

In the early 1920s, Wim Oepts started drawing and producing graphic work in the form of woodcuts and linocuts. Through a mutual acquaintance, in 1924 he made contact with the artist Charley Toorop (1891 – 1955). Recognising his talent, she made him her new protégé. At her instigation, Oepts took the radical decision to give up his job as a draughtsman with an engineering company and devote himself entirely to his art. At the time, Charley Toorop was one of the most influential figures in the Dutch art world, with an extensive personal network of progressive artists and critics. She encouraged Oepts to take part in group exhibitions, and also to take up painting. In 1930 Professor Johan van Regteren Altena (1899 – 1980), director of the Print Room at the Rijksmuseum, arranged a grant enabling Oepts to take evening classes at the Amsterdam Academy.

Two years later, impelled by an overwhelming urge to escape Toorop's influence, Oepts headed for Paris – at the time, the world centre of modern art. Here he encountered the Postimpressionist work of Pierre Bonnard (1867 – 1947) and the Fauvist paintings of André Derain (1880 – 1954), Emile Othon Friesz (1879 – 1949) and Maurice de Vlaminck (1876 – 1958). These works were characterised by their light colours, strong colour contrast and simplified forms, all very different from the dark, sober Amsterdam cityscapes Oepts had been producing. He was also enchanted by the bright, colourful southern French landscape. During this period he travelled frequently back and forth between Amsterdam and Paris.

At the Academy in Paris he was taught by Othon Friesz. In the summer he often worked on the French coast, around Saint-Tropez, the fishing village of Collioure and in Provence. After the Second World War, he increasingly withdrew from the art scene and dedicated himself to painting landscapes, harbour views and village scenes in sun-drenched colours. His style became freer and more abstract, with his compositions often comprising sharply delineated fields of contrasting colours. By applying layer upon layer of paint, he also brought great brightness to his work. The result was a uniquely personal style, in which his graphic talent is clearly recognisable.

Oepts' paintings have always been much appreciated by Dutch collectors. In 2011 the Kunsthal in Rotterdam organised a major retrospective of his work.



Illustration front cover

Fernand Toussaint

1873 – Brussels – 1956

An elegant lady with Japanese prints

Oil on canvas 60.3 x 50.5 cm

Signed lower left

Provenance

Private Collection, New Jersey,
United States

Illustration back cover

**Margaretha Cornelia Johanna
Wilhelmina Henriëtte**

(‘Margaretha’) Roosenboom

The Hague 1843 – 1896 Voorburg

Roses in a vase

Oil on canvas 61.7 x 35.6 cm

Signed lower right

Annotated verso: “Marg:

Roosenboom, Roses, deux milles
francs”

Provenance

Collection Frank Tuchfarber,
Cincinnati, United States

Collection Caspar H. Rowe,
Cincinnati, 1909

Stayed in this family from 1909 until
2017

Colophon

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Kunsthandel Bies has been buying and selling nineteenth-century paintings and watercolours from the Romantic School and the Hague School for more than six decades. In recent years we have expanded our activities to include works from the early twentieth century.

Over the years we have built up a substantial clientèle in the Netherlands and abroad – museums as well as collectors. At our own exhibitions and through our participation in leading art and antiques fairs such as PAN Amsterdam and TEFAF Maastricht, our collection is seen by an extensive group of potential buyers.

We have recently been highly successful in securing sales of numerous important works by the great masters of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with top-quality paintings by Barend Cornelis Koekkoek, Cornelis Springer, Andreas Schelfhout, Hendrik Willem Mesdag, Isaac Israëls, George Hendrik Breitner, Henri Fantin-Latour and Jan Sluijters finding buyers in Europe, the United States and Asia.

We are therefore always looking for more high-quality paintings by artists of this calibre and period. As well as selling on consignment, we also purchase works for our own collection.

If you are considering selling an important work of this kind, or even an entire collection, please feel free to call or e-mail us.

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