
Amsterdam | Eva van Geldorp | +31 (0)20 550 2206 | eva.vangeldorp@sothebys.com
London | Matthew Weigman | matthew.weigman@sothebys.com

Works from the Collection Besselaar will lead Sotheby's Amsterdam Sale of 19th Century European Paintings on 13 December 2010

The Selection Offered for Sale Represents All the Important Artists and Genres of the Dutch Romantic School



Andreas Schelfhout, *Numerous skaters and a horse-sledge by a refreshment stall*, 96 by 145 cm., estimate €280,000 – 450,000*

Sotheby's Amsterdam sale of 19th Century European Paintings on **13th December 2010** will feature Twelve Master Paintings from the Collection Besselaar. The selection, which is expected to bring in excess of €1,5 – 2 million, represents all the important artists and genres of the Dutch Romantic School. All of superb quality and rarely offered on the market today the Collection Besselaar includes a panoramic landscape by Barend Cornelis Koekkoek, a lively winter scene by Andreas Schelfhout, a flower still life by Arnoldus Bloemers and several town views by Cornelis Springer and Willem Koekkoek.

Andreas Schelfhout's Numerous skaters and a horse-sledge by a refreshment stall:

Painted in 1857, *Numerous skaters and a horse-sledge by a refreshment stall*, is without any doubt one of the artist's masterpieces. Comparable to the one in the Rijksmuseum Twente (The Netherlands), which is regarded by connoisseurs as the best of his winter scenes, this work is of outstanding quality. The wonderfully detailed figures, some gathered around a refreshment stall, others cheerfully skating, and the superb treatment of the translucent ice with its scratches and reflections have been rendered with great natural quality, bathing in a subtle light.

As one of the most applauded landscapists of his time Andreas Schelfhout (1787-1870) was universally admired for his beautiful winter scenes. Building on a grand tradition that had blossomed in the 17th century, Schelfhout acquired international fame with his perfectly balanced compositions, superb brushwork and masterful depiction of the ice and sky.

The present lot is unique in its unusual large size and is a superlative example of Schelfhout's unsurpassed virtuosity. *Numerous skaters and a horse-sledge by a refreshment stall* is estimated to realise €280,000 – 450,000.

More Highlights from the Collection Besselaar:



Also from the Collection is *Travellers with cattle and donkeys in a Rhenish panoramic landscape*, painted in 1840 by the most important landscape painter of Dutch Romanticism, Barend Cornelis Koekkoek (1803 – 1862).

The painting is a wonderful example of Koekkoek's unsurpassed virtuosity. It contains all the elements for which his art became famous. On the foreground, we see travellers overlooking the wonderful panoramic landscape, hills extending far beyond. One can't stop

admiring the richness of the painting; from the sweeping panoramic vista, divided into various levels, to even the

smallest detail, like the leafs and blades of grass, each depicted with almost botanical accuracy. The painting is estimated at €280,000 – 450,000 and is offered for sale since decades.

A further significant highlight of the Collection Besselaar is *The Gemeenlandshuis and the Old Church, Delft, in summer* by Cornelis Springer (1817-1891). Painted in 1877, the present lot can be seen as one of the best and most fascinating works by the artist. The rhythm of the differences in height and the strong vertical accents, the contrast of light and shadow, the colouring and the solid composition of the figures and the geometrical pattern of the Gemeenlandshuis, all these elements make



this composition a complex and intriguing painting. Even more interesting is that Springer made notes of the progress of the execution of the painting. It took him 42 days to work on it. Two months later he sold it to a Dutch Art Collector. *The Gemeenlandshuis and the Old Church* is offered for sale with an estimate of €150,000 – 200,000.

Mr and Mrs Besselaar:

In the late 1980s, Hein and Toni Besselaar began to collect Dutch Romantic paintings. Having both grown up in Holland, their intention was to establish a collection of Dutch nineteenth-century paintings that represented every-day life in their country at that time. With a superb eye for quality and working in conjunction with a number of well established art advisers like, Simon Levie, former director of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, and the late Leslie Smith of Wassenaar, Hein and Toni built a premier collection that includes the outstanding works by the most important Dutch Romantic artists.

The sale of 19th Century European Paintings also includes works by Jongkind, Henri Fantin-Latour, Verboeckhoven, Hermanus Koekkoek, Gabriel, Breitner, Isaac Israels and Mesdag.

The 68-lot sale, to be held in the evening of 13 December at 7 PM, will be followed by the sale of Modern & Contemporary Art. The pre-sale exhibition will run from 10 to 12 December, 10AM – 5 PM at Sotheby's Amsterdam. The Twelve Master Paintings of the Collection Besselaar were also on view at Sotheby's in New York and London.

* Pre-sale estimates do not include buyer's premium.

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