JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

Les Danseuses

Leopold Bervoets

Sold

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REF: 143980

Description

LEOPOLD BERVOETS Belgian School 1892-1978 Les Danseuses Oil on canvas laid down, signed 34.8 x 48.4 cms13 3/8 x 19 1/8 ins
Leopold Bervoets was born in Antwerp in 1892 and undertook his artistic training at L'Académie d'Anvers under the tutelage of Charles Mertens and Isidore Opsomer and became an artist in both oils and watercolours as well as a designer.

Before the outbreak of the First World War, Bervoets had immersed himself in the lively life of street fairs, circuses and dance halls and was as familiar with the nocturnal life of the docks area as a native of that quarter. However this closeness to the bawdy and seedy world was as a dispassionate but close observer in pursuit of subject matter for his art.

When he was thirty, he became a member of the influential art movement Moderne Kunst and companion members included Edmond van Dooren, Ernest Albert, Oscar Verpoorten and Paul Joostens. Later he was part of the group known as Als Ik Kan. He was rather reclusive, preferring to work in his studio, subsuming himself in his paintings and their subject matter rather than exhibiting his work in the public exhibitions.

His technique displayed a close affinity for reality, a meticulous eye for detail and a poetic vision and he adapted the tenets of Cubism and Futurism to depict his personal take on life when portrayed in his paintings. He had an excellent sense of colour and the construction of his paintings is always of great interest. One critic wrote that Bervoets' works had a radiant refinement despite being painted with a subdued palette and soft forms. A painting by him was built up with delicate plains and surfaces which harmonised into the whole.

Another noted that the artist seemed to pass unseen through the turmoil of the city life that he depicted. On his long journeys through the streets of Antwerp in the darkness of night, he was like a silent philosopher observing the curious world inhabited by marginalised society.

He painted still lifes, landscapes, Antwerp street scenes and views of the port but he is probably best known for his genre works: the interiors of workshops, cafés and dance halls peopled with those looking for the edgier side of life as they came up against barmaids, dancing girls, prostitutes and vagabonds.

The Musée des Beaux-Arts in Antwerp has paintings by Bervoets in its collection.

Bibliography:

Arto Dictionnaire Biographique Arts Plastiques en Belgique

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Siecles - Paul Piron

Dictionnaire des Peintres - E Benezit

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