

S P H I N X F I N E A R T



Frederik de Moucheron (Emden, Germany 1633 - Amsterdam 1686)

A Wooded River Landscape with a Traveller on a Track

signed 'Moucheron' (lower right, on the rock)

oil on canvas

61 x 78.1 cm (24 x 30¾ in)

Frederik de Moucheron's majestic landscape, caught moments before the evening light dwindles into a brilliant sunset, inspires a serene and nostalgic atmosphere. The tranquillity of this bucolic ideal is brought to life by his exceptional contouring with its alternating bands of light and shade. The beautiful perspective of the work is created with a foreground interest of slender trees which act as a neat framing device. Both the winding river and the complementary curve of the dappled lowland with its mounted traveller, establish a broad and spacious view. Other human activity is evident on the curved path leading up to the castle ruins, where a shepherd tends to his small flock. There is also, in the middle distance, a modest dwelling place, its tall chimney positioned to the far left of the painting's centre point.

Strong Italianate influences can be detected in the luminous silvering of the tree trunks and their delicately highlighted leaves. Similar silvering can be seen in another of de Moucheron's works, *An Extensive Wooded Landscape* (Private Collection).

De Moucheron was heavily influenced by the second generation of Dutch Italianate artists who numbered Jan Asselijn (after 1610-1652), under whom he trained, [Jan Both](#) (c.1618-1652) and [Nicholas Berchem](#) (1620-1683) among others. These artists, active in Rome and the Netherlands from the 1630s onwards, incorporated classical architecture into their otherwise naturalistic scenery. Such a tendency is clearly apparent in the work of de Moucheron himself. De Moucheron's paintings are appreciated in the main for their decorative and hugely attractive picturesque qualities. Consequently, he was greatly in demand by the upper classes of Amsterdam who commissioned him to paint landscapes for the walls of their homes. Towards the end of his life he even painted the walls of a doll's house which was made and furnished in Amsterdam for Adam Oortmans and Petronella de la Court between c.1674 and 1690.

Provenance:

The Rev. Reginald Cholmondeley, Condover Hall;
(+) Christie's, London, 6 March 1897, lot 50 (28 gns. to Philpot).

Artist description:

Frederik de Moucheron was born into a Dutch family of artists of French descent. Both Frederik de Moucheron and his son Isaac de Moucheron (1667-1744) specialized in Italianate landscape views with park-like settings. These were particularly used to decorate the walls in houses of the well-to-do in Amsterdam.

After training with Jan Asselijn in Amsterdam, he settled and worked in France for several years, where in 1656 he was recorded as staying in Paris and Lyon. He returned to Amsterdam after a brief period in Antwerp. In 1659 he married Marieke de Jouderville, daughter of the painter Isaac de Jouderville; they had 12 children. Frederik was strongly influenced by the work of the second generation of Dutch italianates, particularly Asselijn and Jan Both. His landscapes also show similarities with the late work of Adam Pynacker. Dirck Helmbreker, Johannes Lingelbach, Adriaen van de Velde and Nicolaes Berchem all provided staffage for his paintings.

De Moucheron's work is appreciated primarily for its picturesque, decorative qualities, his paintings often rendered attractively atmospheric by use of silvery touches (e.g. *Italianate Landscape*, 1670s; Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum). Towards the end of his life he painted landscapes for three saletkamer walls in a doll's house, which was made and furnished in Amsterdam for Adam Oortmans and Petronella de la Court between c. 1674 and 1690 (Utrecht, Central Museum). These show how such landscape wall panels would have looked in situ, although to find an actual room so decorated as early as this would have been rare. In 1678 and 1679 he completed, with Berchem, several works by Willem Schellinks, who had died in 1678.

Collections

De Moucheron is represented in the following collections: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; National Gallery, London; Museum der Bildenden Künste, Leipzig; Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hanover; State Museums of Florence, Italy; Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Irkutsk Regional Art Museum, Russia, amongst others.