

# KLAAS MULLER

## HENRI EVENEPOEL

### 2 Farmers of "The Meuse"

In the summer of 1897 and 1898 (a year before his death), Henri Evenepoel left Paris to join his family on holiday to the village of Wépion (near Namur). Both the holiday home and the view of the Trieu-Colin have remained virtually unchanged to this day.

Although Evenepoel died very young (aged 27), all in all he left us a fairly extensive body of work. He was constantly painting and drawing and he always had his drawing and painting materials at hand to depict impressions of everyday life. Also his painter's obsession with photography was quite remarkable: he liked to record his impressions and was in the possession of a Pocket Kodak camera. A few months before Evenepoel painted our work, he stayed several months in Algeria where he had been sent by his family to spend the winter because of his tuberculosis. Perhaps father Evenepoel also wants to put distance between Henri and Louise (his cousin, but also the mother of his son Charles).

What we see are a man and woman heading to the market, captured as if by a fixed camera with the rolling hills on the background. Evenepoel liked to depict everyday life, not idealised. This led to paintings of intimate domestic scenes, images of the seamy side of society (drowning people, beggars, prostitutes) but also seemingly ordinary scenes as is the case here.

Stylistically, the painter was also very progressive: he wanted to capture the fleetingness of things in an expressive way (Together with Rouault and Matisse, he would co-found expressionism and fauvism) to try to get to the heart of things.

1898, Monogrammed below left *HE*

Oil on Canvas, 38 x 46 cm (15 x 18 1/8 inches)



Circa: 1898

### **Exhibitions**

Exposition d'oeuvres de Henri Evenepoel" Cercle artistique et littéraire, Brussels 1923-1924, nr. 75

"Henri Evenepoel" Gal. Georges Giroux, Brussels 1932, nr. 149

"Retrospectieve Henri Evenepoel" KMSK, Antwerp 1953, nr. 113

### **Literature**

Henri Evenepoel 1872-1899" Catalogue raisonné, Danielle Derrey-Capon, Gemeentekrediet 1994, nr. 273 ill.

### **Artist description:**

Evenepoel was born in Nice. He first studied art in Brussels at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts between 1889 and 1890, and entered Paris's Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1892. Evenepoel entered the atelier of Gustave Moreau in 1893, which put him in contact with Henri Matisse, Georges Rouault, Albert Marquet, Edgar Maxence, Charles Milcendeau, and Léon Printemps.