PAN
AMSTERDAM

KUNSTHANDEL BOB SCHOLTE FINE ART

Market in Auxerre

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1905
Signed and dated lower right ‘Ten Cate, Auxerre, 1905’
Oil on canvas
52 × 63 cm

Provenance:
Private collection, Antwerp.

A comparable pastel work is in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam:
https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/object/Markt-te-Beauvais--77cbeb9d520e93ef501f5825e4323f4d

Market in Auxerre, painted in 1905, shows Ten Cate at his best. We see a lively French market square, surrounded by old façades and filled with figures going about their daily routines. His impressionist brushwork is clearly visible in the loose strokes with which he brings light, shadow and activity together. The women in dark clothing, the stalls beneath colourful parasols and the warm tones of the houses create an intimate and authentic image of provincial France at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Frisian Impressionist Siebe Johannes ten Cate (1858–1908) was a born traveller, driven by a constant curiosity about the world beyond his native province. He was born in Sneek and lost both parents at a young age. Thanks to the family fortune he inherited, he was able to move to Paris at the age of 22 after completing his training in The Hague and Antwerp. There he found his true inspiration and developed into a painter with a distinctly Impressionist style.

In Paris, Ten Cate became friends with artists including Camille Pissarro and Alfred Sisley. He shared a studio with Kees van Dongen and met Vincent van Gogh, who mentioned him in his letters. He exhibited regularly in the Netherlands and abroad, including at the prestigious Paris Salon.

Although Paris became his permanent home, he continued to travel extensively. He visited Switzerland, Spain, Belgium, England, Scandinavia, Germany and North Africa, among other places. These journeys became an important source of inspiration. His oeuvre moves between tranquil landscapes and lively urban scenes. From Lake Lucerne and the forests around Zwolle to the markets of Seville, the banks of the Thames and the bustling streets of Paris, he captured everyday life wherever he went.

Ten Cate often worked en plein air, allowing him to observe changing light and daily life at first hand. His pastels, his favourite medium, possess a particular quality. They capture a moment as though recorded with a camera using a long exposure: movement becomes blurred, forms dissolve softly into one another, while the atmosphere lingers. Through loose brushstrokes and pastel marks, lively effects of light and a subtle, dreamlike haze, Ten Cate found a distinctive way of conveying light, movement and humanity. Alongside paintings and pastels, he also produced a small number of etchings and lithographs.

His work is represented in the collections of, among others, the Rijksmuseum, the Louvre, the Musée d'Orsay, the Musée Carnavalet and the Fries Museum. Since 2020, the Siebe ten Cate Foundation has worked to bring renewed attention to his oeuvre. This has included an extensive RKD study and a catalogue raisonné published in 2025, followed by a concise biography in September 2026. Two exhibitions, in both the Netherlands and France, are also in preparation.