

# PAN

AMSTERDAM

KUNSTHANDEL A.H. BIES



Dorpsplein met plataan in Zuid-Frankrijk

Olieverf op doek 54,2 x 64,8 cm  
Gesigneerd en gedateerd rechtsonder 'Oepts .66'

**Willem Anthonie ('Wim') Oepts - Amsterdam 1904 – 1988 Paris**

In the early 1920s, Wim Oepts started drawing and producing graphic work in the form of woodcuts and linocuts. Through a mutual acquaintance, in 1924 he made contact with the artist Charley Toorop (1891 – 1955). Recognising his talent, she made him her new protégé. At her instigation, Oepts took the radical decision to give up his job as a draughtsman with an engineering company and devote himself entirely to his art. At the time, Charley Toorop was one of the most influential figures in the Dutch art world, with an extensive personal network of progressive artists and critics. She encouraged Oepts to take part in group exhibitions, and also to take up painting. In 1930 Professor Johan van Regteren Altena (1899 – 1980), director of the Print Room at the Rijksmuseum, arranged a grant enabling Oepts to take evening classes at the Amsterdam Academy.

Two years later, impelled by an overwhelming urge to escape Toorop's influence, Oepts headed for Paris – at the time, the world centre of modern art. Here he encountered the Postimpressionist work of Pierre Bonnard (1867 – 1947)

and the Fauvist paintings of André Derain (1880 – 1954), Emile Othon Friesz (1879 – 1949) and Maurice de Vlaminck (1876 – 1958). These works were characterised by their light colours, strong colour contrast and simplified forms, all very different from the dark, sober Amsterdam cityscapes Oepts had been producing. He was also enchanted by the bright, colourful southern French landscape. During this period he travelled frequently back and forth between Amsterdam and Paris.

At the Academy in Paris he was taught by Othon Friesz. In the summer he often worked on the French coast, around Saint-Tropez, the fishing village of Collioure and in Provence. After the Second World War, he increasingly withdrew from the art scene and dedicated himself to painting landscapes, harbour views and village scenes in sun-drenched colours. His style became freer and more abstract, with his compositions often comprising sharply delineated fields of contrasting colours. By applying layer upon layer of paint, he also brought great brightness to his work. The result was a uniquely personal style, in which his graphic talent is clearly recognisable.

Oepts' paintings have always been much appreciated by Dutch collectors. In 2011 the Kunsthall in Rotterdam organised a major retrospective of his work.