



Evarist De Buck (Sint-Amansberg, 1892 – Lovendegem / Ghent (?), 1974)

After the Storm, Sint-Martens-Latem, 1918

Oil on canvas, 152.5 x 100.5 cm

Signed and dated lower right :

Ev. De Buck

1918

Evarist De Buck paints in a post storm light one of the emblematic places of Sint-Martens-Latem, the Tempelhof, from which a rainbow emerges. Thanks to the neo-impressionist technique that he practiced for a short period, he gave his work an intensity of color and light.

Evarist De Buck



Evarist Gustave De Buck was born in Sint-Amandsberg, a suburb of Ghent, in 1892. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent, where his teachers were Pierre Jules Van Biesbroek, Jean Delvin and George Minne. He perhaps continued his training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels, where the art of Constant Montald left his mark on him. His early works were also influenced by symbolism. Mobilized in 1914, he was injured and sent to convalesce in the south of France. At the same time, he evolved towards more realism in social and religious subjects marked by the pessimistic art of his friend Albert Servaes, a tendency that can be found at several moments in the artist's life. (fig.1). But Luminism and Neo-Impressionism soon brought a new richness of color and light to his landscapes (fig.2). This new interest corresponds to his first stay in Sint-Martens-Latem, between 1917 and 1918¹. He settled there permanently in 1927. During the 1930s, he was influenced by Expressionism, which had an impact on many Belgian painters. As a painter of the landscapes of the Leie throughout the seasons, De Buck is also influenced by the captivating landscapes of Valerius de Saedeleer, which will simplify his painting process (fig.3).

Committed to the Flemish cause², Evarist De Buck offered a painting representing Our Lady of Flanders to the Yser pilgrimage committee in 1932. He also depicted the legend of Tjil Uylenspiegel. During the Second World War, De Buck was marked by the death of his son, arrested by the Gestapo for an act of resistance. Despite his social involvement, De Buck remained a loner who maintained little contact with the inhabitants of Sint-Martens-Latem.

¹ At the time only Albert Servaes was in Sint-Martens-Latem. The other artists were mostly in the United Kingdom or in the Netherlands.

² He also had pro-German and then Stalinist convictions which inspired him to create allegorical works.

Evarist de Buck mainly exhibited in Ghent. At the beginning, he presented his works at the *Kunst en Kennis* circle, which brought together students of the Ghent academy and at the *Salle Taets* (1917). Subsequently, he exhibited at the *Galerie d'art* and at the *Cercle artistique et littéraire* of Ghent. He also presented his works in his own gallery in Sint-Martens-Latem, as well as in Brussels and Antwerp.

Evarist de Buck died in Lovendegem or Ghent in 1974³. He is buried in the Sint-Martens-Latem cemetery. Two years earlier, the municipality honored him with a retrospective of his work.

After the Storm, Sint-Martens-Latem

In a monumental vertical format leaving ample room for sky and water, Evarist De Buck represents the Tempelhof farm on the banks of the Leie. The dark sky filled with heavy clouds is illuminated by a rainbow that seems to spring from the farm.

This old Tempelhof⁴ farm is a 17th century building which originally depended on the Saint Bavo Abbey in Ghent (fig.4). Located on the banks of the Leie, behind the Saint-Martin church, it is an emblematic place in the village of Sint-Martens-Latem. So much so that it inspired the many painters who frequented the village from the end of the 19th century on (fig.5). But it can already be found as early as 1860 in Xavier De Cock's work, who was one of the precursors of what we would call the School of Sint-Martens-Latem (fig.6).

Evarist De Buck also represented Tempelhof on several occasions since his arrival in Sint-Martens-Latem in the spring of 1917⁵. He then abandoned the pessimism of his previous works and the war situation for the painting of landscapes marked by the Luminism of Emile Claus. He developed light and color while fragmenting his touch (fig.7). But De Buck went a step further by adopting the neo-impressionist technique, better known under the term *pointillism*, for a brief period, in the summer of 1918. This evolution of Impressionism, which we owe to Georges Seurat and which would be theorized by Paul Signac would be known in Belgium thanks to the exhibition in Brussels at the *Les XX Salon* in 1887 of *Un Dimanche après-midi à*

³ In Ghent, after DE SMET.

⁴ Despite its name, it has no connection with the Templars. The first mention of the place dates back to 1121.

⁵ After DE SMET in the chapter dedicated to Evarist De Buck.

l'île de la Grande Jatte of Seurat. Several Belgian artists then adopted the neo-impressionist technique. The most famous and diligent would be Théo Van Rysselberghe in Ghent, who in turn would mark the young Evarist De Buck for works which would undoubtedly be the best of his career. Of note is also that a painting by Evarist Du Buck which belonged to the famous Josefowitz collection, *Three Bathers* (fig.8), was once mistakenly attributed to Van Rysselberghe⁶.

The few neo-impressionist works of Evarist De Buck have in common the depiction of the Leie. In most of them, Tempelhof appears as well as its reflection in the calm river (fig.9). These are works with a positive and bright atmosphere, representing bathers or the rainbow after the storm. The painter also chose this decor and this technique for the portrait of Ghent writer and composer Florimond van Duyse (fig.10), also painted in 1918. In these works, the neo-impressionist technique makes it possible to render a colorful atmosphere, here bluish, by the presence of points of color of this hue throughout the entire canvas but in varied proportions. This bluish stormy sky with an almost mauve tint is also found in a view of the Leie by Modest Huys (fig.11). The use of points of complementary colors also helps enlivening the light and the colors which then experience their most vivid expression in the work of Evarist De Buck.

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⁶ See : FELTKAMP (Ronald), *Théo Van Rysselberghe*, Brussels, Racine, 2003, p.506, n°.2.

Illustrations

In the text: Photograph of Evarist De Buck.

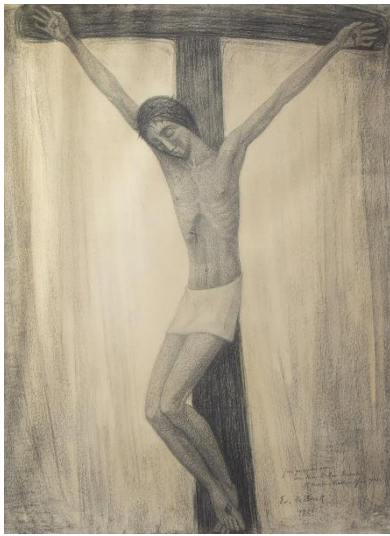


Fig.1 : Evarist De Buck, *Christ on the Cross*, 1926.

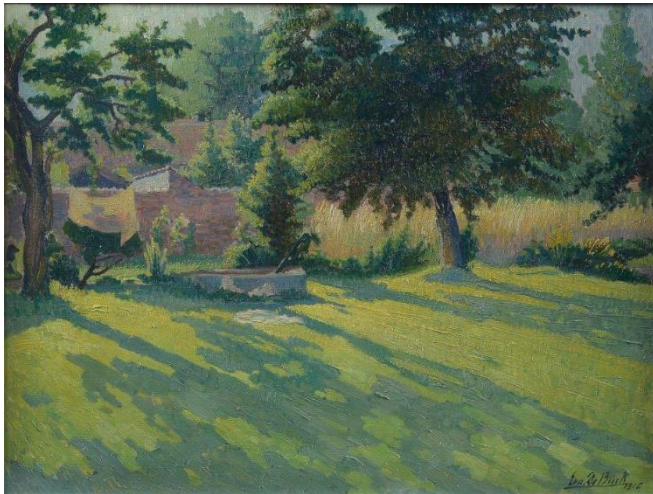


Fig.2 : Evarist De Buck, *Sunny Garden*, 1916.

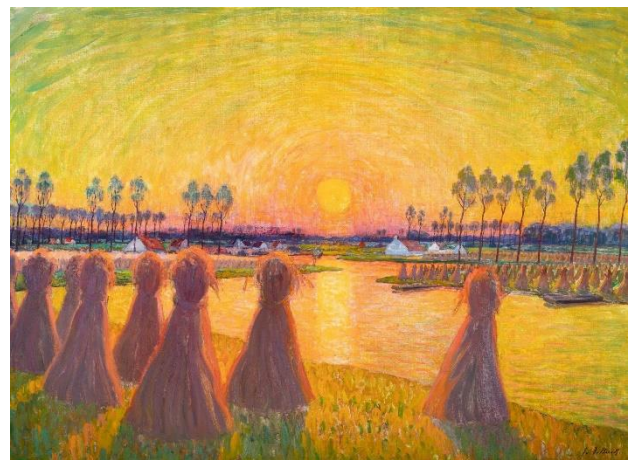


Fig.3 : Evarist De Buck, *The Leie*.



Fig.4 : Tempelhof, Sint-Martens-Latem.

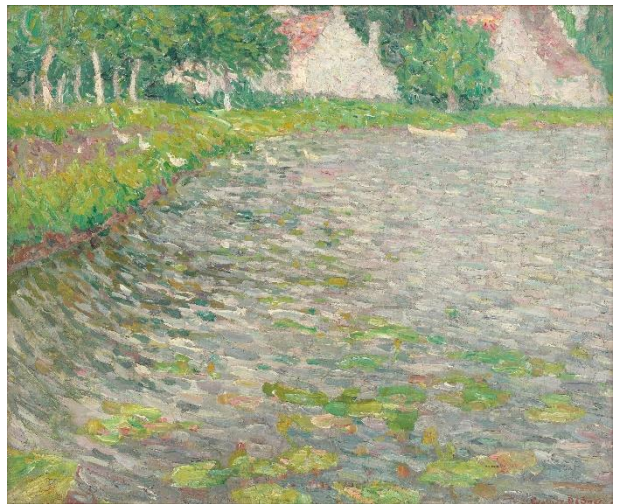


Fig.5 : Gustave Van De Woestyne, *Selfportrait in Sint-Martens-Latem*, 1900 / Gustave De Smet, *The Leie near Tempelhof*, c.1907.



Fig.6 : Xavier De Cock, *Crossing the Leie by ferry in Sint-Martens-Latem*, 1860, Deinze, Mudel.



Fig.7 : Evarist De Buck, *Sunset*, 1918, Deinze, Mudel.

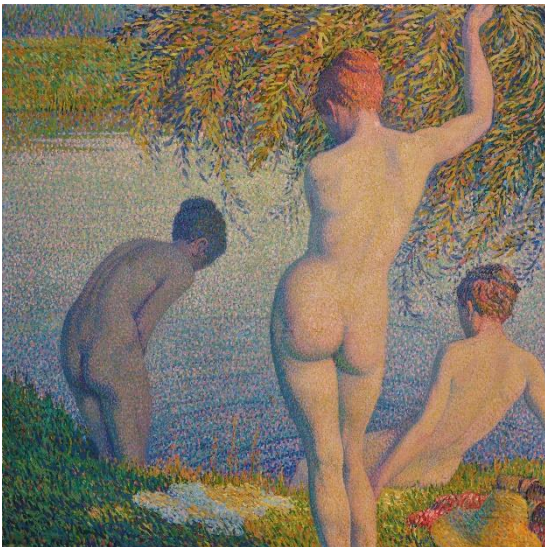


Fig.8 : Evarist De Buck, *Three Bathers*, 1918, formerly Josefowitz coll.

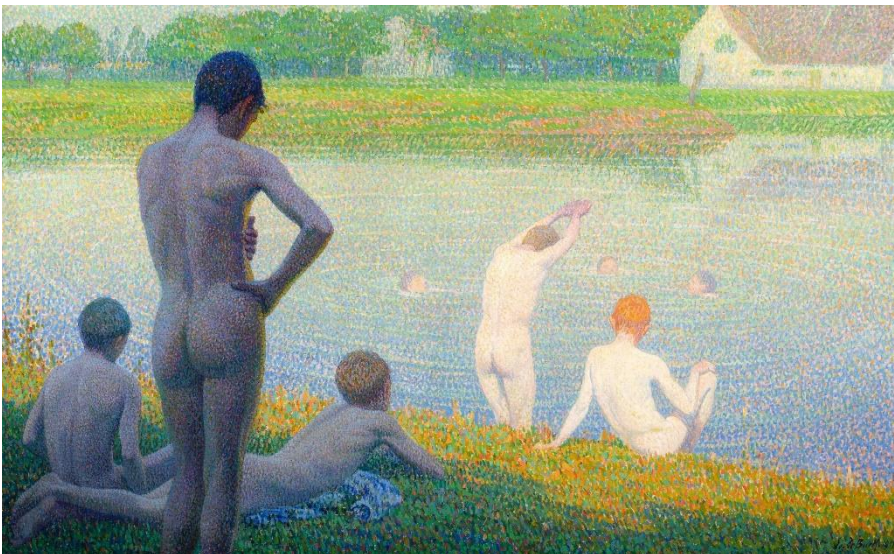


Fig.9 : Evarist De Buck, 1918.



Evarist De Buck, 1918.



Fig.10 : Evarist De Buck, *Portrait of Florimond van Duyse*, 1918, Ghent, Museum of Fine Arts, coll. Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

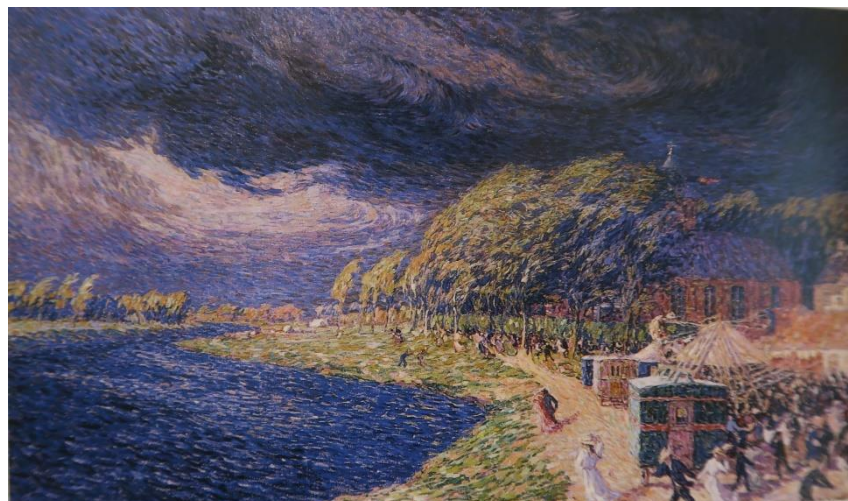


Fig.11 : Modest Huys, *Feast along the Leie in stormy weather*, 1910.

Resources used

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