

# KARL&FABER

## Franz Roubaud

## Lot 34

Caucasian horseman, pursuing the enemy



Low estimate :

EUR 10,000.00

High estimate :

EUR 12,000.00

Buyers premium incl. VAT :

32 %

**Artist**

Franz Roubaud

**Additional description**

Öl auf Leinwand. 81 x 54,2 cm. Signiert unten links. Gerahmt.

**Period**

(1856 Odessa - München 1928)

**Technique**

Gemälde

**Provenance**

Privatsammlung, Bayern.

Franz Roubaud was a European painter, an artist who travelled between East and West, working simultaneously in Germany and Russia. It is a characteristic artistic career in the second half of the 19th century, when artistic exchange between East and West was a matter of course. It is important to keep this in mind in view of today's situation, in which such an exchange between cultures has become impossible. Born into a family from the south of France in Odessa in what is now Ukraine, Roubaud enrolled at the Munich Academy in 1878 after his first drawing lessons in his home town, where he studied under Otto Seitz and Wilhelm von Diez and was recognised for his diligence and talent by Carl von Piloty. However, Roubaud was unable to earn a living there, which is why he returned to Odessa as a drawing teacher, but came back to Munich at the end of 1881 after a stay in France, where he took private lessons with the battle painter Josef von Brandt. This paved the way for Roubaud's artistic career, who now settled permanently in Munich and established himself as a painter of battles in the Caucasus, among other things. His admirers included Prince Regent Luitpold of Bavaria as well as Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II, on whose behalf he decorated the Hall of Fame in Tbilisi, which was built especially for Roubaud's paintings, with battle paintings from the mid-1880s onwards. Three huge panoramas depicting battles from recent Russian history - the storming of the Achulgho mountain fortress in 1859, the defence of Sevastopol in the Crimea in 1854/55 and the Battle of Borodino in 1812 - were also purchased by the Russian imperial family, which Russia used to visually legitimise its conquests during the Caucasian War (1817-1864) and the expulsion of the peoples living there. They became particularly popular in Russia and helped Roubaud gain an international reputation. In the panoramas, Roubaud had developed an extremely close-up, realistic style of depiction that is reminiscent of the "Cinemascope" format of today's cinemas. It also defines our painting - a village has been attacked, it is burning and smoke rises above it, disappearing into the hazy sky, but a troop of Caucasians has taken up the pursuit of the enemy. A Caucasian in full

regalia boldly strides ahead on his grey horse, his rifle at the ready and his eyes focused on the pursuit of the enemy. He is the first to pursue the enemy, whom his troops have put to flight - they are still gathering, followed by the standard-bearer and other riders, while a rider and his horse collapse on the left. However, all painterly attention is focussed on the advancing rider - glistening light contrasts with the dark shadow cast by the rider; he stirs up dust on the barren, stony ground, while the scenery behind blurs in the haze, from which Roubaud uses a broad brush to carve out individual riders and the silhouette of the burning city. It is not only the rider who is in motion; broad brushstrokes create a shimmering, wild colourfulness that sets the whole picture in motion. It is this rapid action of the battle, how the rider rushes towards the viewer at high speed, how he is drawn into the battle, as it were, that still keeps the viewer in suspense today. This type of effective, realistic staging was to the taste of the contemporary audience - they could watch the battle from a safe distance, but at the same time they were also there. Contemporary journalism praised this realistic depiction as having a "genuinely oriental character", which gave the impression "of the self-seen, especially in fleet horsemen" (Freisinger Tagblatt, 19 January 1886). Dr Peter Prange We would like to thank Dr Olga Sugrobova-Roth for confirming the authenticity of the painting on the basis of a high-resolution digital photograph (email dated 2 July 2025). She will include the painting in the digital addendum to the Catalogue Raisonné.