zwiggelaar auctions








Nicolaas van der Waay (1855–1936)

From the Collection of Engel Verkerke

Zwiggelaar Auctions | Session 5 | 11 December 2026 | 7.00 pm

De collectie Engel Verkerke

Nicolaas van der Waay (1855–1936)

Engel Verkerke (1924–2022) became known in the 1960s as the 'Poster King'. Through his art reproductions and posters, he brought painting, photography and later the imagery of pop music within reach of a wide public. Less well known was his own passion for collecting nineteenth-century paintings. His particular interest was the work of Nicolaas van der Waay (1855–1936), whose paintings and studies he collected for almost fifty years.

Verkerke grew up as the son of a Rotterdam dockworker. During the Second World War, he helped print and distribute the underground newspaper De Waarheid, for which he worked as a journalist and editor after the liberation. His familiarity with printing took a new direction in 1957, when he and his then wife started a publishing business specialising in art reproductions. Funds were initially limited, so the first posters were printed in black and white. Early publications included reproductions of a galloping horse by the Chinese artist Xu Beihong and Picasso's Don Quixote. Both proved commercially successful.

What began as a modest enterprise grew into an international business. With permission from museums and copyright holders, Verkerke reproduced works by Rembrandt, Brueghel, Van Gogh, Renoir, Cézanne, Paul Klee and Karel Appel, among others. For a few guilders, people could buy a reproduction of a painting they might otherwise only see in a museum or private collection. By making paintings accessible and affordable to a wide public, Verkerke helped democratise art.

In the 1960s, he also responded to the rise of pop music and the growing youth culture. Alongside art reproductions came posters of Jimi Hendrix, Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan and Che Guevara, later followed by Madonna and George Michael. In choosing his subjects, Verkerke relied largely on his own intuition, which proved remarkably accurate. His business eventually sold millions of posters worldwide each year.







Behind his interest in contemporary imagery lay a deep affection for the nineteenth century. 'If only I had been born a century earlier', Verkerke said more than once. He collected bound volumes of art journals, including The Studio, which he could spend hours reading and leafing through. He was drawn not only to their contents but also to the design of the bindings, often decorated with Art Nouveau motifs. His fondness for the art of this period was also reflected in his publishing business, which issued reproductions of Alphonse Mucha's Four Seasons.

In 1973, Verkerke bought his first painting by Nicolaas van der Waay at the Amsterdam auction house Mak van Waay. The purchase was more or less accidental. The painting showed an Amsterdam orphan girl pouring milk for a cat. Verkerke bought it for his wife Marie, who was very fond of cats. The gift unexpectedly became the beginning of a collection he would continue to build for the rest of his life.

Curious about the painter, Verkerke began to study his life and work. In Pieter Scheen's dictionary of artists, he read about Van der Waay's depictions of Amsterdam orphan girls and discovered the variety of his work. Paintings in the Amsterdam Museum deepened his interest. He began looking specifically for works by Van der Waay, visiting auctions, art fairs and galleries, and regularly receiving tips from friends or offers from other collectors. He also gathered articles, clippings and auction catalogues to learn as much as possible about the painter.

Nicolaas van der Waay was a versatile artist who painted portraits, figure compositions and scenes of everyday life. For many years, he taught at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam. He became best known to the wider public for his paintings of girls from the Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis, the city's civic orphanage. In their distinctive red-and-black clothing, the orphan girls were a familiar sight in the streets of Amsterdam.

In these girls, Van der Waay found a subject that would occupy him for many years. Other artists were also drawn to them. Interest became so great that the governors restricted access to the orphanage. Van der Waay was not permitted to paint there, but was allowed the use of an original girl's costume in which models could pose in his studio. His depictions of everyday life in the Burgerweeshuis were therefore not based solely on direct observation, but also took shape in his studio.

These were the paintings that particularly appealed to Verkerke. In the high-ceilinged rooms of the former public library on the Keizersgracht, where he lived for many years, the generous daylight showed them to particular advantage. He enjoyed showing his collection to friends and visitors, pointing out how the same furniture and objects appeared in different paintings, each time in a different arrangement.

His interest was not confined to the orphan girls. Other subjects and studies by Van der Waay also found their way into his collection. His final purchase was a view of the painter's studio. By his own admission, he paid far too much for it, but Verkerke regarded the work as the final piece of his collection.

What began in 1973 with a painting bought for his wife grew into a collection that would occupy almost half a century of his life. It offers a view of the different aspects of Van der Waay's work, while also showing how an almost accidental first purchase led to a collection assembled with sustained interest and pleasure over nearly fifty years.

The Engel Verkerke Collection is now offered for sale at Zwiggelaar Auctions.

Fine Arts: Collection Engel Verkerke: Nicolaas van der Waay (2860 - 2881)

2860 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Interior with woman looking in a mirror - Watercolour and pastel on paper, 75 x 42.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. A woman in a white cap, blue bodice and pale apron stands before a wall mirror, holding a brass-coloured pail. Her face is visible in the reflection. In ornate plaster frame, behind glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. *The Burgerweeshuis girls were a recurring subject in Van der Waay's paintings and drawings. According to the Amsterdam Museum, his access to the orphanage was eventually withdrawn, although the circumstances remain unclear. In 1901 he received a complete orphanage costume, later supplemented with further garments, enabling him to stage scenes with models. His depictions therefore combine observations of the orphanage girls with carefully arranged genre compositions, rather than necessarily documenting life within the institution. Ref.: Gemeente Amsterdam, 'De Collectie | De weesmeisjes van Van der Waay'; Amsterdam Museum, collection documentation for inv. SA 36353. € 6000 - € 9000


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2861 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Playing piano - study - Charcoal and crayon on paper, 79 x 59.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. Two women at a piano, one seated before an open musical score, the other standing beside her. The standing woman's face is reflected in the mirror above the instrument. Sl. creased along lower edge. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. The corresponding oil painting is also offered in this auction. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 500 - € 1000

2862 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Playing piano - Oil on canvas, 49 x 40 cm (excluding frame), signed upper right. Two women in the distinctive red-and-black costume of the Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis, one seated at a piano before an open musical score, the other standing beside her. The standing woman's face is reflected in the mirror above the piano. In an ornate gilt frame. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 2000 - € 4000

2863 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Standing woman, seen on the back - study - Charcoal and pastel on paper, 74 x 41.5 cm (excluding frame), signed upper right. A woman in a long dress, her head turned to the left and one hand raised towards her shoulder. Pale fabric lies on a small table in the foreground. Preliminary study, the corresponding oil painting is also offered in this auction. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 1000 - € 2000

2864 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Standing woman, seen on the back - Oil on canvas, 124 x 71 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. A woman in a long dress, her head turned to the left and one hand raised towards her shoulder. Pale fabric lies on a small table in the foreground. In a dark frame with a gilt inner border. Label of Schouten & Voskuil on verso. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 3500 - € 7000

2865 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman in front of a mirror - Charcoal and pencil on paper, 95 x 46.5 cm (excluding frame), unsigned. A woman in a cap and shoulder covering stands before an ornamental wall mirror, her face visible in the reflection. Some creasing. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 400 - € 600

2866 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman reading - Charcoal and pastel on paper, 69 x 34 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. A woman in a cap, shoulder covering and apron stands in profile, reading an open book held before her. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 800 - € 1500


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2867 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman reading a letter - Oil on panel. Signed lower right. 42.5 x 23 cm (excluding frame). A woman in a white cap and shoulder covering, wearing a red-and-black costume, stands beside a doorway reading a letter. Her free hand rests against the furniture behind her. In an ornate plaster frame. Label of François Buffa & Zonen on verso. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 2000 - € 4000

2868 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman at the well - Charcoal, pastel and pencil on paper, 65 x 46.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. A woman in a white cap and apron holds a jug beneath the spout of an ornamental wall fountain. A bucket and broom stand beside its base. Mounted under passepartout in a dark frame with a gilt inner border, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 600 - € 900

2869 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman with a coal scuttle - Watercolour on paper. Signed lower right. 32 x 23 cm.Watercolour on paper, 32 x 23 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. A woman in a white cap, dark bodice and pale apron stands in profile, holding a brass-coloured coal scuttle. A small oval portrait hangs on the wall behind her. Paper sl. foxed. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 200 - € 400

2870 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman pouring milk for cat (the milkmaid) - Oil on canvas, 144 x 65.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. A woman in the red-and-black costume of the Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis pours milk from a jug into a saucer, with a cat seated at her feet and a cabinet of ceramics behind her. Ornate plaster frame. Exhibition label on verso: '1898 Regeeringsjubileum 1923. Tentoonstelling van Nederlandsche Beeldende Kunsten', Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke, purchased by Verkerke in 1973. € 5000 - € 8000

2871 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Italian landscape - Oil on canvas, 23 x 31 cm, signed lower left. Landscape with tall trees in the foreground and reddish buildings beneath distant hills. Van der Waay travelled to Italy in 1884. The location and date of this painting have not been established. In a dark-stained wooden frame. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 400 - € 800

2872 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Park - Watercolour and pastel on paper, 38.5 x 25.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. Figures seated and strolling in a park beside water, with flowerbeds and tall trees. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 600 - € 1000


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2873 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Interior with two women - Charcoal on paper, 80 x 59 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. A furnished interior with one woman seated on the left and another standing beside a tall cabinet on the right, seen from behind. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 800 - € 1500

2874 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). "Amsterdamsch Weesmeisje" - Oil on canvas, 43 x 39 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right, titled on verso. A seated woman in a white cap and shoulder covering, occupied with needlework, with a cabinet of ceramics behind her. In an ornate plaster frame. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 4000 - € 6000

2875 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). "Mijn atelier" - Oil on canvas, 52 x 75.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. The artist's studio, with a standing woman in the red-and-black costume of the Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis, holding a metal jug. A piano stands on the left, with framed paintings displayed on the walls and leaning against furniture. In an ornate gilt frame. Label on verso bearing a signature, title, address and price. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 6000 - € 10000

2876 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Child and young goat beside a broken milk jug - Oil on panel, 229 x 92.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. A barefoot child draped in a white cloth stands with hands clasped beside the face, looking down towards a young goat and a broken jug. Spilt milk lies on the paving beside water, with slender trees and a wooded landscape behind. In a narrow, light-coloured frame. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 5000 - € 8000

2877 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Portrait of a woman - Pastel on paper, 31 x 25 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. Head-and-shoulders portrait of a dark-haired woman facing left, wearing a pale garment. In an ornate gilt frame, under glass. € 200 - € 400

2878 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Sketch of interior with woman - Charcoal on paper, 38 x 28 cm (excluding frame), unsigned. A standing woman beside a cabinet in a furnished interior. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 100 - € 200

2879 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Standing woman with basket - Charcoal and pencil on paper, 68 x 50 cm (excluding frame), signed lower right. A woman in a long dress stands with her back partly turned towards the viewer, her face in profile, holding a basket at her side. A wall mirror reflects the back of her head. Mounted under passepartout in a gilt frame, under glass. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 800 - € 1200

2880 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Vestal virgin - Oil on canvas, 58.5 x 31 cm (excluding frame), signed upper right. A seated woman in pale classical robes and a veil, looking down with her hands resting together in her lap. In a gilt frame. In a gilt frame. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 1500 - € 3000

2881 Waay, Nicholaas van der (1855-1936). Woman with porcelain cabinet - Oil on canvas, 144 x 65.5 cm (excluding frame), signed lower left. A woman in the red-and-black costume of the Amsterdam Burgerweeshuis reaches into an open cabinet displaying ceramics, holding a metal jug in her other hand. In ornate plaster frame. Provenance: Collection Engel Verkerke. € 5000 - € 8000


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2. Each buyer is held to buy for his own account and cannot claim any commission.
3. The highest bidder is the buyer. Floor and written bids always take precedence over absentee bids left at Invaluable.com. The auctioneer shall have absolute discretion to settle any dispute. The auctioneer reserves the right to divide or to unite lots and to refuse any bid. In case of error or dispute with respect to bidding, the auctioneer is entitled to re-open the bidding. If any dispute arises after the sale, our sale records are always conclusive.
4. Artworks by living artists and artists who died no longer than 70 years ago that are sold with a hammer price of 2500 euros or higher, will be charged with an extra 4% ('Droit de Suite', 'Wet Volgrecht', 'Resale Right Law') over the hammerprice and buyer's premium.
5. The goods are in good condition, unless otherwise stated. If any named item in this catalogue proves defective, the item may be returned, provided this is done within one week after the sale. This guarantee does not cover lots indicated as 'w.a.f.'. In addition, the following conditions apply to the art, graphics and poster departments:
   - All objects in the auction are described in good conscience. However, descriptions, as well as verbal statements made before or during the auction, do not represent more than an opinion, and do not in any way constitute a guarantee of authenticity, date, origin, etc.
   - Barring notable exceptions, the condition of the lots is not mentioned in the catalogue. Mention of any defect does not imply the absence of others. Each object is sold in the condition it is in at the time of auction. Prospective buyers must verify the condition themselves during the viewing days (additional photos can be supplied).
   - The risk of damage to a purchased lot rests with the buyer from the moment the the auctioneer accepts the buyer's bid as the highest bid during the auction.
   - If a buyer can demonstrate - to the satisfaction of the auctioneer - within four weeks after the auction that an object purchased by him is a forgery, the purchase will be dissolved and the purchase price fully refunded, provided the lot is returned in the condition in which it was sold.
6. In case intending purchasers are prevented from attending the sale personally, the auctioneer will execute their bids without any charge. 'Buy' bids are not accepted. In case of equal bids, the first bid is accepted. Written bids, telephone bids and bids by email should be received by the auction house before 4 pm, prior to the session. Bidding by phone is possible, provided a phone line is available. Zwiggelaar Auctions cannot be held responsible for failing to make contact with a telephone bidder, nor can we held responsible for errors or omissions in connection to Invaluable.com or Lot-tissimo.com
7. The prices are in euros. Bidding will start at the lowest estimate.
8. Bids are raised at fixed increments:
   up to € 200 by € 10;
   € 200 - € 500 by € 20;
   € 500 - € 1000 by € 50;
   € 1000 - € 2000 by € 100;
   € 2000 - € 5000 by € 200;
   amounts higher than €5000 will be raised by € 500 etc.
9. All books must be paid for within one week after receipt of the invoice. In case the buyer fails to pay within one week, the auctioneer shall be entitled to exercise one of the following rights:
   1. Charge extra administrative costs of 25 euros;
   2. Proceed for damages for breach of contract;
   3. Rescind the sale of that or any lots sold to the buyer and re-sell the lot or lots whereupon the defaulting buyer shall pay to the auctioneer any shortfall between the proceeds of that sale after deduction of costs of re-sale and the total sum due.
10. Shipping takes place at the expense and risk of the buyer and after full payment of the invoice. The auction house is not responsible for damage or loss caused by the courier. However, the auction house can advise on shipping and insurance. Please check the section Shipping Costs for all conditions: https://www.zwiggelaarauctions.nl/Archive/General/ShippingCosts2026.pdf
11. Purchases can be collected by appointment only and not right after or during a session.
12. The buyer must be aware of the above auction conditions.

HOW TO GET TO HISTORISCH PAKHUIS VRIESSEVEEM

BY CAR

Hoogte Kadijk is a one-way street, accessible from Sarphatistraat. Cross the bridge by Werf 't Kromhout; our entrance is on the right. Paid street parking is available nearby.

FROM AMSTERDAM CENTRAAL STATION

Take bus 42 to Wittenburgergracht (fourth stop). Cross the bridge on your right and continue to Hoogte Kadijk. Turn left and enter the gates at 143 F2 on your left. Our entrance is on the left inside the courtyard.



ZWIGGELAAR AUCTIONS | BURGERSDIJK & NIERMANS

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VIEWING DAYS:

Friday 4, Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 December 2026, 10 am–5 pm. All viewing days and auction sessions take place at: Historisch Pakhuis Vriesseveem, Hoogte Kadijk 143 F2, 1018 BH Amsterdam

AUCTION SESSIONS

Seven auction sessions will take place from 7 to 13 December 2026, each starting at 7 pm.

PART I – BURGERSDIJK & NIERMANS | AUCTION 364

Sessions 1–3 | 7–9 December 2026
Old & Rare Books, Literature, Scientific Books, Manuscripts, Maps and Topography, Master Prints and Asian Art.

PART II – ZWIGGELAAR AUCTIONS | AUCTION 36

Sessions 4–6 | 10–12 December 2026
Children's Books, Toys, Catchpenny Prints, Fine Art, Erotica, Posters, Comics, Ephemera, Photography and Photobooks, including a special section devoted to Nicolaas van der Waay (1855–1936).

PART III – ZWIGGELAAR AUCTIONS | ARTISTS' BOOKS AND EPHEMERA SPECIAL

Session 7 | 13 December 2026
Artists' Books, Editions and Ephemera.

BIDDING & ATTENDANCE

- Sessions 1–6 are **open to the public**. All visitors are warmly welcome.
- Session 7 (Artists' Books and Ephemera Special) will take place **behind closed doors**.
- Live online bidding will be available for all seven sessions through **Drouot** and **Invaluable**.

PAYMENT, COLLECTION & SHIPPING

Invoices will be issued after the final auction session on 13 December 2026. Purchases made at Burgersdijk & Niermans and Zwiggelaar Auctions will be invoiced separately by the respective auction houses. By issuing all invoices after the final session, we can coordinate collections and combine shipments from both auction houses whenever possible. For logistical reasons, invoices cannot be issued earlier, and purchases cannot be collected before the designated collection dates.

COLLECTION

Wednesday 16 – Tuesday 22 December 2026, from 10.30 am – 5 pm. Purchased items from both auction houses can be collected at: **Historisch Pakhuis Vriesseveem**,Hoogte Kadijk 143 F2, 1018 BH Amsterdam. **Advance booking is required**. Clients will receive an email containing a link to book their preferred collection date and time slot. Please note that collection outside the designated period will not be possible.

SHIPPING

Shipping is available. Please consult the 'General Information' section on our website for shipping rates and conditions.
If you purchase items from both auction houses, we can combine them into a single shipment whenever possible. One shipping charge will be calculated and added to the invoice issued by one of the auction houses.

CATALOGUES

The price of the complete set of three catalogues is €25. If you would like to continue receiving our catalogues, please transfer €25 to: IBAN: NL82 ABNA 0606 4747 06, Account holder: Zwiggelaar Auctions B.V., Amsterdam, Reference: Next catalogues. Payment confirms that you wish to receive the catalogues for our next auctions. If no payment is received, this will be a one-off mailing, and no further catalogues will be sent. Individual catalogues can be ordered for €10 each, plus shipping costs. The digital catalogues, including photographs of all lots, are available on our website: www.zwiggelaarauctions.nl

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