



**PROANTIC**  
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## Oil On Wood By Jan Balet



850 EUR

Signature : Jan Balet ( Brême, 1913 - Estavayer le Lac, 2009)

Period : 20th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Length : 51.5

Height : 41

Depth : 4

### Description

Oil on wood by the Swiss artist Jan Balet title: Tobacco shop signature lower right and on the back "Balet" Very beautiful naive and colorful composition, in a solemn and somewhat geometric style, dear to the artist. Born in Bremen in 1913, descendant of a Valais family that became Dutch, he spent his childhood with his grandparents on the shores of Lake Constance in Langenargen. His grandfather was a prison director. After an apprenticeship as a house painter, he attended the Fine Arts Schools in Berlin and Munich. From this academic period, he only has two paintings left, the rest were destroyed. Hitler comes to power, Jan Balet must join the ranks of the army. He is 25 years old. "I became aware of the future of Germany. For me, Nazism was not a sufficient reason to die. I

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deserted." He settled in New York for twenty-seven years, married an American woman, and became the father of a child: "I am an American citizen. He worked as a graphic designer in magazines, rubbing shoulders with Henry Miller and Tennessee Williams. In 1965, he returned to Munich before starting anew. Balet returned to the north of France, settled in the suburbs of Paris, and took up lithography. This, for printing reasons, took him to Switzerland. He decided to settle on the shores of Lake Neuchâtel and extended his art to painting. Is he a naive painter? "I am naive, only with the women in my life." While he prefers not to categorize his paintings, he nevertheless classifies them as "sophisticated primitive art" because he is a "borderline case of naivety." When you walk through his three studios, the largest devoted to acrylic painting, the smallest to sketches and drawings, the third to photography and engraving, you realize that it is difficult to reduce his work to naïve painting. Perhaps because it exudes too corrosive a humor. His paintings speak of human tragedy, they deal with the feeling of love - "because of the fiasco of my marriages." They refer to art, Greek mythology, the Bible that his grandmother often read to him at the beginning of the century, his "favorite era." His figures like to take the path of the outdoors, avoid the narrowness of buildings, and settle in parks. Stylized, they represent social types, most often the lower middle class. His themes evoke strolling, travel, and the journey. Little known in French-speaking Switzerland despite his international renown, the painter settled permanently in Switzerland but exhibited regularly in major American museums. A retrospective exhibition at the Bulle Art Museum was dedicated to him in 1998. He died in Estavayer-le-Lac in 2009, leaving a prolific body of work in European, American and Japanese collections.