

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Plinio Colombi (1873 - 1951)

The Silvretta Glacier seen from Selfranga, Klosters, Graubunden, Switzerland

oil on canvas

76 x 100 cm.

signed and dated 1918

Colombi came from a Swiss Italian family in Bellinzona and having studied architecture in Winterthur, decorative art in Paris and Bern, he had become an independent painter by 1900. Thanks to his apprenticeship as a designer and poster artist Colombi could turn his hand to engraving, lithography and woodcuts as well as oils and watercolours with equal aplomb. He began painting snow scenes in these early years when living near Lake Thun in the Bernese Oberland from where he made frequent forays into Graubunden and the Engadine.

Colombi was not a *peintre-alpiniste* but was particularly adept at painting wintry forests, wide snowbound meadows and usually worked with a bright palette. His work in oils erred more towards a lithographic look than his watercolours which were more subtle. Looking at the dates of many of his Klosters pictures, it is most likely that he lived there in the second decade of the 20th century.

Among the many accolades Klosters receives, it is often stated how unspoilt or relatively unchanged the surrounding villages are. Indeed, the two farmer's sheds seen in this panoramic composition are still there today and, in fact, come the summer, the eighth hole of Selfranga's golf course runs right beside the cabin in the immediate foreground.