



Inv. no. B 357

P.S. KRØYER (1851–1909)
MERCHANT S.W. ISBERG, 1894
OIL ON CANVAS

134 X 74.5 CM

P.S. Krøyer is particularly well known for his many evocative paintings from Skagen, where he lived much of his life. However, he also had strong ties to Copenhagen, where he grew up, was educated and periodically worked, especially in the winter, executing numerous portraits and commissions. An excellent observer, Krøyer had a gift for portraying people with forthright honesty. Precisely because of this, he became one of the most celebrated and best paid portrait painters of his time.

During the period 1888 to 1904, Krøyer created five monumental group portraits with an extensive gallery of characters, including *From Copenhagen Stock Exchange* from 1895, depicting fifty leading figures from the Danish business community at the time.¹ It took Krøyer approximately three years to complete the commission, partly due to the complicated composition of the painting, the demand for a great many model studies and the labour of creating nine or ten large

full-length portraits of carefully selected gentlemen in the foreground of the picture.²

Merchant S.W. Isberg is one of the full-length portraits done by Krøyer as part of the creation of *From Copenhagen Stock Exchange*. The portrait depicts the businessman Svend Wilhelm Isberg (1820–1895), shown here wearing the top hat and coat typical of trade and industry magnates at the time.

Recent research has shown that practical and artistic considerations were not the only reasons why Krøyer depicted the gentlemen in the foreground of *From Copenhagen Stock Exchange* on individual canvases – and in such large formats. He also had the marketability of the finished works in mind and the likelihood of selling them to the people portrayed, their families or their companies was very great. Indeed, as a kind of advertising push, Krøyer elected to exhibit them before he had completed *From Copenhagen Stock Exchange*.³ However, the portrait of Isberg was not sold. C.L. David acquired it several years after its creation at the auction of Krøyer's estate in 1910.

¹ Charlotte Linvald (ed.): *Mesterværker – Krøyer på bestilling*, Skagens Museum, Skagen 2019, pp. 55–56.

² *Everyone depicted in From Copenhagen Stock Exchange paid for their place in the painting. Svend Vilhelm Isberg was placed in the foreground, which cost DKK 500. See: Charlotte Linvald (ed.): Mesterværker – Krøyer på bestilling*, Skagens Museum, Skagen 2019, p. 11, 49.

³ P.S. Krøyer; *From the Copenhagen Stock Exchange, 1895, property of The Danish Chamber of Commerce. The other four group portraits are A Soirée at the Glyptotek, 1888; Committee for the French Art Exhibition in Copenhagen 1888, 1899; A Meeting in the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 1897; and The Men of Industry, 1903–04.*

Published in:

Fortegnelse over Malerier, Studier, Tegninger m.m. af Maleren P.S. Krøyer; Charlottenborg, København 1905, cat.no. 113;

P.S. Krøyer 1851-1909, Katalog over Udstilling i Kunstforeningen (paa Charlottenborg), København 1910, cat.no. 242;

Hans Chr. Christensen: *P.S. Krøyer 23. Juli 1851 – 20. Nov. 1909*;

Fortegnelse over hans Oliemalerier, København 1923, no. 539, p. 86;

Erik Zahle in *C. L. Davids Samling: Nogle Studier*, [1], København 1948, pp. 246-247;

C.L. David: *C.L. Davids Samling*, København 1960, p. 24;

Charlotte Linvald (ed.): *Mesterværker: Krøyer på bestilling*, Skagens Museum, Skagen 2019, pp. 54-55;