

Russia House

ON JUNE 9, Alameda, Calif.-based auction house Michaan's will hold its Fine Art, Furniture and Decorations sale. Opening the auction will be several important Russian paintings. Two paintings by Ivan Ivanovitch Shishkin will be on the block: *Wood Clearing* (est. \$80,000–100,000) and *Na Beregu Ruchya* (est. \$20,000–30,000). These works exemplify the break a number of mid-19th-century Russian painters were making from the Academy and its classical and religious themes. During this period, as in several other European countries, Russian painters of the



avant-garde turned to realism to depict landscapes and figurative studies.

Petr Petrovich Vereshchagin's *High Water of River Pisava* would be at home among paintings of the Hudson

River School. The majestic work, which is estimated at \$40,000–60,000, depicts a mountain cutting into a stream of clouds. Below, a river winds amid a rocky bank dotted with trees, while fisherman in a small boat can be seen in the distance. Vladimir Donatovitch Orlovskii's *Coastal Village*, which is estimated at \$40,000–60,000, looks up at homes and figures populating a hillside from the rocky coast. The village and coastline are bathed in a muted yellowy-brown, which almost mimics the tone of an old postcard. Nicolai Semenovitch Samokich's *The Anichkov Bridge* (\$7,000–9,000) depicts carriages speeding over the St. Petersburg landmark in a style akin to the Impressionists. The figures, both walking and riding, are bundled in furs and hats as the city looms in the background.