



Feast In The Garden Of Love, Louis De Caullery (1582-1621)



22 000 EUR

Signature : Louis de Caullery (1582-1621)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 59 cm (encadré)

Height : 67 cm (encadré)

Description

Louis de Caullery (1582-1621)

Antwerp School early 17th century

Oil on oak panel

Dimensions: h. 51 cm, w. 43 cm

Ebonized wooden frame

Framed: h. 67 cm, w. 59 cm

Our work is registered in the RKD database under the number 214025 (The Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, headquartered in The Hague in the Netherlands, is one of the most important documentation centers specializing in the history of art)

<https://rkd.nl/images/214025>

Provenance:

- private collection, United Kingdom - Christie's sale, November 5, 2003, lot no. 32

Dealer

Galerie Nicolas Lenté

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- 1983-2003 Jan Lipinski Collection, Frankfurt, Germany - Sotheby's sale, London, 23 June 1982, lot 37

- before 1982 collection of the princes of Schaumburg-Lippe at Bückeburg Castle, Germany

Our painting with a prestigious princely provenance illustrates a scene of a gallant meeting taking place in a park. The elegant figures, richly dressed in Renaissance fashion, are seated in the shade of the trees enjoying wine, delicious food and music. To the sounds of violins and lutes are added the trickling of a fountain. Time seems to stand still in these gastronomic and romantic celebrations.

The theme of courtly love treated here derives from medieval iconography of the "garden of love" type. It was brought back into fashion by the Antwerp painters of the genre (Sebastien Vrancx, David Vinckboons and Louis de Caullery): the gallant assemblies made up exclusively of the upper bourgeoisie celebrated love and the joy of living. However, a moralizing message associated with another theme is cleverly concealed by the painter and is only discernible by the artifice of a small scene in the foreground, the young pages having fun blowing soap bubbles, while a little boy is lying on the skull. An unexpected character also seems to be part of the feast: a jester recognizable by his cap hides behind a tree spying on the merry company.

This is how, in fact, beyond the pleasant and apparently superficial character of the painting, the theme of Vanity is revealed through its attributes: the soap bubbles signify the fragility of life which bursts, the skull is the symbol of death, the jester symbol of human madness is ultimately the only lucid being. Thus all his intruders into the festivities admirably placed by the painter in the composition serve to make us reflect on the brevity of life and love, the transience of earthly pleasures and the artist invites the viewer to concentrate on the life of the 'beyond'.

It is important to emphasize that at the end of the 16th century and beginning of the 17th century, Vanity is often associated with a young child, in itself a symbol of the ephemeral nature of youth, leaning or sitting on a skull, having fun blowing soap bubbles, sometimes in the presence of a vase from which smoke escapes. These are the main symbols of the transience of time in use late 16th century, before the vanities triumphed, in the 17th century, through the genre of still life.

Louis de Caullery seems to have been particularly interested in the representation of gallant scenes, through different subjects: festivals, carnivals, allegories of the senses are all pretexts for the representation of groups of animated and colorful characters. The numerous small figures meticulously executed in skillfully sought-after and varied postures, the vibrant rendering of the costumes, the attention paid to details, all its characteristics are specific to the works of Louis de Caullery, who likes to depict small elegant figures richly dressed in lush landscapes or rich palace interiors.