



## Jan Miense Molenaer (1609/10 - 1668), A Flirting Couple



4 700 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

### Description

Jan Miense Molenaer Dutch painter Haarlem  
1609/10 - 1668 Haarlem A flirting couple Oil on  
panel : 35,9 X 29,6 cm Signed "molenaer" (barely  
legible) lower right, on the small stove on which  
the woman's left foot rests Frame : 46,4 X 40,4  
cm Our painting is recorded at the RKD, The  
Hague, number 343776 (May 2025, identification  
given by Ellis Dullaert): dating from the late  
1640s or from the very start of the 1650s. Jan  
Miense Molenaer was an excellent painter of the  
ordinary behaviour of the lower social classes in  
taverns. According to Dennis Paul Weller, writer  
of the catalogue of the first monographic  
exhibition of Molenaer (in 2002), in Raleigh, at  
the North Carolina Museum, our painter tried  
circa 1650 to reach out to richer clients, which he  
exceptionally represented in just a few works

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from that period. Our painting is an excellent example of this effort. But what the modern viewer does no longer see, was easy to identify for 17th century spectators: this is actually a brothel scene, a warning against bad behaviour for the respectable Dutch Calvinists. Behind the rich, well-dressed man Molenaer has painted a lute, a then common erotic element: the Dutch word "luit" was a slang term for vagina. It identifies many merry companies as brothel scenes. All my paintings stand fully documented on my website:

<https://www.jeanmoust.com/categories/portraits-genre-and-exterior-scenes/molenaer-jan-miense-2025/a-flirting-couple-5806857>