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David Ryckaert III, Circle Of, Kitchen Scene With Fighting Peasants (vanitas Allegory)

1 900 EUR



Signature : DAVID RYCKAERT III, cercle de

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 69 cm

Height : 49 cm

Description

DAVID RYCKAERT III, circle of KITCHEN SCENE WITH FIGHTING PEASANTS (VANITAS ALLEGORY) DAVID RYCKAERT III Antwerpen 1612 - 1661 Antwerpen Oil on canvas, 49 × 69 cm / 19.3 × 27.1 in with frame: 69 × 89 cm / 27.1 × 35 in Yellowed varnish; craquelure; age-related wear. The underlying paint layer remains visible in key passages. The present painting, attributed to David Ryckaert III, belongs to one of the most significant and conceptually complex currents in Netherlandish art: the theme of the vanity of earthly things, or Vanitas. Originating in the fifteenth century, this moralizing tradition developed into an independent pictorial language by the mid-seventeenth century, in both the Dutch and Flemish schools. Ryckaert's oeuvre not only fits

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naturally within this context, but also represents a subtle and intelligent reinterpretation of the Dutch genre idiom, particularly in the spirit of Adriaen Brouwer and David Teniers the Younger, to whom he was closely related stylistically. Despite the loss of chromatic clarity under a dense, yellowed varnish, the composition remains strikingly expressive. The formal narrative is built around a tavern brawl unfolding in the background--a typically Teniersian motif, with its theatrical gestures and rustic humour. Yet the viewer's attention is irresistibly drawn to the foreground, dominated by an imposing still life of kitchen utensils, bowls, vessels and metalware. These objects, painted with remarkable precision and tactile immediacy, recall the refined idiom of Dutch still-life painters, especially Willem de Poorter, known for transforming simple objects into bearers of layered symbolic meaning. This compositional logic--where the primary action is pushed into the depth of the picture while the foreground is occupied by seemingly "secondary" objects--has a long European lineage. One cannot help but think of Velázquez's *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary*, where the biblical event appears only in a reflected or distant space, while the foreground is dominated by pots, food and the hands of a young servant. These dual planes create two distinct but interrelated realms: the world of action and the world of meaning. In the present work, the battered utensils, overturned vessels and worn kitchenware form a metaphor for the *sæculum*, the vanity of earthly pursuits. If the brawl in the background speaks of human passions, the still life in the foreground reminds us of the fragility and eventual decay of all material things. Understanding this duality requires attention to the figure of the artist himself. David Ryckaert III (1612-1661) was one of the most distinguished Flemish genre painters of the seventeenth century. A member of a celebrated artistic dynasty--his grandfather David I and father David II were both active painters and art dealers--Ryckaert entered the Guild of

Saint Luke in Antwerp in 1636-37 and later served as dean in 1652-53. In 1635 he worked under the direction of Rubens on the decorations for the Triumphal Entry of the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand into Antwerp. His patrons included Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria, whose collection later formed a cornerstone of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Ryckaert's artistic language evolved at the intersection of several traditions. His early work shows the influence of Adriaen Brouwer in its vivid depictions of peasant life, emotional intensity and directness of observation. Later, under the impact of David Teniers the Younger, his palette became lighter, his compositions more decorative, and his use of chiaroscuro more nuanced. He also explored themes of alchemy, witchcraft, quack doctors and other liminal subjects, making him one of the most versatile Flemish painters of his generation. The compositional coherence of the present work, the depth of its spatial construction, the subtle symbolism and the character of its execution all justify its attribution to the circle of David Ryckaert III--a master who succeeded in uniting genre observation with moral reflection, and who produced some of the most refined Flemish interpretations of the Vanitas tradition.