Peasants In A Cornfield (boer In Het Veld) By David Teniers The Younger (attributed To)



24 000 EUR

Signature : David Teniers le Jeune (Attribué)
Period : 17th century
Condition : Veuillez nous contacter pour un rapport d'état avec des images uv et irr.
Material : Oil painting
Diameter : 18 cm
Height : 25 cm

Description

Remembering the magic of everyday life moments in the art of David Teniers:

The art of David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690) coincided with the heyday of the Flemish Baroque and captured a great variety of motifs of his time. In this painting of a seemingly simple peasant scene lies keys to understanding both the imaginative mind of Teniers as well as why this time period produced some of the most iconic works in all of art history.

As indicated by the name, Teniers was more or less born into his profession. As the son of David Teniers the elder, himself a painter who studied under Rubens, the younger David received training in art from a very young age and had no

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less than three brothers who also became painters. Because of his father's frequent financial failures that even at times saw him imprisoned, David the younger helped to rescue the family from ruin through painting copies of old masters. Essentially, the young Teniers was confronted with painting as both a passion and creative expression as well as a necessity during difficult times, an experience that would shape much of his capacity and sensitivity in his coming life.

Despite the hardships, the talent and determination of Teniers was recognized and quickly expanded his possibilities. He had already spent time in France and possibly also England when he was hired by his father's former teacher Rubens to help with a prestigious commission with mythological paintings, now considered lost,for Philip IV the king Spain. In 1644-54 Teniers was appointed dean of the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke, manifesting his esteemed position within the artistic community. A few years afterwards he took an important step when relocating to Brussels, where Teniers yet again found new career opportunities that would prove to be very successful.

As the keeper of the collections of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, a role similar to what we now refer to as an art advisor, Teniers purchased hundreds of important artworks that manifested the prominent status of the Archduke's collection while at the same time providing an unusual access to inspiration and knowledge for Teniers himself. Since he kept on painting during the same time, his creative scope must have seemed almost bewildering in the great variety of images and stories that he surrounded himself with.

Regardless of how glamorous and culturally stimulating the career of Teniers was, he was as open to the charm and existential importance of everyday life as he was to works of great masters and luxurious collectibles. In his impressive

repertoire of genres with everything from exquisite royal portraits, interiors, landscapes and history paintings he always added something new and inventive, highlighting the possibilities of art and importance of an experimental and intuitive mind. It is difficult to single out one aspect or genre to summarize his legacy, since it lies much more in the broad virtuosity across many motifs, although he is particularly remembered for farm scenes and meticulously depicted interiors where other paintings and artworks are captured with an astonishing precision. However, the fact that he is still today one of the most known and celebrated names of the Dutch Golden Age is a proof to the magic of his work, which continues to spark dialogue and wonder in the contemporary viewer of his works.

The farm boy in the field in this painting, which likely dates to the mature part of his career, is a wonderful entry into the mind of Teniers. In the tightly cropped motif, we see him standing right in the middle of the busy harvest when men, women and everyone capable were sent out in the field to collect the crop that formed the very core of their diet and survival. In the background we see a fresh blue sky interspersed with skillfully painted clouds, some trees reaching their autumnal colours and in the far distance the glimpse of a small church and village. The presence of a church in a landscape, so typical of Dutch art, served both a symbolic and visual function as a representation of faith while at the same time defining scale and distance.

In the field, the work is in full action with the farmers spread out in various positions, all in the midst of hard and sweaty labour. While they are portrayed as having nothing else than the work on their mind, our farm boy seems to have his attention directed elsewhere. Standing there with his white, half open shirt, flowy curls and strong, sturdy body; his gaze is directed away, out of the picture and the scythes in his hands. He looks

almost smirking, expressed with tremendous subtlety in the slight smile of his lips and big eyes, being just in the middle of losing focus on the work. What is it that steals his attention? What has he seen, or realized, or felt - to break him free of the arduous task of harvesting, if but for a moment?

Here starts the wondering and the questions that are the hallmark of a great piece of art. Instead of explicitly locking in the motif in overly clear symbolism Teniers has chosen an open ended, subtle yet striking moment for us to consider. While it of course can be related to numerous other farm scene depictions of this time, and clever usages of gazes and real-life scenes to underscore various moral or symbolic meanings, thepainting can be much more of a contemplation than an explanation or illustration. The ordinary nature and understated yet emotionally textured composition of the motif gives greater space for our own reactions and thoughts. Has he seen a pretty farm girl just passing by? Is he fed up with the farm life, joyously dreaming away for a minute, imagining another future? Or is he simply in need of distraction, looking away and ready for anything that can steal his attention?

One quality that never seem to have escaped Teniers was that of curiosity. During all of his career he constantly investigated, expanded and experimented with not only the style and technique of painting, but with the vision of art itself. Being credited with more or less introducing farm motifs for a broader audience not only tells us of his ability to understand the demand for different motifs, but the sensitivity to transform seemingly ordinary parts of life into deep aesthetic experiences, far beyond their expected reach.The farm boy in this painting is, of course, exactly that. But with the help of one smirk the entire picture is charged with a different energy, awakening many contrasts and relationships between the calm landscape, the

hard work and his own breach of effectivity, holding sharp scythes while thinking or seeing something else.

It is no wonder Teniers chose to work with farm scenes as a way of investigating these intricate and delicate plays on expectations and surprises, clarity and ambivalence. It invites us to an appreciation of human everyday life that connects us with the people of 17th century Netherlands in a moment of shared fascination.

INFO:

David Teniers the Younger (Attributed to)

Title: Peasants in a Cornfield (Boer in het veld)

canvas size 9.84 x 7.08 inches (25 x 18 cm)
frame 12.59 x 10.03 inches (32 x 25,5 cm)
signed with monogram lower right: DT F

Provenance:
Stockholms Auktionsverk, 1996-06-03, lotnr. 234, as Attributed to David Teniers II;
Private Collection Sweden;
Uppsala Auktionskammare (Uppsala) 2016-06-14, lot 21, as By David Teniers II (Expertise Marina Aarts);
A Stockholm Collection;
Uppsala Auktionskammare 2021-06, as Attributed to David Teniers II (Expertise Marina Aarts)

RKD Archive:
Nr 19489, as Attributed to David Teniers II - Peasants in a cornfield (Boer in het veld)

Exhibited:
TEFAF March 2017

Comparable Sales:
Hampel, Germany, Junger Landmann mit Spaten, 25 mar 2021, Price including buyer's premium:

EUR 31,000