



Cornelis Dusart
(Haarlem 1660 – 1704)
Village Fiddler
Oil on Canvas
39,3 cm. x 32,1 cm.
Signed Work
1680-85 ca.

For the month of March we have chosen this wonderful canvas depicting a violinist within a typical village scene done by the leading Dutch painter of the seventeenth century, Cornelis Dusart. The artist developed his artistic activity in the city of Haarlem and later on his teacher would be Adriaen van Ostade (1610-1687), one of the great master of Dutch painting. It was van Ostade who taught and led Dusart to specializing in genre scenes with a style that is evident in the high quality of his figures and his mastery as a painter. Already in his time, Dusart enjoyed recognition and fame, producing a large number of works that were in great demand for this type of cheerful scenes of everyday life.

All of the artist's works tend to depict interior and exterior scenes with a rural atmosphere. This shows how Dusart faithfully followed the style of his mentor, especially this last period, in which there are many shades and color tones but villagers are painted realistically with Dusart's own style. His works convey a sense of joy and happiness always with villagers, sometimes portraying their leisure time, playing cards, smoking, dancing to the beat of the music of an impromptu musician playing the violin or flute. Other pictures capture the everyday scenes of the time such as at the food market with all the fish, vegetables, meat, etc.

Having been a pupil of one of the great masters of Dutch painting, it is inevitable for the viewer to constantly compare it with Dusart. In fact, it is common for many of his works to be attributed to Adriaen van Ostade. Dusart used to paint small format and use panel more instead of canvas. Although as in our case, there are several examples of works on canvas.



We can date the work between 1680 and 1685, a period of maturity of the artist, in which we find all the typical components within the artistic production of Cornelis Dusart. The viewer is able to witness an outdoor scene where a happy villager wearing a funny gray beret adorned with a feather (on top there is a loop holding his porcelain pipe) is playing violin and singing. He seems to be playing for the child dancing with dog on the right. The children are next to a mother holding daughter in her lap. The composition truly highlights the striking red skirt of the mother.



The most interesting part of the whole composition is the child dancing with a Dutch water dog, known in Holland as Kooikerhondje. This is a hunting breed that appears in many paintings of this period, such as landscapes, portraits, or as in our case genre scenes.



Artists such as David Teniers, Willem van Herp, or Adriaen van Ostade's placed the dog within their works as common character. In our case, struck by the thoroughness and care with which the artist has painted the dog's shiny coat in contrasting white and brown.

Within the painting, there is always an area where the viewer can get a glance of the sky. In this case, the sky is completely covered by lush trees whose intense color contrasts with green turquoise studded sky of clouds.



The house that appears as a backdrop, is the typical house construction of modest villages around major cities in the Netherlands. In this picture, probably near Haarlem. The artist has paid particular attention to paint each of the bricks that make up the facade, in which the viewer can see the original window, whose upper arch is the reflection of a crystal and the lower a rustic fence made with different branches bound together. The entrance door to the house is crowned with a dense green ivy.



One of the most tender and delicate detail of the work the earthenware bowl with milk on the bottom left. It is the food of the little one with her mother enjoying the impromptu concert by the violinist. Dusart has made attention to detail, showing all the reflections of clay, spilled milk around the edges, and the spoon resting on one side.



In the background, the viewer can see in a chiaroscuro, a group of characters around a booth run by a lady who is weighing on scales the fruits that the boy with red cap is purchasing. Two chickens are also pecking some food scraps that have fallen to the ground. Next, there are a series of characters that seem to be waiting for their turn to stock up the viands. The way they are dressed clearly shows their humble status.



This painting gives the viewer the chance to get closer to the daily life of an ordinary day in a Dutch village. In all the pictures depicting this type of scenery, the small details always convey a great sense of joy and happiness to the viewer. These typical works always show fun tavern scenes, animated storytelling with fascinated children along the performer, lively market days with numerous food stalls, or as in this work a friendly impromptu concert.



Our work is signed "C. Dusart" on the left, just behind the lady, on top of the wood board that is on the ground. It was very common for artists to choose areas and objects within the composition unusual to locate their signature.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- W. Bernt, *The Netherlandish Painters of the Seventeenth Century*, Phaidon, 1970, Vol I, pg. 35, plate 345.
 - Catálogo *All the paintings of the Rijkmuseum in Amsterdam*, pg. 206.
- Catalogue *Masters of Seventeenth Century, Dutch Genre Painting*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984, pg. 196-197.
- Cristopher Wright, *Dutch Pinting in the Seventeenth Century. Images of a Gonden Age in British Collections*, 1989, pg. 186.
 - E. Benezit, *Dictionnaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs*, Vol. 4 , pgs. 921 y 922.

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, USA.

Private Collection, England.

Salomon Lillian Galley, Amsterdam, 1994.

Private Collection, Amsterdam

MUSEUMS

Cornelis Dusart's works can be found in many museums around the world including: Amsterdam- Rijksmuseum, Birmingham- Barber Institute, Braunschweig- Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Cheltenham- Art Gallery, Dublin- National Gallery, Haarlem- Frans Hals Museum, The Hague- DVR, London- Dulwich Picture Gallery, Moscow- Pushkin Museum, Vienna- Kunthistorisches Museum.

EXHIBITIONS

Maestri fiamminghi ed olandesi del XVI-XVII secolo, 53 mostra, Galleria Luigi Caretto.Turin, Italy.

Feriarte, November 2013 Madrid, Spain, Soraya Cartategui Gallery

AIFAF, Palm Beach (Florida) February 2014, Caretto & Cartategui Fine Arts.

MA+D, Miami Art and Design, Florida, February 2014, Caretto and Cartategui Fine Arts