



JAN BRUEGHEL the Younger

(1601 Antwerp 1678)

A river landscape with ferry boat and figures.

Oil on panel.

18.3 x 26 cm.

Expertise: Dr. Klaus Ertz, 22.6.2012. Provenance: European private collection. Within a sunlit village landscape, several figures are engaged in the activity of loading ships. The arrangement of the buildings and figures on the left and on the right of the river accentuates the perspective, which leads the viewer's eye along the river and up to the city in the distance – probably Antwerp. Following the example of his father, Jan the Elder, multiple river landscapes with village scenes and figures are known in the oeuvre

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of Jan Brueghel the Younger, a testimony to the great popularity of these compositions. His father's "View of a village canal with landing stage" dated c.1605–11 served as his model for the present painting (oil on copper, 19 x 27 cm, private collection, see Ertz, Klaus / Nitze–Ertz, Christa: Jan Brueghel der Ältere (1568–1625), Lingen 2008–2010, Vol. I, p. 300, Cat. No. 140 with ill.). The quality of the execution of our river landscape with figures is thereby particularly fine: the colouring and precise detail in the rendering of the leaves, the animals in the water and the city view with church steeple in the background add to the appeal of this atmospheric depiction. For Klaus Ertz this suggests a date for the present painting between 1625 and 1630, thus in the first years Jan the Younger took over the paternal workshop upon the death of his father. As a matter of fact, the brushwork of Jan the Younger initially follows the very fine brushstrokes found in his father's oeuvre, and first develops in the 1630s into the wider, less structured, more painterly manner seen in works such as the "A village view with peasants in a wagon alongside a river" in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm (Inv. No. 678, c.1630, see Ertz, Klaus: Jan Brueghel der Jüngere (1601–1678), Freren 1984, Cat. No. 40, pl. 9), the "A view of a city along a river" in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (Inv. No. A66, 1630s, see Ertz 1984, Cat. No. 48 with ill.), and the "A river landscape with a mill" in the Dienst Verspreide Rijkscollecties in The Hague (Inv. No. NK 1415, 1630s, see Ertz 1984, Cat. No. 56 with ill.).

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