



CORNELIS DE BAEILLIEUR

(1607 Antwerp 1671)

Achilles discovered among the daughters of Lycomedes

Oil on panel.

Verso with mark of the city of Antwerp, chisel mark of the panel maker Lambrechts Steen and traces of a red wax seal.

55.7 x 77.5 cm.

Expertise: - Dr. Ursula Härting, 6.6.2019 (as workshop of Frans Francken the Younger).
- Dr. Jaco Rutgers, 17.6.2019 (as Cornelis de Baellieur). Provenance: Swiss private collection. Depicted here is the classical episode from Ovid's Metamorphoses relating the story of Achilles disguised as a woman and living among the daughters of King Lycomedes. The cunning Odysseus reveals Achilles's true identity by

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entering the royal court as a clothing merchant and presenting the royal daughters with precious fabrics, jewellery and finery, which included various weapons. According to his true nature, Achilles immediately grabbed the sword and shield, while the women were fascinated by the treasures. The still life elements, the ruse, and the erotic hints of a game of hide-and-seek amongst the sexes fascinated many seventeenth-century viewers and spawned an increased demand for this composition. Still life motifs of musical instruments, such as the lute, viola, violin and shawm, the large bronze candlestick before the gilt leather wallpaper with gold decoration, the variety of splendid vases, oriental fabric, and the kris, probably a Javanese dagger, between the tablecloth and helmet in the foreground, equally draw viewers into their spell today. Many of these imported goods, as well as the exotic shells, Chinese vases and cups, were highly sought-after treasures. Frans Francken was one of the first Flemish painters who took up this theme (see Ursula Härting: Frans Francken II – Die Gemälde, Freren 1989, cat. no. 304–307, p. 317–319 and Ursula Härting: Studien zur Kabinettbildmalerei des Frans Francken, Hildesheim 1983, cat. no. A224, Prague, National Gallery, cat. no. A225, Paris, Louvre, cat. no. A225a, A226 and cat. no. B225). Cornelis de Baellieur was active in the workshop of Frans Francken the Younger, which he possibly also took over after Francken's death. Dr Ursula Härting also concludes that this panel was created in the workshop of Frans Francken the Younger.

CHF 40 000 / 60 000

€ 41 240 / 61 860

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