

KLAAS MULLER

P A L A M E D E S P A L A M E D E S Z

Interior with a merry Company

The Palamedesz family was of Flemish descent, Anthonie's father was a "decorative artist" in the service of the Scottish king James VI, but moved later with his family to Delft. Two of his sons became painters there: Anthonie (known for interiors, portraits and "kortegaardjes", scenes in guard rooms) and Palamedes (best known for battle scenes and robberies).

Our painting depicts an aristocratic family at a festive table: drinking, playing cards and making music. On the left a servant pours wine, a character that we find literally on other paintings by the painters brother (cfr "A merry Company", Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam , inv./cat.nr Sk A 1906).

In the front we see a family with the father, mother and daughter who look the viewer in the eye, self-conscious and richly (frivolously for the time even) dressed. More than likely these are personalized portraits: a rarity in Palamedes Palamedesz's oeuvre. In the background on the wall we see 2 engravings of a man and a woman, possibly also relatives or ancestors.

On the same wall there are 3 paintings of battles: an obvious reference to Palamedes' paintings.

The style, composition, the rich use of color are very typical for the master who became familiar with such interiors. Striking is the repainting (repentir) that became more visible over the years on the right of the painting: an alcove or bed with a sword hanging from it.

Moreover, the work is very signed and dated: "Palamedesz Stevaerts 1637". Stevaerts was the middle name of Palamedes Palamedesz, a name he rarely used though. We may wonder why Palamedes made a painting in a style and genre so typical of his brother Anthonie, and moreover signed the work conspicuously with his middle name, which he rarely or never used. Could this be a collaboration between the brothers?

oil on panel, 40.5 x 66 cm

Signed *Palamedez Stevaerts 1637*

Prov.: according to the label on the back: "marquize de Courtebourne de Gand" (N° catalog 108)"

