

KLAAS MULLER

J A C Q U E S F O U Q U I E R

Travellers in a Landscape

Fouquier became a master in the Antwerp Guild of St Luke in 1614 and a member of the Brussels Guild of St Luke in 1616. Early on he was influenced by the paintings of Jan Brueghel I and travelled to Heidelberg, where he worked for Frederick V, the Elector of the Palatinate. In 1620 he went to Italy where he came into contact with the landscapes of Paul Bril but also Poussin.

He was commissioned by King Louis XIII of France in 1626 to paint views of French cities, as part of the scheme to decorate the Louvre's Grande Galerie. Fouquier built a prolific career in France until he fell out with Poussin (who had returned to Paris). His synthesis of descriptive northern landscapes with the heroic landscape style developed in Rome had a strong influence on landscape painting in France in the first half of the 17th century.

Our painting was made during Fouquier's "Flemish period":

It shows us 2 travellers passing workmen carrying tonnes and packs with their horses. The work is beautifully constructed according to the classic Flemish brown-green-blue plan, which creates an optical depth. Both left and right on the composition are trees, generating an effect more theatrical (like a baldakin). The figures and trees in front are painted sharper compared to everything behind them, and this too creates depth. The painter seeks a balance in light, colour and composition. Even at this relatively small size, the painter creates a whole world, a vast landscape that the viewer can disappear into.

Oil on copper, 15 x 19.4 cm (5 ⁷/₈ x 7 ⁵/₈ inches)

We are grateful to Dr. Luuk Pijl for his certificate (with confirmation as an authentic Fouquier)

Collection label on the back

