

KLAAS MULLER

P A U L D E V O S

A Deer Hunt

Paul De Vos was the younger brother of Cornelis De Vos and the brother-in-law of Frans Snyders. He apprenticed with Snyders and joined the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke in 1620 (after which he became more independent of Snyders). Together with other artists, he worked under Rubens' supervision on the mythological decorations for Philip IV's Torre de la Parada hunting lodge near Madrid. Snyders and De Vos painted more than 60 hunting scenes and animal pieces for this project, sometimes they worked on the same painting together.

Paul De Vos' work must have become popular with the Spanish nobility: following the royal commission, De Vos received numerous commissions to decorate hunting rooms and hunting pavilions. It is also in this light that we should view our painting: it is not unlikely that the painting has never left Spain since the 17th century (where it was still located until recently).

A roe deer and a fawn are being hunted by a mad pack of dogs. Like a good director, De Vos captures the dramatic scene in full action. He uses some of the methods he saw in Snyders: some of the dogs are only depicted in part, which generates movement in the composition. Paul De Vos also depicts the moment just before the deer are finally caught, which creates more tension.

We are grateful to Prof. F.G. Meijer for authenticating our work as an original painting by Paul de Vos.

