



**DAVID TENIERS the Younger**  
(Antwerp 1610 – 1690 Brussels)

"A Barn Scene with a man courting a young woman, and several figures"  
Oil on canvas: 53,5 x 69,5 cm;  
signed "D.Teniers" on the box (l.c.), and dated '1681' on the barrel;  
With dedication on verso: "To Felixe & Charli Eyston - presented by  
Grandmother as a wedding present, September 1982 - L.H."

**Expertise:**  
Dr. Margret Klinge, 27 Jan 1992, including provenance.

**Provenance:**

Collection of the Duke of Orleans, 1798;

Collection Archibald Coats, esquire, 1883

Collection of Harold Sidney Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Rothermere.

Christie's London, 19 dec 1941, nr. 106

Arthur de Casseres, London, 1943 (illustrated in the magazine *Connoisseur*, September 1943, p. XIII)

private collection, United Kingdom;

Felix & Charli Eyston, London, 1982;

private collection,, The Netherlands;

with Douwes Fine Art at TEFAF in 2006;

private collection, The Netherlands.

**Literature:**

this is most probably the painting described by John Smith in his *Catalogue Raisonné*, London 1831, Vol.III, under no.372, where the dimensions are incorrectly stated as square.

**Exhibition:**

Loan exhibition of works by Old Masters and Scottisch National Portraits, 1883, catalogue nr. 235 Leeuwarden, Fries Museum, 'Van Jan Steen tot Jan Sluijters, De smaak van Douwes', from Nov.1998 until Feb.1999, cat.no.22, with ill.

**Notes:**

A young woman and a male companion are engaged in conversation. She is smoking a typical 'Gouda' clay pipe and holding a Berkemeyer glass in her right hand. A little white dog sits trustingly by the girl's side. From a window at the top, an older lady observes the couple. Above her head an owl, the ancient symbol of wisdom. Could she be the girl's mother, secretly observing what is going on? The presence of the dog indicates a form of trust and fidelity. Is the young man putting the young woman to a test of courtship? And might the dog indicate her being faithful and not giving in to his advances? To the right in the background is a group of merry peasants, in front of an open fireplace, possibly speculating about the outcome of the couple's conversation. As the date given by the artist: 1681 shows, the painting was created in Brussels during Tenier's last creative years. It is a good example of how, even at this time, the painter mastered the execution of his works with virtuosity and care, namely in composition, training and characterization of the figures, in the implementation of the details, in color and lighting.



Photo detail, signature



Photo detail, date 1681 on the barrel

### **Biography Artist:**

David Teniers the Younger was not only one of the most prolific Flemish artists but also one of the most versatile. Although best known for his representations of peasant life, he painted subjects that range from alchemists and witches to allegorical and biblical themes. Moreover, Teniers painted views of collectors' cabinets, many of which include portraits, and also made small-scale copies of Italian paintings.

Teniers was baptized in Antwerp in 1610. He apparently studied with his father, David Teniers the Elder (1582-1649), who specialized in small-scale history paintings. Early in his career he collaborated with his father in creating a series of twelve panels illustrating Torquato Tasso's great epic, *Gerusalemme Liberata* (Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado). Upon entering the Antwerp Saint Luke's Guild in 1632/1633, he began to specialize in low-life genre scenes in a style derived from the work of Adriaen Brouwer, who had moved to Antwerp from Haarlem in the early 1630s.

Records in Antwerp indicate that a David Teniers received a passport for a visit to Paris in 1635. A more certain reference to the young artist's travels in that year is a contract he signed with the art dealer Chrisostome van Immerseel on 29 December 1635 in Dover, England.





In 1636 Sir Peter Paul Rubens called upon Teniers, as well as a number of other artists, to assist in a commission to decorate the Torre de la Parada, a hunting lodge near Madrid belonging to King Philip IV of Spain. Unfortunately, the painting Teniers made from Rubens' modello is now lost. The artist's association with Rubens was personal as well as professional: Rubens had been guardian of Anna Brueghel, whom Teniers married in 1637, and was a witness to their marriage contract. In July 1638, when David Teniers III, the first of the couple's seven children, was baptized, the child's godmother was Rubens' second wife, Hélène Fourment.

Teniers painted for both domestic and foreign markets. During the 1640s he collaborated frequently with other painters, among them Lucas van Uden (1595-1672/1673), Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606-1683/1684), Jacques d'Arthois (1613-1686), and Jan van Kessel.

In 1645 and 1646 Teniers was dean of the Antwerp artists' guild. He was also an active member of the rhetoricians' chamber De Violieren. Among the important patrons for whom he worked during the 1640s was Antoon Triest, bishop of Ghent, who may have introduced him to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, governor of the southern Netherlands. Teniers apparently entered the archduke's service at his Brussels court by December 1647, although he continued to live in Antwerp until at least November 1649.

In the early 1650s Teniers succeeded Jan van den Hoeck (1611-1651) as official court painter. Among his more important pictures of this period are representations of the Painting Gallery of the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, in which Teniers often depicted himself alongside the archduke. During these years the artist also worked for other European rulers, including William of Orange, stadtholder of the United Netherlands, Queen Christina of Sweden, and the exiled King Charles II of England.

In 1656, several months after the death of his wife, Teniers, who had become very wealthy, bought a house on the Rue Terarken in Brussels. On 21 October of that year he married Isabelle de Fren, daughter of the secretary of the Council of Brabant. In August 1658 the artist was elevated to the rank of ayuda de cámara (chamberlain) under Don Juan of Austria, who had by then replaced Leopold Wilhelm in Brussels. With the end of the reign of Don Juan of Austria in January 1659, Teniers seems to have retired from court life. In 1662 he bought a country house called Dry Toren (Three Towers) near Vilvoorde. During this period he devoted much of his time and energy to establishing an academy of painting in Antwerp, which opened in 1665.

Teniers died on 25 April 1690 at the age of seventy-nine.



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