

SEBASTIAEN VRANCX

(Antwerp, 1573 - 1647)

An ambush beside a wood

inscribed, lower centre (recto): *Vieux Breugle Original*; inscribed (verso): *Vieux Breugle Original* / *Sebastien Franck*

pen and brown ink with grey and brown wash, framing lines in red chalk

300 x 450 mm

Provenance:

Descendants of the Loubat de Bohan family, Bourg-en-Bresse

Sold by the estate, 2023

This large-scale depiction of an ambush is by Sebastiaen Vrancx, a polymathic Antwerp artist who is widely considered the first Netherlandish master of the battle painting and whose representations of military action and roadside skirmishes established a standard for such scenes in 17th century Flanders.

Although various elements of the composition relate to a painting at the Brooks Museum, Memphis, the differences in arrangement, impressive sense of scale and high degree of finish indicate that the drawing was intended as an independent work. The duplication and reinterpretation of specific figures is a typical feature of Vrancx's drawn and painted oeuvre, as established by Louisa Wood Ruby in her two studies on Vrancx's illustrations of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Here, a number of motifs which can be recognised from the Memphis painting have been arranged into a more concise and cohesive composition. The three central figures, one in a hat with a mounted gun, one in a suit of armour carrying a pike, and one in a hat with a gun on his right hip; the central horse with its caped and armed rider; and the fleeing horse to the rear in quarter profile to the right, all find analogies in the Memphis painting. A similar composition with three comparable figures blockading a road can also be seen in a painting at the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig.

Please contact us for a full catalogue entry.