

H. H. RUMBLER



JACQUES CALLOT
(1592 - 1635)

The Great Hunt

Etching

19.7 x 46.6 cm (7 ³/₄ x 18 ³/₈ inches)

Circa 1620

Lieure 353/I (of IV)

One of the sought-after principal sheets by this artist – one of his most spirited etchings (H. D. Russel).

Here we have the extremely rare 1st state in a splendid impression of the greatest brilliance. With sooty, deep black lines in the foreground, yet with painstakingly nuanced halftones in the distinct background, so that the desired effects of illumination are enhanced to an extraordinary degree.

With all of the characteristics mentioned by Lieure only for the early impressions: Les détails des lointains se voient très nettement, en particulier la chasse au sanglier du fond à droite et le pont, le croix et la petite ville du fond à gauche... le faucon volant au-dessus d'un oiseau...

With fine margins around the plate mark; on the right, minimal irregularities around the framing line. Now closed marginal blemishes are not visible to the eye, and can be disregarded in view of the beauty of this impression.

The Great Hunt is the largest and perhaps most beautiful landscape by this artist. It was presumably produced when the artist was still in Florence. *Lieure suggested that Callot's hunt takes place around the town Signa, where the Medici had one of their villas, and it is likely that a specific setting was intended. At the same time, depictions of hunts in drawings, prints, and paintings were common enough, and Callot certainly was aware of some of them. His own contribution to the theme is the projection of the kinetic and frenetic activity intrinsic to it. At the right the swinging trees become nearly anthropomorphic participants in the hunt, reinforcing the movement of charging horses, riders, and dogs into the distant middleground where the stag is being surrounded. At the left, huntsmen move toward the prey with a counterpointed cadence... the scene is carefully ordered compositionally and suffused with a sense of atmosphere.* (H. D. Russel)