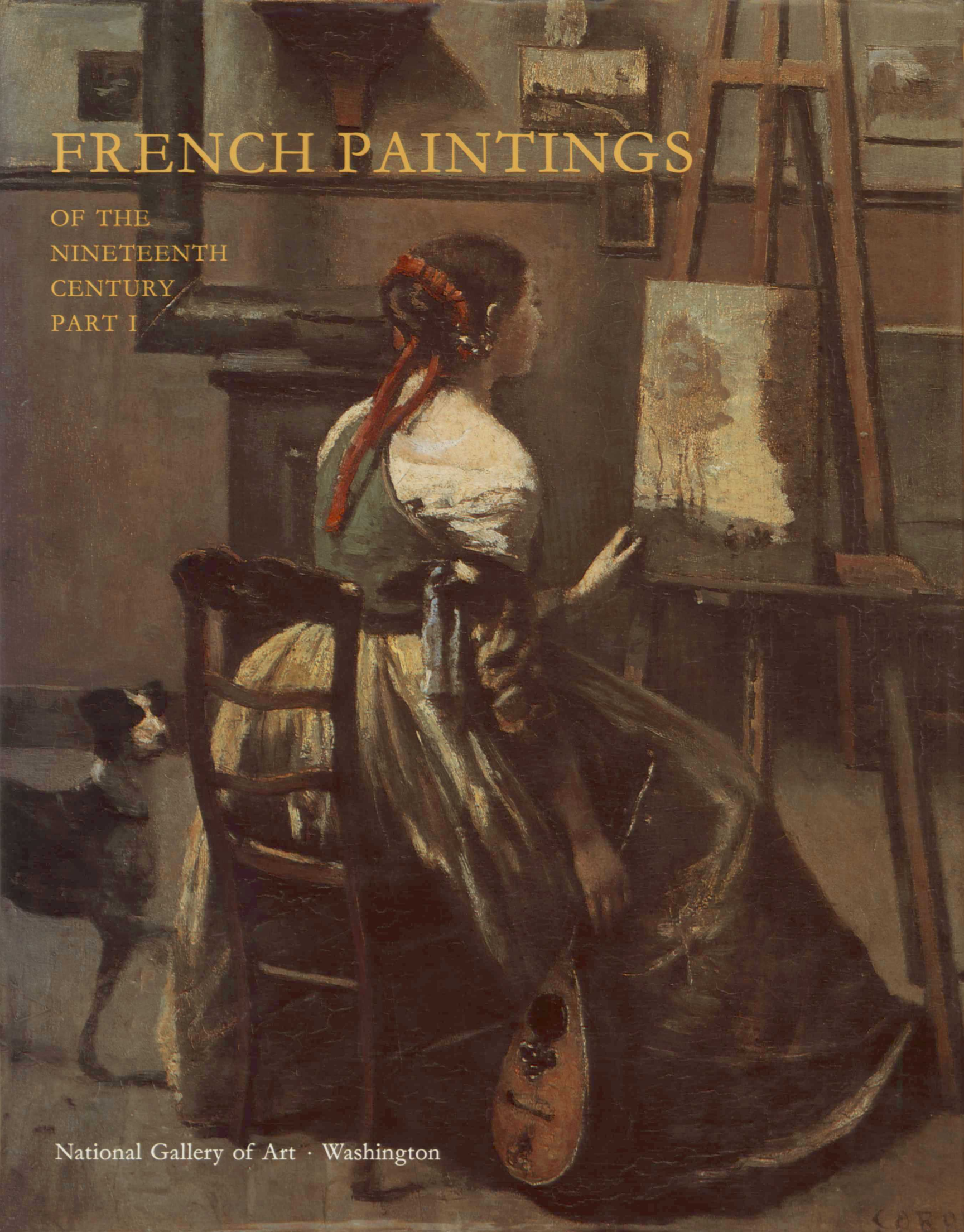


FRENCH PAINTINGS

OF THE
NINETEENTH
CENTURY
PART I



National Gallery of Art · Washington

THE COLLECTIONS OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
SYSTEMATIC CATALOGUE

The systematic catalogue will include approximately thirty volumes on the paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts in the collection of the National Gallery of Art. Published to date are:

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OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

PART I: BEFORE IMPRESSIONISM



LORENZ EITNER

French Paintings

OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

PART I: BEFORE IMPRESSIONISM

THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
SYSTEMATIC CATALOGUE

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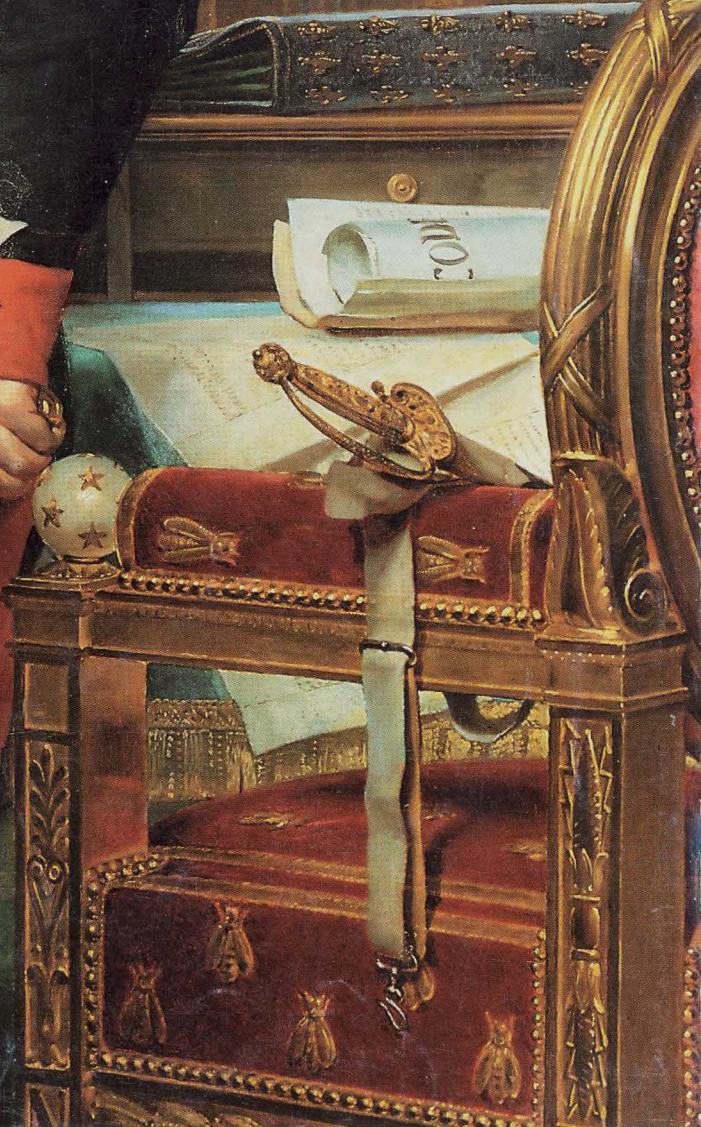
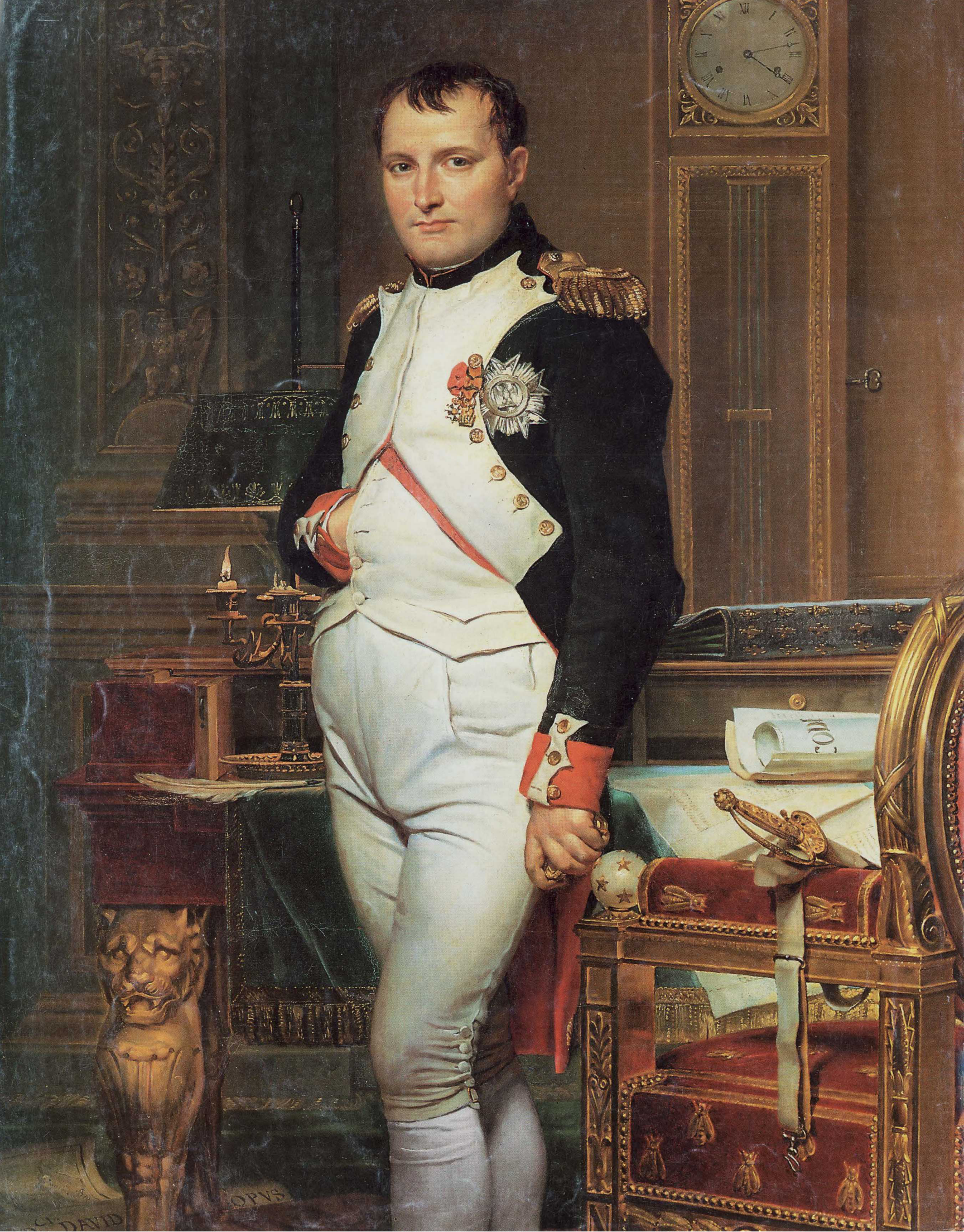
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OPVS

J. DAVID

FOREWORD

It is no exaggeration to say that the National Gallery's collection of French paintings of the nineteenth century is one of the greatest in North America, ranking with museum collections established much earlier—in the nineteenth century itself—in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Included among the paintings from the collections of Andrew W. Mellon, Joseph Widener, Samuel H. Kress, and Chester Dale are important landscapes and figure pieces by Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Gustave Courbet, Louis-Léopold Boilly, and Honoré Daumier. These would become the foundation of an enviable collection of pre-impressionist works. Later, the Gallery received gifts of paintings by Jacques-Louis David, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, and Pierre-Paul Prud'hon. Since the 1970s, the Gallery's acquisition program has continued to enrich our initial holdings in this area.

Some of the Gallery's great masterpieces are published here: David's *The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries*, a stunning expression of the artist's admiration for the emperor; Eugène Delacroix's *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains*, a classic Orientalist picture; Courbet's *The Stream*, among his most vigorously painted landscapes; and Ingres' *Madame Moitessier*, one of his most iconic portraits. Within the group of eighteen works by Corot, who is represented in a concentration greater than that accorded to any other pre-impressionist artist, it is

possible to see not only his open-air studies painted from nature, but more elaborate compositions, such as *A View near Volterra*, and full-scale imaginary works such as his brooding *Forest of Fontainebleau*, which was intended as an impressive piece for exhibition at the Salon.

This volume, the first of three to catalogue the Gallery's nineteenth-century French paintings, encompasses contemporaneous and sometimes conflicting movements of romanticism, classicism, and realism. We have been fortunate to secure the scrupulous scholarship of Professor Lorenz Eitner, a world authority in French art before impressionism. I thank him on behalf of the Gallery and all his readers. Professor Eitner's research has been complemented by systematic technical investigations of every work, undertaken by the Gallery's conservation and scientific research laboratories. Above all, we are grateful to our donors whose gifts—particularly the Chester Dale gift of 1963—permit Gallery visitors to experience a wide range of subject matter that characterizes the pre-modern era in European painting. The present catalogue is a tribute to their generosity and discernment, from which our curators, most recently Philip Conisbee, senior curator of European paintings, continue to build a coherent, world-class collection.

Earl A. Powell III
Director



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A catalogue such as this is inevitably a collaborative enterprise that depends in the course of its preparation on information and many kinds of help received from various sources. At the completion of my work, I am uneasily aware of the difficulty in trying to recollect every one of the many acts of kindness and advice from which I have profited, and I beg the forgiveness of those helpers whose names I may inadvertently have omitted from the acknowledgments that follow.

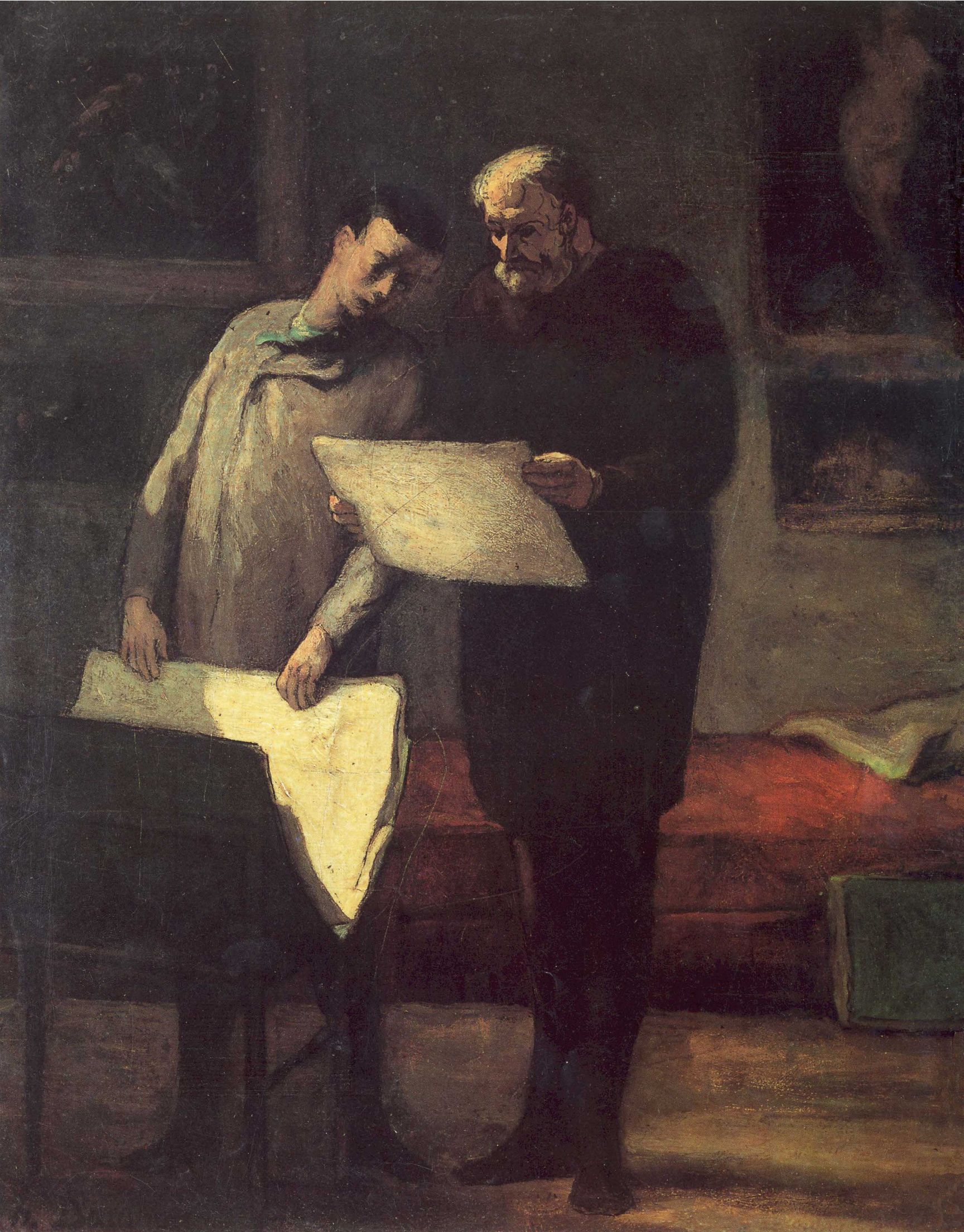
Colleagues and friends, both in this country and in Europe, gave valuable information and advice, among them Mr. and Mrs. Robert Boisteau, Angers (on Turpin de Crissé); Sven Bruntjen; Kathy Kirby-Eitner (on Pizzo Falcone); Maria Haffner, Geographical Institute, University of Innsbruck (on Coignet's *View of Bozen with a Painter*); Lee Johnson (on Delacroix attributions); Silvain Laveissiere, chief curator of paintings, Musée du Louvre (on Corot's submissions to the Salons of the 1830s); Elizabeth Martin, art department, Stanford University; Jean Mesqui and Marcel Prade, specialists in the history of French bridges (on Corot's *Bridge on the Saône River at Mâcon*); Milo M. Naeve (on J. L. Krimmel); Pierre Rosenberg, director, Musée du Louvre (on Boilly's *A Painter's Studio*); and Alexander Ross, art librarian, Stanford University (for frequent biographical help). I am particularly indebted to Daniel Ternois, Paris, for information, generously shared, on Ingres' *Marcotte d'Argenteuil* and *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel*.

At the National Gallery of Art, my particular thanks are due to Nancy Yeide, head of curatorial records and files, for innumerable instances of prompt help with often complicated matters. Her

command of provenances and of biographical sources, ably supported by Anne Halpern, led to the solution of some stubborn puzzles that otherwise would have remained unexplained. Of the Gallery's painting conservation department, Elizabeth Walmsley and Carol Christensen supplied most of the information that went into the catalogue's technical notes, assisted by Elizabeth Freeman, Susanna P. Griswold, Ann Hoenigswald, and Katherine A. Metzger. Philip Conisbee, senior curator of European paintings, Florence Coman, assistant curator of French paintings, and Charles S. Moffet, former senior curator, also lent a hand. Of the National Gallery's staff more particularly concerned with the publication of the series of systematic catalogues, I recall with gratitude Suzannah Fabing, the former head of the department of research on the collections, who first introduced me to the intricacies of this enterprise. Since then, the work of coordinating the various editorial contributions to the catalogue has mainly been carried by Katherine Whann, who has managed its complications with admirable care. Of the members of the Gallery's editors' office, my thanks also go to the late Frances P. Smyth, editor-in-chief, Mary Yakush, senior editor, Barclay A. Gessner, Jorgelina Orfila, and Janet C. Blyberg, who undertook the procurement of comparative illustrations. Fronia W. Simpson's Argus-eyed copy-editing purged my text of many major and minor flaws.

My greatest debt, impossible to repay, I owe to Trudi Eitner, who cheered me on with her patience and kindness during the years it took me to write this catalogue.

Lorenz Eitner
August 1999



INTRODUCTION

This catalogue covers the National Gallery's holdings of French paintings from the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, with the addition of a very few German and Swiss works. The collection it describes is the result of a gradual accumulation of sporadic private donations to the Gallery in the nearly sixty years since its inauguration in 1941, rather than of planned acquisitions aiming at a balanced historical coverage. The collection spans the period from the neoclassicism of David to the naturalism of the Barbizon painters. Its strengths and omissions reflect the fluctuating preferences of that relatively small number of American patrons whose private collecting, begun in some instances in the early 1890s, contributed to the founding of what became, half a century later, the National Gallery of Art.

Within the terminal dates of 1800 to 1875, the eighty-one paintings that at the time of publication comprise this part of the Gallery's collection divide around the year 1850, those dating from 1800 to 1849 balanced fairly evenly by those from 1850 to 1875. As a component of the Gallery's general holdings, this particular collection had a rather halting start. By 1963, after twenty years of slow growth, it numbered no more than twenty-seven pictures. That year, however, Chester Dale's gift of thirty-one French paintings abruptly doubled the size of the collection, and the weight of this gift strongly confirmed the collection's focus on French painting. Within these bounds, the collection has since grown in ways that continue to express the evolving interests of the American patrons whose personal purchases from the 1920s through the 1960s mainly formed its character and made it a *national* collection, reflecting cultural and social attitudes prevailing in the country and period of its formation.

Among the traces of its origins in private collecting is the predominance of moderate-sized pictures and the corresponding scarcity of large canvases:¹ most of these paintings were acquired by their former owners to suit the scale of city apartments and form a background for prestigious sociability. It is probably not merely by chance that among these eighty-one pictures there is only a sin-

gle, entirely decorous, female nude. While landscapes and portraits predominate, the grand subjects of the Paris Salons—religious and mythological scenes, episodes from history or literature—are almost entirely absent. Modern-minded American collectors had lost interest in them by 1900, with the result that they did not come into the pool of privately owned art from which the National Gallery in time developed.

In their successive donations of modern French paintings, the early supporters of the National Gallery exhibited a remarkable consistency of preferences (see *Appendix of Donors and Dealers*). From the beginning, Corot was their decided favorite. By 1961, twenty years after the Gallery's opening, he was represented by nine pictures, at that time nearly half of the Gallery's holdings in French painting of the period. The Chester Dale gift of 1963 added a further six paintings by Corot, and at the time of publication he, with nineteen paintings, stands not only as the Gallery's most richly covered painter of that time, but as one of the most fully represented European painters of any period. What accounted for this exceptional favor was in part the sheer longevity of Corot's vogue, which owed much to his gift of self-renewal manifest in the different phases of his work. From the lyrical naturalism of his early studies, to the atmospheric suggestiveness of his composed landscapes, and, finally, to the masterly concreteness of his late figure paintings, successive generations of collectors found a perennial modernity in his work. It is noteworthy that those American collectors who ultimately gave their pictures to the National Gallery on the whole preferred the realism of Corot's early and late periods to the "poetic" vagueness of the more popular compositions of his middle years.

Next to Corot, Daumier and Courbet ranked high among the choices of the Gallery's early donors. By comparison, works by David and Ingres arrived later and in smaller numbers, though in paintings of particular importance. The great Romantics—Gros, Gericault, Delacroix, and Chasseriau—appealed far less to American collectors and therefore remain more sparsely represented. Curatorial acquisitions have made some corrective

additions in recent years, strengthening in particular the works of the early open-air landscape painters. But the collection's base still has not broadened beyond French painting, and gender-conscious users of this catalogue may note the absence of women artists.

The gifts that gradually came together to form this part of the National Gallery's collection represent the choices of private individuals, more often spurred by personal enthusiasm than by professional guidance, though the advice of favorite dealers no doubt carried some weight. Three distinct generations of collectors were responsible for the collection's earliest institutional formation. In the 1890s, the first of these, consisting of Peter A. B. Widener (1834–1915), Henry Osborne Havemeyer (1847–1907), and his wife Louisine (1855–1929), bought paintings by Corot and Courbet. This was followed by a second generation, exemplified by Horace Gallatin (1871–1948), who participated in the American vogue for the painters of Barbizon, with purchases of pictures by Diaz, Dupré, and Millet in the early 1900s. A third generation, finally, produced Chester Dale (1883–1962), whose wide-ranging purchases, carried on from the 1920s through the 1950s, extended the scope and enriched the historical continuity of the collection by introducing works by Boilly, Daumier, Delacroix, and

Millet. Institutional gifts by the Kress Foundation had previously added substance in areas—the work of David, Ingres, and Prud'hon, for example—where private contributions had been lacking. It was by successive Kress donations (1946, 1952, and 1961) and the Chester Dale gift of 1963 that the National Gallery's holdings in French painting of the period 1800 to 1875 were finally transformed from a scattering of sporadic gifts into a coherent museum collection.

Since the early 1970s, gifts of paintings from individual benefactors have gradually declined in numbers and have been increasingly supplemented by curatorial purchases, reducing the collection's traditional dependence on private donors and allowing new scope for programs of planned acquisitions that aim for a more balanced historical coverage.

Lorenz Eitner

1. By far the largest painting in this group is Corot's *Forest of Fontainebleau*, which measures 175.6 × 242.6 cm. It is followed at a distance by David's *The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries*, 203.9 × 125.1 cm.; Ingres' *Madame Moitessier*, 146.7 × 100 cm.; Courbet's *The Stream*, 104.1 × 137.1 cm.; Delacroix' *Christopher Columbus and His Son at La Rábida*, 90.5 × 118.4 cm.; and Millet's *Leconte de Lisle*, 117 × 81 cm.

NOTES TO THE READER

Following an introductory biography for each painter and a brief bibliography, each entry begins with the title of the work, its medium, dimensions, and the location of signatures or inscriptions. The following conventions are used in dating the paintings:

- 1810 Executed in 1810
- c. 1810 Executed in about 1810
- 1810–1815 Begun in 1810, finished in 1815
- 1810/1815 Executed sometime between 1810 and 1815
- c. 1810/1815 Executed sometime around the period 1810–1815

Dimensions are given in centimeters, with height preceding width (dimensions in inches follow, in parentheses).

The technical notes summarize the contents of the examination reports prepared by members of the Gallery's conservation department specifically for the systematic catalogue. The notes were written in consultation with individual conservators, and they describe the condition of each picture at the time of examination. The following procedure was employed for the technical examinations.

Each picture was examined unframed, in normal light and using a binocular microscope with a magnifying power of up to 40x. The pictures were examined under ultraviolet light and using X-radiography, which is mentioned only when it reveals significant changes or damage.

Each painting underwent infrared examination, with one of three cameras: a Hamamatsu C/1000-03 camera with a N-2606-10 PbS tube and a Nikon 55 mm lens fitted with a Kodak 87-A Wratten filter; a Kodak 310-21X PtSi thermal imager configured to 1.5–2.0 microns; or a Mitsubishi M-600 PtSi thermal imager configured to 1.2–2.5 microns. Information gathered during infrared examination is mentioned where it revealed underdrawing and also when none was found, as that is in some cases significant. Other forms of analysis, such as X-ray fluorescence or cross-section sampling, are mentioned, though they were rarely done.

The majority of the pictures were painted on plain-woven fabric supports that were estimated to be (but not analyzed as) linen. The type of weave

and thread count are noted, but, in the absence of fiber analysis, the supports are described under the generic term *fabric*. In most cases, paintings on fabric had been lined onto auxiliary fabric supports, again assumed to be linen. The lining adhesive employed was usually aqueous, such as glue or paste, and original tacking margins were generally found to have been removed as part of the lining process. Instances where original tacking margins survive are noted. Most of the paintings are no longer mounted on their original stretchers; those estimated to be original are noted and their construction described. Where colormen's stencils are present on an original stretcher, canvas, or panel, they are described.

Wood support type was determined from samples using light microscopy. Of the thirteen paintings on wood panel, seven are on mahogany panels, five are on oak panels, and one is on a pine panel. Often these panels were later cradled, and it has been noted where it occurred. A number of the paintings are on paper that has been adhered to a wood panel. These papers have been described as laid or wove where it was possible to identify them, but their fiber composition in most cases was not determined. Only one painting was executed on *carton* (paperboard), later attached to a cradled panel. The paintings were all estimated to be executed in oil paint; no medium analysis was undertaken to confirm this assumption.

The condition of the paintings is described, including alterations, additions, and damage. None of the varnishes was presumed to be original. The dates of restorations are noted where known, but restorers' names have been omitted.

Although the paintings in this catalogue are stylistically diverse, certain common technical practices were noted. Most of the pictures were painted on plain-woven fabric; only two twill supports were identified. A little less than half the fabric supports had thread counts of 18 to 28 threads per centimeter; they are described as "finely woven"; the rest had thread counts of 10 to 17 threads per centimeter ("medium weave"). Only two paintings were on coarsely woven fabric (fewer than 10 threads per centimeter).

Nearly all the grounds with which the supports were prepared were off-white. All paintings on fabric were prepared with a ground. Where the ground covers extant tacking margins and can therefore be presumed to have been commercially applied before stretching, it has been noted. The red-brown grounded Boilly (1943.7.1, p. 4) and the small Gaertner (1973.13.1, p. 367) sketch with salmon-colored ground are exceptional in this collection. Courbet painted one work on a brown ground (1943.15.2, p. 105), but the rest appear to be commercially prepared off-white grounds that he overlaid with dark brown or dark red-brown imprimaturas to create the underlying dark tonality he preferred. This practice of covering a light ground with a brown imprimatura may have been common practice, since it was noted on several other paintings. In this catalogue, an imprimatura was considered to be any continuous layer applied

over the ground. The one case where a white layer was applied over a colored ground (Boilly, 1943.7.1, p. 4) was described as a double ground. In only one painting, a small study by Millet on wood (1949.9.1, p. 321), was the ground absent altogether.

The section on Provenance gives the name of each known owner, with the use of a semi-colon between names indicating a direct transfer. The use of a period after a name indicates a break in the chain of ownership, with the whereabouts of the object unknown until its next documented owner. Dealers' names are provided in parentheses. Exhibition histories are as complete as available information has made possible. The reference section concentrates on important and useful sources, and repeats the listing of exhibition catalogues if they are considered essential scholarly sources on the particular artist.

CATALOGUE

Louis-Léopold Boilly

1761–1845

LOUIS-LÉOPOLD BOILLY was born in the village of La Bassée, near Arras, the son of a wood-carver. From 1775 the boy lived in Douai with a relative, a prior of the Augustine order. It is not known who gave Boilly his first training. A very early practice of portrait painting, partly self-taught, seems to have launched him into his profession. By 1779 he was at work in Arras, busy with portraits. In 1785 he moved to Paris, where two years later he married Marie-Madeleine Deslignè, the daughter of a merchant of Arras. His family portraits, conceived as intimate domestic scenes, attracted the attention of a provincial noble of literary bent, Calvet de La Palun, who commissioned him to paint a series of narrative genre subjects based on texts furnished by himself. From 1791 onward Boilly regularly exhibited portraits and genre scenes at the Paris Salons. When private patronage dwindled after the outbreak of the Revolution, he sought to reach a wider popular audience by painting boudoir scenes, of mildly licentious character, to be reproduced in quantity by the printmakers. A lukewarm supporter of the Revolution, he was denounced in 1794 to the Société Républicaine des Arts by a fellow artist, the Jacobin zealot Jean-Baptiste Wicar (1762–1834), for having painted “obscene works revolting to republican morality.” The denunciation was forwarded to Robespierre’s Comité de Salut Publique. At the height of the Terror this was a life-threatening accusation, of which Boilly managed to clear himself by painting *Triumph of Marat* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille), which appeased the revolutionary thought-police. His wife had meanwhile succumbed to the anxiety caused by these alarms. Remarried in 1795, Boilly benefited from the pacification resulting from the fall of Robespierre. The resurgence of luxury, corruption, and elegance in the years that followed brought him new patrons and supplied him with subjects for the kind of social observation that suited his temperament—amused, uncensorious, vividly pictorial, and often spiced with mild bawdiness and a touch of caricature. Besides episodes from the everyday of urban life (*Queueing for Milk*, Salon of 1796), he observed street crowds reacting to national events

(*Departure of the Conscripts of 1807*, Salon of 1808, Musée Carnavalet, Paris), sampled sidewalk entertainments (*The Boulevard Prestidigitator*, 1806), and surveyed the city’s thriving prostitution (*The Galleries of the Palais Royal*, 1809, Musée Carnavalet, Paris).

In his choice of subjects, he had an immediate French predecessor in Philibert-Louis Debucourt (1755–1832) with whose colored prints *Promenade de la Galerie du Palais Royal* (1787) and *La Promenade publique* (1792) he was certainly familiar. Debucourt’s scenes of fashionable outdoor sociability in turn derived from Thomas Rowlandson’s (1757–1827) *Vauxhall*, a print of 1784.¹ In adapting these prototypes Boilly gave them a plainer middle-class aspect and treated them with a profusion of mundane detail that contemporaries criticized as “Dutch” and compared to the styles of Gerard Terborch II (1617–1681), David Teniers II (1610–1690), and Gabriel Metsu (1629–1667). The factuality of his social and physical observation was, however, tempered by his invariable classicist embellishment of his young female figures, the hard distinctness of his colors, and the glassy smoothness of his brushwork.

Portraiture, having launched him on his career, remained to the end his most dependable source of income. His facility in executing small portraits rapidly and cheaply enabled him to be productive on an almost industrial scale, rivaling the output of the photographers of later generations. By 1828, well before the end of his career, he could claim to have painted more than five thousand portraits, each completed in about two hours. In searching for ways of capturing likenesses with speed, he tinkered with optical devices that, in turn, helped him to develop the illusionist techniques by which he brought off the spectacular feats of trompe-l’oeil still-life painting that astonished Salon audiences and irked the critics.

Portrait painting influenced his treatment of genre subjects. His *Meeting of Artists in Isabey’s Studio* (Louvre), which won success at the Salon of 1798, and his *Studio of a Sculptor* (1804, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris), exhibited in 1804 as *Picture of a Family*, arranged actual portraits to form imag-

inary genre situations. Conversely, when composing his crowded urban genres he gave them the appearance of animated group portraits. But the portraitlike figures that fill his genre scenes—the attractive child, the fashionable young woman, the portly elderly bourgeois, and the grim-visaged street tough—are in fact only stock types from a repertoire to which he constantly returned.

Boilly's work evolved very gradually from a classicizing Louis-XVI style to a French version of Biedermeier, always contemporary in subject matter and popular in tone but tending to mannerisms and repetitions that mitigated its underlying realism. Held in suspense by his contrary tendencies—to detailed surface realism on the one hand and embellishing stylization on the other—it underwent no radical changes: his later genre scenes, such as *The Entrance to the Turkish Garden Café* (Salon of 1812, private collection, Australia) or *The Distribution of Wine and Food in the Champs-Élysées* (Salon of 1822, Musée Carnavalet, Paris), still recall his work of the 1790s. Inevitably, they began to seem old-fashioned and by 1830 had entirely lost the flavor of modernity that had constituted their appeal.

Boilly last exhibited at the Salon in 1824. Among the works of his old age was a series of lithographs of comical facial expressions, *Grimaces*. In the spring of 1829 he sold his collection of Dutch, Flemish, and French paintings and decorative objects, as well as thirty-seven of his own paintings. The monarchy of Louis-Philippe awarded him the cross of the Legion of Honor. He died in 1845, aged eighty-four.

Notes

1. de Goncourt, 1874, 2:255.

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Louis Boilly (1761–1845). [Exh. cat. Musée Marmottan.] Paris, 1984.
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1943.7.1 (738)

A Painter's Studio

c. 1800

Oil on fabric, 73.5 × 59.5 (29 × 23^{3/8})

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At bottom center: *L. Boilly*.

Technical Notes: The painting's primary support, a medium-weight plain-weave fabric, was lined onto fabric sometime before its 1943 acquisition by the National Gallery. Its tacking margins have been cut off. The fabric was prepared with a double ground composed of a lower reddish brown layer and an upper white layer. Although infrared reflectography and X-radiography did not reveal the presence of extensive underdrawing or paint changes, close examination of the surface with a stereobinocular microscope revealed a few grayish lines of painted underdrawing. Also, a very dark reddish brown paint was used to outline volumes in the composition, both initially and as a final definition of the forms. The smooth, thin paint was built up in opaque layers, with transparent glazes used for the red draperies. The most recent conservation treatment, completed in 1995, included removal of a discolored, hazy varnish, inpainting of small areas of abrasion, and reframing in an eighteenth-century signed frame by Etienne-Louis Inffroit altered to fit the painting's dimensions. The painting is in good condition.

Provenance: Early provenance unknown. Possibly (anonymous sale [Prince Galitzin?], Paris, 18 December 1826, lot 140). André Vincent, Paris, by 1930; (his sale, Galerie Jean Charpentier, Paris, 26 May 1933, no. 15);¹ purchased by (Etienne Bignou, Paris); by whom sold 1933 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Possibly Paris, Salon, 1800, no. 35, as *Un Intérieur d'atelier de peinture*. Paris, Jacques Seligman & Fils, Ancien Hôtel de Sagan, 1930, *Exposition L. L. Boilly*, no. 58, lent by André Vincent. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum; NGA, 1995, *The Art of Louis-Léopold Boilly: Modern Life in Napoleonic France*, repro. (Washington only).

TWO YOUNG WOMEN are shown in a lofty, columnar hall that is furnished as a painting studio and filled with canvases, easels, and plaster casts. The older, wearing a low-cut, high-waisted white muslin dress, stands near an easel and is about to take a drawing or print from a portfolio. The younger, dressed in gold-colored satin, is seated in an armchair and, a pencil in her left hand, exam-



Louis-Léopold Boilly, *A Painter's Studio*, 1943.7.1



Fig. 1. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *A Painter's Studio (L'Atelier de dessin)*, oil on canvas, c. 1800, probably destroyed (illustrated in sales catalogue, *Tableaux anciens*, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 10 June 1893, no. 4)

ines the plaster casts on the table before her, among them a reduction of Jean-Antoine Houdon's (1741–1828) *écorché* and a small torso of the Medici Venus. A ray of sunlight from an unseen window at the upper left sharply illuminates the scene, which is evidently intended to represent a teaching studio, where the two young women are not merely visitors but students. The many plaster casts, the portfolio of prints, and the well-thumbed book on the floor point to study as the activity that Boilly meant to picture. The setting, with its

glimpse into a monumental colonnade, is suggestive of the accommodations temporarily provided at the Louvre, during the 1790s, for some privileged artists and their students, though these improvised ateliers were in actuality much plainer than this imaginary interior.

Boilly exhibited a painting of precisely this subject at the Paris Salon of 1800 with the title *Un Intérieur d'atelier de peinture*,² as is apparent from the detailed description by a visitor to that Salon, the Danish critic T. C. Bruun-Neergard: "Among the

pictures on view, we note Boilly's interior of a painter's studio. It shows a young woman about to draw after plaster casts. Her younger sister,³ standing a little farther back, is about to take a drawing from a portfolio. On the table and in the background there are several plasters."⁴

The description fits two known versions of the subject that are of equal quality and closely similar composition, the painting at the National Gallery of Art and its nearly identical counterpart, formerly in the collection of Baron Henri de Rothschild in Paris (fig. 1).⁵ Because their individual provenances cannot with certainty be traced further back than the end of the nineteenth century and early records do not allow us to distinguish between them, it remains unknown which of the two is the picture shown in 1800 and hence, presumably, the original on which the other is based.⁶ The earliest ascertainable appearance of the version now at the National Gallery of Art occurred only in 1930, when it was shown in Paris at an exhibition of Boilly's work.⁷ Its twin, then owned by

Henri de Rothschild, had passed through several distinguished collections and well-published sales between 1893 and 1903 and had been included in Henry HARRISSE's catalogue of Boilly's work published in 1898,⁸ while the existence of the other picture remained unknown for three more decades.⁹ The Rothschild version as a result found a place in the art-historical literature on Boilly at a relatively early date and thus came to be generally accepted as the picture shown at the Salon of 1800,¹⁰ although its history before 1893 is no better known than that of the picture at the National Gallery.

Boilly repeatedly used the studios of particular artists as a setting for group portraits, most spectacularly in his *Meeting of Artists in Isabey's Studio* (Salon of 1798, Louvre),¹¹ in which he included himself with thirty other artists, musicians, and writers who had, like himself, survived the recent terrors of the Revolution. In a painting of more intimate scale, *Studio of a Sculptor* (Salon of 1804, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris),¹² showing the sculptor Houdon at work on a bust of the

Fig. 2. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *The Studio of Houdon* (*Atelier d'un sculpteur, Portrait de famille*), oil on canvas, 1804, Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, inv. Pe 63, photograph by Laurent-Sully Jaulmes





Fig. 3. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Study of a Woman's Head*, oil on paper mounted on canvas, c. 1800, England, private collection (published in Lille 1989:118, no. 41)

astronomer Pierre-Simon de Laplace (fig. 2), he prominently placed Houdon's wife and three daughters in the foreground, justifying the picture's subtitle, *Picture of a Family*, under which it was exhibited at the Salon.

While these larger paintings were mainly designed as extended group portraits, Boilly's other, smaller studio pictures, which include the National Gallery's *Painter's Studio*, are true genre scenes, containing no identifiable portraits.¹³ They all show young women, always dressed with conspicuous elegance, at work drawing or painting or merely examining prints, in interiors that are lavishly furnished with studio necessities—canvases on easels, portfolios on stands, plaster casts of antique and modern sculptures on every surface, and a litter of paint boxes, vases, and bottles on the floor. It is tempting, given the apparent realism of these scenes, to accept them as representations of actual studios and the young women who are shown at

work in them as the portraits of particular artists. Those in the National Gallery's *Painter's Studio* were in fact once misidentified as "the daughters of Houdon,"¹⁴ evidently by analogy with Boilly's *Studio of a Sculptor* of 1804 in which Houdon's three daughters do appear (fig. 2), and perhaps because of the prominent position in the picture of a small plaster cast of Houdon's *Flayed Man* which the younger of the two women is about to draw. But casts of the famous *écorché* were common fixtures of Parisian painting studios, and the two women in this picture bear no physical resemblance to any of Houdon's three daughters.¹⁵

The women who appear, singly or in pairs, in Boilly's imaginary atelier scenes are, in fact, not actual portraits, but stock figures from a repertoire that he also used for other, quite unrelated genre compositions. The most prominent figure in *A Painter's Studio*, that of the young artist dressed in white who stands looking at a print, served him, very slightly changed, for various compositions dating from between 1800 and 1812.¹⁶ She reappears, for instance, as a young mother accompanied by her children in *Fête de famille* (c. 1803),¹⁷ as a fashionable stroller on the boulevards in *Les Petits Savoyards montrant la marmotte* (1807),¹⁸ and again in *The Entrance to the Turkish Garden Café* (Salon of 1812, private collection, Australia).¹⁹ The prototype on which Boilly based his various repetitions of this figure may have been the profile study of a young woman now in an English private collection (fig. 3).²⁰

Nor are the studio interiors in which he staged these figures to be taken literally, as the actual working places of particular artists. They are fantasy settings, composed of a multitude of objects arranged, in the case of *A Painter's Studio*, in several distinct groups of still lifes—the brightly sunlit plaster casts on the modeling stand, the further casts on the shadowy ledge behind the young women, and the clutter of canvases, dog-eared books, bottle, and vase at their feet. Boilly pictured these props with an insistent, sharp precision that leaves no doubt that he took them from direct observation. He appears to have used the camera obscura for the capture of visual effects.²¹ The frequent recurrence of the same objects in his different studio interiors indicates that he based them on articles in his own possession.²²

The motif of the young woman artist in a

painter's studio can be traced back in Boilly's work to the late 1780s, when he first used it in pictures like *The Young Artist* in Saint Petersburg (fig. 4),²³ that are imitations, in a preciously late-rococo idiom, of seventeenth-century Dutch genres of a kind much sought after by French collectors at the close of the eighteenth century (fig. 5).²⁴ While their subject matter, as well as many of their typical features—such as the activity of drawing after plaster casts and the conspicuous fashionability of the young draftswomen—continued to reflect their seventeenth-century Dutch origins, Boilly progressively modernized the style of these studio scenes, gradually shifting from the late rococo gracefulness of sentiment, costume, and pose in his work of the 1780s to a classicizing sobriety in his post-Revolutionary years. This change in form and mood is apparent in his Salon exhibit of 1796, *Interior of a Painter's Studio*, in which a young woman artist seated in strict profile view is shown at work on the portrait of a child.²⁵ It is evident in other ways in *The Studio of a Young Artist*, in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow (fig. 6), which, like the Na-

tional Gallery's *Painter's Studio*, dates from about 1800 and is in some respects that picture's counterpart.²⁶ Its young painter, watched by a small girl while working at her easel, is surrounded by a profusion of studio furnishings, plaster casts, and painting utensils that in their hard distinctness resemble the still-life detail in the picture at the National Gallery and in several instances—the small plaster torso of the Medici Venus and the terracotta relief vase in the style of Clodion (1738–1814)—actually represent the same objects. But in the two young women in the National Gallery's *Painter's Studio* Boilly went beyond the moderate classicism of his other studio pictures and produced figures of an ideal, nearly abstract purity of contour and form that stand in sharp contrast to the “Dutch” realism of their setting.

Aside from its conventional currency as a genre motif, the subject of young women artists in the studio may have acquired a special, topical interest in the years from 1795 to 1800 when, in the course of the liberalization of social and cultural life after the Terror, young women of the middle class and

Fig. 4. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *The Young Artist* (*Intérieur d'atelier de peintre*), oil on canvas, 1785–1788, Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum



Fig. 5. Gabriel Metsu, *A Young Woman Drawing*, oil on panel, c. 1660, London, The National Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Trustees





Fig. 6. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Studio of a Young Artist*, oil on canvas, 1800, Moscow, Pushkin Museum

the former aristocracy again found their way into the teaching studios.²⁷ Their advent seemed to augur the return of a gentler climate in the world of art. Etienne Delécluze, working in the atelier of Jacques-Louis David in 1795 at the time of the émigrés' return from exile, noted the courteous welcome given by that former Jacobin to the young comtesse de Noailles who was to occupy a place among his students.²⁸ Such signs of change were received with surprise and pleasure and may account for the relative frequency with which artists of the period recorded the presence of young women artists in the studios.

Despite their modest size and subject matter, Boilly's paintings at the Salon of 1800 drew considerable attention. In a popular guidebook to the attractions of the capital, *Le Pariseum, ou tableau de Paris* (1803), which included a list of the city's prominent artists, Boilly's name was accompanied by a particular mention of his recent Salon success,

cited as *L'Atelier du peintre*.²⁹ But the critics were divided between praise of his meticulous truth to appearance and blame of his finical execution. The comments of the discerning Dane Bruun-Neergard summed up their ambivalence: "This painter is a good colorist, but his handling sometimes becomes dry, for being too finished. This is a flaw for which the Flemish masters are also blamed, which should not be a reason for following them."³⁰ Boilly's supposed imitation of Netherlandish models prompted reviewers to invoke the names of Metsu, Adriaen van Ostade (1610–1685), or Gerard Dou (1613–1675), not necessarily with approval.³¹ A century later, some of the reservations voiced by Boilly's contemporaries still echoed in Henri Harisse's terse summation of the qualities of *A Painter's Studio*: "Very harmonious tones; negligences and dryness in the execution of the standing young woman: accessories and background admirably well painted."³² In the most recent discussion of the paint-

ing, Susan Siegfried (1995), shifting the focus from painterly to ideological concerns, deplored the gender roles that Boilly assigned to his young women artists, his “reversion to a portrayal of idle, droopy girls” and presentation of “women in the studio as conventionally eroticized objects.”³³

Notes

1. The catalogue of the Vincent sale both confuses the provenance of this picture with that of its composition's other version, then in the collection of Baron Henri de Rothschild (see note 5 below), and misidentifies it as *The Young Artist* actually at the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (see fig. 4 and note 23 below).

2. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture et dessins, sculpture, architecture et gravure, des artistes vivans. Exposés au Museum central des Arts... An VIII de la République Française* (Paris, An VIII [1800]), under no. 35.

3. This detail of the description is evidently due to a memory lapse on the part of Bruun-Neergard: it is the older sister who stands at the back.

4. T. C. Bruun-Neergard, *Sur la situation des Beaux-Arts en France, ou lettre d'un Danois à son ami* (Paris, 1801), 65.

5. The earliest ascertainable appearance of what may be called the Rothschild version of the composition occurred in an anonymous sale in Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 10 June 1893, lot 4, as *Un Atelier de dessin*. Acquired on this occasion by the Comtesse Robert de Fitz-James, it was later included in her sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 4 June 1903, lot 1, *Les Filles de Houdon ou l'atelier de peinture*, from which it was bought by Baron Henri de Rothschild (see HARRISSE 1898, 77, no. 19; Marmottan 1913, 73–75, 89, 95; Mabile de Poncheville 1931, 106–107, 165). Painted in oil on canvas, its dimensions have been variously recorded as 73 × 60 cm (Anon. sale, 1893), 77 × 60 cm (Fitz-James sale, 1903), and 74 × 60 cm (Paris 1930; see Exhibited, above). The picture was shown in this exhibition under no. 44, as *Un Intérieur d'atelier de peinture* (repro. 19). In the same exhibition the other version, now at the National Gallery, was shown under no. 58, as *Les Jeunes Artistes* (not repro.).

During World War II, the Henri de Rothschild collection was evacuated to England, where a German bombing raid destroyed many of its pictures, including, it is believed, this painting by Boilly.

6. The exactness of the repetition is such that the differences between the two paintings can be detected only by a minute examination. The most significant is in the position of the raised hand and arm of the seated girl in relation to the skirt of the young woman standing beside her. In the NGA's version, that hand overlaps the skirt considerably and forms a dark silhouette against the brilliant white of the skirt. In the Rothschild version, the contour of the seated girl's arm and hand is continuous with the contour of the standing woman's skirt—there is almost no overlap. The extreme closeness of this duplication and the present in-

accessibility of the Rothschild version make it virtually impossible to determine which of the two paintings is the original and which the copy. What caused Boilly to repeat this composition is not known, though explanations have been attempted (see note 9 below).

The individual histories of the two versions in the decades that followed the exhibition at the Salon of 1800 are equally obscure. One of them, possibly the Rothschild version, was sold in an anonymous sale in Paris, 18 December 1826, as lot 140 (HARRISSE 1898, 77, no. 19). The sellers, according to LUGT (1953, 2: no. 11316) were Prince Galitzin and a London firm of art dealers, Delamotte and Emerson, with Me. Determes acting as auctioneer. This sale offers the last glimpse of either picture prior to the reemergence of the Rothschild version in 1893 (see note 5 above). Mireur (*Dictionnaire des ventes d'art*, 7 vols. [Paris, 1911], 1:268) reports a sale of an *Atelier de peintre* by Boilly in a Prince Galitzin sale, 15 April 1863, but this seems to be an error, since that sale included only drawings (see LUGT, 2: no. 27263).

7. Paris 1930 (see Exhibited), 22, no. 58, lent by André Vincent and listed in the catalogue as *Les Jeunes Artistes*.

8. HARRISSE 1898, 77, no. 19.

9. Neither the obscurity of the picture's early provenance nor the existence of two nearly identical versions is exceptional in Boilly's work. Not a few of his paintings have come to light only in recent times, and of several there exist two or more replicas. An attempt to explain the late emergence of *A Painter's Studio* from its long invisibility was made by William P. Campbell in 1954 (notes in NGA curatorial files), who suggested that this version of the subject may have been owned at an early date by the history painter François-André Vincent (1746–1816), who is known to have been acquainted with Boilly as a fellow member of the Société des Amis de l'Art, founded in 1789. Campbell raised the possibility that the André Vincent who owned the picture in 1930 was a descendant of the history painter and that the picture remained in the private ownership of the Vincent family until its sale to Chester Dale in 1933. He further ventured that “the girls in the painting were the daughters of the painter Vincent and for that reason the painting had remained in the family.” To support these conjectures, he pointed to what he believed to be evidence that the “Vincent family seems to have been strongly associated with Boilly,” including the activities of various collectors, dealers, and auctioneers bearing the fairly common name of Vincent who in the course of the nineteenth century owned or sold works by Boilly. But there is no evidence that any of these dealers and collectors were actually related to the painter François-André Vincent who was acquainted with Boilly. Vincent, who married at an advanced age, left no children. The André Vincent who owned *A Painter's Studio* in 1930 and sold it in 1933 is described in the Chester Dale papers of that date (NGA curatorial files) “as the directeur of the bankrupt Banque Nationale de Crédit.”

10. See Marmottan 1913, 89; Mabile de Poncheville 1931, 106–107.

11. Oil on canvas, 71.5 × 111 cm, Louvre, RF 129obis. HARRISSE 1898, 75, no. 13; Siegfried 1995, 97–101, color fig. 69.

12. Oil on canvas, 88 × 115 cm. HARRISSE 1898, 79–80, no. 29; Siegfried 1995, 101–105, color fig. 79.

13. Among Boilly's other studio scenes dating from about 1785–1800 are a) *The Young Artist (Intérieur d'atelier de peintre)*, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (see fig. 4 and note 23 below); b) *La Jeune Artiste*, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Mass., oil on canvas, 40.8 × 32.5 cm. HARRISSE 1898, 114, no. 340; Siegfried 1995, 175, color fig. 159, here identified questionably as *The Artist's Wife in His Studio*; c) *La Jeune Artiste*, location unknown, oil on canvas, 50 × 40 cm. HARRISSE 1898, 114, no. 341, "Vêtue d'une robe de soie blanche, elle est assise dans un fauteuil, devant son chevalet, et tient sa palette. Une guitare, une boîte à couleurs et différents objets sont posés à terre"; d) a smaller version of the same subject, location unknown, oil on canvas, 31 × 24 cm. HARRISSE 1898, 114, no. 342; and e) *The Painter in Her Studio* (Salon of 1796), Staatliches Museum, Kunstsammlungen Schlösser und Gärten, Schwerin (Germany), oil on canvas, 63 × 56 cm. HARRISSE 1898, 97, no. 152; Siegfried 1995, 174, color fig. 149.

14. This error, first published in the catalogue of the comtesse Robert de Fitz-James sale, 4 June 1903 (lot 1, the Rothschild version), was retained by Mabile de Poncheville 1931, 106–107.

15. As their portraits in *Studio of a Sculptor: Picture of a Family* make clear (see note 12 above, Siegfried 1995, 104, fig. 79).

16. Her left-handed companion, however, seems to have been based on studies from life and does not recur in other paintings. A chalk drawing, in a private collection, which shows a girl of very similar appearance, facing to the left and holding a pencil in her right hand, evidently pictures the same model (Lille 1989, 104–105, no. 34). She has been dubiously identified as Boilly's daughter, but this is extremely unlikely. Six children were born of the artist's first marriage (1787–1794), three of whom, including his only daughter of that marriage, died at an early age between June and October 1795 (de la Monneraye 1929, 20 and 27; Mabile de Poncheville 1931, 80).

17. Oil on canvas, 33 × 27 cm, Musée du Château, Boulogne-sur-Mer. HARRISSE 1898, 107, no. 265; Lille 1989, 118, repro. 119; Siegfried 1995, 146.

18. Oil on panel, 23.5 × 32 cm. Dated 1807 and exhibited at the Salon of 1808 (no. 55), the picture's present location is not known. Siegfried 1995, 13, fig. 6.

19. Oil on canvas, 75 × 94 cm. Exhibited at the Salon of 1812 (no. 108). HARRISSE 1898, 82, no. 37; Siegfried 1995, 134–143, figs. 116 and 122.

20. Oil on paper applied to canvas, oval format, 18 × 15.5 cm. Lille 1989, repro. 118.

21. Boilly's son, Julien, in a letter written in 1847, remembered his father's preoccupation with optical de-

VICES: "très laborieux, et toujours occupé chez lui, soit de son art, soit de chambres noires et d'optique, amusement sérieux auquel il consacra un très long temps, et où il avait trouvé des perfectionnements singuliers" (Benisovitch 1958, 366). An inventory of Boilly's belongings, drawn up after the death of his first wife in 1794, included "une vieille chambre noire," i.e., a camera obscura (de la Monneraye 1929, 26).

22. Among the objects in *A Painter's Studio* that recur in other paintings are the small plaster casts of Houdon's *écorché* and of the Medici Venus, both of which also appear in the Moscow *Studio of a Young Artist* (see note 25 below), and again, in larger scale, in both versions of *Studio of a Sculptor (The Studio of Houdon)*, the one at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris (note 12 above) and the later variant in the Musée Thomas-Henry, Cherbourg. The terracotta vase in the style of Clodion, with handles in the shapes of ram's heads, that stands at the foot of the easel in the NGA's picture is also to be found in each of these other paintings. The inventory taken of Boilly's possessions in 1795 mentions several "figures en plâtre" and a terracotta relief by Clodion (de la Monneraye 1929, 22 and 25); Boilly's studio sale in 1829 also included a terracotta by Clodion; *Catalogue du précieux cabinet des tableaux des écoles hollandaises, flamandes et françaises de M. Boilly* [auction cat. Salle Lebrun.] (Paris, 13–14 April 1829). Finally, the armchair in which the younger of the two artists in the NGA's painting is seated seems to be the same as the one in which Houdon's wife is shown in *Studio of a Sculptor*, though Boilly has changed the color of its velvet upholstery from green to red in the latter picture.

23. Oil on canvas, 40.5 × 32 cm. HARRISSE 1898, 90, no. 84; Siegfried 1995, 2, fig. 3. The picture's early date is confirmed by the fact that it was sold in Paris, Salle Lebrun, 9 December 1788, lot 271.

24. Franklin W. Robinson, *Gabriel Metsu* (New York, 1974), 168, fig. 116. Boilly owned a small collection of Netherlandish and French paintings. According to a note written in 1847 by his son Julien: "Il était, comme tous les vrais artistes, amateur et connoisseur en peinture, et posséda longtemps une collection, peu nombreuse mais exquise, de tableaux flamands" (Benisovitch 1958, 371 note 11). Boilly's collection was dispersed in his studio sale in 1829; see note 22 above.

25. Staatliches Museum, Kunstsammlungen Schlösser und Gärten, Schwerin; see note 13, under e.

26. Oil on canvas, 63 × 57 cm, formerly Yusupov collection, Arkhangelskoye (bought in Paris between 1808 and 1811 by Nikolai Yusupov). Not catalogued by HARRISSE. Irina Kuznetsova, *French Painting from the Pushkin Museum, 17th to 20th Century* (New York, 1979), color pl. 79; Siegfried 1995, 177, fig. 152.

27. Boilly himself was among the artists who maintained a teaching studio. The inventory taken of his apartment in 1795 describes one of its rooms as "une pièce... servant d'atelier [*sic*] aux élèves du Cn. Boilly" (see de la Monneraye 1929, 21). Its extremely simple furnishings did not resemble those shown in any of

his studio pictures, nor is it known whether his pupils included women.

28. Delécluze 1855, 33–44.

29. J.-F.-C. Blanvillain, *Le Pariseum, ou tableau de Paris en l'an XII* (Paris, 1804), 150.

30. Bruun-Neergard 1801 (as in note 4), 65.

31. *La Décade philosophique* (Paris, 1800, 1^{er} trimestre), 88.

32. HARRISSE 1898, 77, no. 19.

33. Siegfried 1995, 177.

References

1942 Dale: 18, repro.

1944 Dale: 18, repro.

1953 Dale: 22, repro.

1958 Benisovitch: 370, repro. 369 (the picture's date is mistakenly given as "an 13" [1804] on p. 371, in evident confusion with that of *The Studio of Floudon* in Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris).

1965 NGA: 15.

1965a Dale: 23, repro.

1968 NGA: 9, repro.

1973 Wilenski: 155.

1975 NGA: 32, repro.

1985 NGA: 50, repro.

1995 Siegfried: 177, color fig. 151.

1963.10.2 (1666)

Caroline Mortier de Trévisé

c. 1810–1812

Oil on fabric, 22.3 × 16.5 (8¾ × 6½)

Chester Dale Collection

1963.10.3 (1667)

Malvina Mortier de Trévisé

c. 1810–1812

Oil on fabric, 22.2 × 16.6 (8¾ × 6½)

Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: Both paintings are executed on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, subsequently lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cut off both paintings. The supports of both have been prepared with a moderately thick white ground. X-ray and infrared examination reveal no signs of underdrawing or design changes. The paint is applied smoothly and tightly, with low impasto visible in the costumes of the sitters. The surfaces of both portraits are covered with a varnish that has yellowed and cracked since it was applied following treatment in 1964. The paintings are

well preserved, with no paint loss. Retouching is confined to a few strokes in the sitter's face in 1963.10.2 and a few areas of the background in 1963.10.3.

Provenance: Jacques-Victor, comte de la Béraudière [1808–1884], château de Bouzille, near Angers, France; his son, comte de la Béraudière, château de Bouzille; his widow, Marie-Thérèse, comtesse de la Béraudière, Paris; (her sale, American Art Association, New York, 11–13 December 1930, no. 9 [day one]); purchased by (H. E. Russell) for Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

THE YOUNG GIRLS in the two portraits are similarly dressed in white, high-waisted gowns of pleated muslin, with open collars and short sleeves. Their short, straight hair is parted in the middle and brushed over their temples. They wear no jewelry of any kind. Boilly has differentiated their faces and expressions with great subtlety. The slightly older girl, her bust turned to the right, her face frontal, her eyes glancing to the left, has features that seem set in a prematurely adult cast in contrast to her still infantile body. Her round-cheeked younger sister has preserved the robust, unruffled wholeness of early childhood.

The portraits are believed to represent the two daughters of Marshal Adolphe-Edouard-Casimir-Joseph Mortier (1768–1835). One of the most battle-tested officers of the Napoleonic armies, Mortier had won his laurels in the wars waged by the governments of the Revolution, the Directory, and the Consulate. In 1804 he was in the first contingent of marshals created by Napoleon, who, four years later, raised him to ducal rank as duc de Trévisé. After Napoleon's fall, Mortier served the government of the restored Bourbons and, following the Revolution of 1830, that of Louis-Philippe. He was killed, in 1835, in Giuseppe Maria Fieschi's attempt on Louis-Philippe's life.

Mortier married in 1799. His wife bore him seven children,¹ among them four daughters of whom Caroline (1800–1842)² and Malvina (1803–1833)³ were the eldest. In Boilly's portraits they appear to be about twelve and nine years old respectively. This would suggest a date about 1810–1812, which agrees with the style of the dresses they wear.

The dwindling of art patronage during the Revolution initially compelled Boilly to capitalize on his gift for seizing likenesses.⁴ Throughout much of his long life, portraiture remained his chief



Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Caroline Mortier de Trévise*, 1963.10.2



Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Malvina Mortier de Trévise*, 1963.10.3

livelihood. Looking back, in his late sixties, he estimated that he had painted more than five thousand portraits,⁵ nearly all in the small size of about 23-by-17 centimeters that he had adopted as his standard, and invariably limited to the head and bust, without hands, and giving disproportionate size to the head. Boilly required only a single two-hour session for each portrait, a fact that he advertised,⁶ knowing that it contributed to his popularity with a mainly middle-class clientele. Despite the rapidity of his work and an almost industrial productivity, he achieved remarkably insightful and candid likenesses of his sitters, subtly using the painterly opportunities that costumes, hats, and coiffures offered him to improve on their often commonplace physiognomies.

Children's portraits are relatively rare in Boilly's vast output, though he was well able, as these two portraits prove, to do justice to the early, faint signs of emergent individuality in children's faces: despite similarities in costume and hairstyle, closeness in age, and an underlying family resemblance, his portraits of the two young Trévisé sisters exhibit clearly distinct characters.

Notes

1. Louis Chardigny, *Les Maréchaux de Napoléon* (Paris, n.d. [c. 1990]), 226–227, 464.

2. Caroline Mortier married the marquis de Rumigny in 1819 by whom she had six children (Col.

Frignet Despréaux, *Le Maréchal Mortier, duc de Trévisé*, 2 vols. [1918], 1:431).

3. Malvina was named after the heroine of the Ossianic poem by the choice of Napoleon, an admirer of Macpherson's pseudo-epic, who served as godfather at her baptism. She married Charles Certain, comte de Bellozanne, by whom she had three children; after his death she married the comte de Naives (Frignet Despréaux 1918, 1:431; and *Almanach de la noblesse* [Paris, 1875], 109).

Mortier's daughters next in age, Louise (b. 1811) and Eve (b. 1814), cannot have sat for these portraits in which the hairstyle and costumes are of an earlier date.

4. In his autobiographical sketch, written in 1828, Boilly remarked: "Dans le temps de la Révolution, les amateurs étant disparus, M. Boilly fut forcé de faire des portraits" (quoted in Benisovitch 1958, 371).

5. In his autobiographical sketch of 1828 (Benisovitch 1958, 368), Boilly, speaking of himself in the third person, states with pride: "il prouve par plus de cinq mille portraits qu'il a fait qu'il a des droits à cette réputation et à la confiance qu'on lui a accordé et qu'on lui accorde encore."

6. At the Salon of 1800, where he exhibited several of his small portraits as parts of one entry (no. 39), he took care that the catalogue referred to them as "faits chacun en une séance de deux heures" (*Explication des ouvrages de peinture et dessins, sculpture, architecture et gravure, des artistes vivans* [Paris, An VIII {1800}], 15, no. 39).

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- | | |
|------|-------------------------|
| 1965 | Dale: 24 and 25, repro. |
| 1965 | NGA: 16. |
| 1968 | NGA: 9, repro. |
| 1975 | NGA: 32, repro. |
| 1985 | NGA: 51, repro. |

Jules-Louis-Philippe Coignet

1798–1860

JULES-LOUIS-PHILIPPE COIGNET studied with the influential neoclassical landscape painter Jean-Victor Bertin (1767–1842) and in 1821 was among the competitors for the Rome Prize in Historical Landscape. From 1824 until 1857 he regularly exhibited at the Paris Salon, winning a gold medal in 1824 with *View of the Gulf of Salerno* (lost). A constant traveler in search of picturesque motifs, not unlike his contemporary Corot, he carried his explorations as far as Egypt and Syria. Although he had begun as a painter in the tradition

of the composed, "historical" landscape, his Salon submissions were for the most part topographical views, based on oil studies painted out-of-doors. In these studies, the raw material from which he developed his exhibition pieces, he showed himself a fluent colorist, sensitive to effects of light and atmosphere: in short, a naturalist, whose painterly, observation-based work contains no trace of neoclassical stylization. Unlike other landscapists formed, like himself, in the school of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes (1750–1819), Bertin,

and Achille-Etna Michallon (1796–1822), he did not construct his landscapes piecemeal by an addition of parts but aimed from the outset for the entire image. His preliminary studies from nature already present encompassing views of the chosen sites in their proper illumination. In his finished paintings, his reliance on direct experience allowed him to dispense with the fictions by which other painters sought to heighten the significance of their landscapes. His Salon submissions contained no mythical or historical motifs. Though he was partial to evocative sites, as exemplified by one of his most successful works, *Temple of Poseidon* (1844, Neue Pinakothek, Munich), he rarely gave way to romantic exaggeration. It may have been this abstinence from both classicist elevation and romantic drama that caused his paintings to be slighted by the critics, despite his popularity with the middle-class public in France and Germany. A prolific and careful draftsman, Coignet produced a large body of pencil drawings (many of them now at the Musée d'Art of Clermont-Ferrand) that deal in a fairly prosaic way with topographic views and landscape details such as trees, shrubbery, and rocks. Some of these were intended for lithographic reproduction in the books on landscape that Coignet published.¹

Notes

1. *Cours complet de paysage and Vues pittoresques d'Italie d'après nature* (Paris, 1825).

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1994.52.1

View of Bozen with a Painter

1837

Oil on paper laid down on fabric, 31 × 39 (12 1/4 × 15 3/8)
 Gift of Mrs. John Jay Ide in memory of Mr. and Mrs.
 William Henry Donner

Inscriptions

With the handle of the brush into the wet paint, at bottom left: *Botzen*. 1837

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a sheet of thin tan wove paper, prepared with an off-white ground and much later mounted onto stretched fabric. The vertical brushstrokes with which the ground was applied are visible in the X-radiograph. Infrared reflectography reveals an underdrawing that defines the mountains with contours that deviate considerably from those followed in the final execution. This dark blue penciled underdrawing is visible in normal light, in the sky at the left, where mountains have been drawn in but not painted. The paint is thinly and smoothly applied in the sky, with slight impasto in the highlights of the mountains, and a slightly thicker application in the figure and in elements of the immediate foreground. There is an 8-cm repaired tear at the top right, a 14-cm complex tear in the mountains at the right, and a retouched paint loss at the extreme top right corner. A 1998 conservation treatment removed a discolored varnish and flattened lifting paint along the edges of the tears. The painting is covered with a clear varnish applied following that treatment.

Provenance: Art market, France. (Galerie Fischer-Kiener, Paris); sold November 1991 to Mrs. John Jay Ide, San Francisco.

SHADED by a sun umbrella, a painter sits on a rocky height overlooking the valley of the Talfer river. The view ranges southeastward. Far below appear the houses of Bozen (Bolzano), the provincial capital of the South Tirol, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Nearby, at the lower right, the tower and roofs of the castle of Maresch emerge from clusters of trees. On the opposite side of the valley rise the heights, one above the other, of Haselburg, Virglwarte, and Kohlern.¹ The haze of summer midday veils the distance.

Coignet traveled in Switzerland and the Austrian South Tirol in the summer of 1837, painting landscape studies on which he later based paintings exhibited at the Salons of 1838 and 1839. Among the six landscapes that he showed at the latter Salon was *Vue de Botzen, dans le Tyrol; effet du milieu du jour* (location unknown)² for which this study may have served as the model.

Notes

1. According to information in NGA curatorial files, furnished by the Geographical Institute, Abteilung Landeskunde, of the University of Innsbruck, courtesy of Maria Haffner.

2. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure, et lithographie des artistes vivans exposés au Musée Royal, le 1 Mars 1839* (Paris, 1839), 43, no. 372.

Jules Coignet, *View of Bozen with a Painter*, 1994.52.1





Jules Coignet, *View of Lake Nemi*, 1994.52.2

1994.52.2

View of Lake Nemi

1843

Oil on paper laid down on fabric, 27 × 36 (10^{5/8} × 14^{3/16})
Gift of Mrs. John Jay Ide in memory of Mr. and Mrs.
William Henry Donner

Inscriptions

With the handle of the brush into the wet paint, at lower left: *Nemi* 1843

Technical Notes: The painting was executed on a piece of paper while tacked to a board, as pinholes in its corners indicate. The deckled edge of the paper is visible in the X-radiograph along the bottom and left edges, indicating the piece was cut from a larger sheet, of which this was the bottom left corner. It was later lined onto fabric and mounted on a keyed butt-join wooden stretcher. Although it is not clear whether this was done by the artist or someone else at a later date, the very old stretcher with the stamp of the Paris colorman Cesar Guichandras suggests it may be the original presentation. A thin off-white ground was applied to the paper with vigorous vertical strokes, whose strong texture in the X-radiograph prevents identifying whether the paper is laid or wove. Infrared reflectography reveals some traces of a quick penciled underdrawing in the foliage at the lower left. The paint has been thinly and fluidly applied with little body. A thin, clear varnish covers the painting. There are small tears at the bottom center and right, as well as some damage at the top left.

Provenance: Art market, France. (Galerie Fischer-Kiener, Paris); sold November 1991 to Mrs. John Jay Ide, San Francisco.

THE VILLAGE of Nemi, some twenty kilometers southeast of Rome, is perched on a steep cliff above the east shore of Lake Nemi, which fills the crater of an extinct volcano. Coignet's view, looking southward from the wooded slopes north of the village, shows Nemi surmounted by the tower of its castle, owned at the time by a Prince Rospigliosi. The memorable silhouettes of this tower and cliff figure in innumerable views by landscape painters of the early nineteenth century who, following a time-honored itinerary, walked from Frascati, via Marino, Albani, Ariccia, and Genzano, around the southern shore of the circular lake to arrive at Nemi. Coignet's sketch is of broad but characteristically uniform execution, giving it the appearance of a fully realized picture.

Coignet traveled in Italy in 1843, visiting Rome and continuing thence to the Holy Land, where he was at work by 1844. When he painted at Nemi in the summer of 1843, Corot, with whom Coignet was acquainted, worked at Genzano on the lake's opposite shore, an hour's walk distant.¹

Notes

1. Galassi 1991, 217, 219, fig. 275.

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot

1796–1875

JEAN-BAPTISTE-CAMILLE COROT, born in Paris in 1796, was the son of a prosperous draper and of a mother well known as a fashionable modiste in the years of the Empire and the Restoration. The infant was put in the care of a nurse in a village near L'Isle-Adam on the Oise river, where he grew into a sturdy and cheerful country boy. After grammar school in Paris, he attended a lycée in Rouen (1807–1812) under the guardianship of M. Sennegon, a quiet man and lover of nature, who often took him on meditative evening walks. Two further years in a boarding school near Paris concluded his formal studies, which, though far from

brilliant, left him with a predilection for classical literature and its values of harmony and style.

His tastes inclined him to art, but his father wanted him to become a merchant. Apprenticed to a draper, Corot demonstrated his incompetence for business. Placed in another firm, under an indulgent manager, he proved employable as a delivery boy, though much given to admiring the sky and loitering at shop windows. To satisfy his appetite for work with pencil and brush, he enrolled in evening sessions at the private Académie Suisse, where, for a fee, he could draw the posing model.

When in 1822, aged twenty-six, he was still without a profession, his parents despaired of his fitness for moneymaking and settled an annuity on him that allowed him to go his own way. He found a studio near his parents' shop and took instruction from a painter of his own age, Achille-Etna Michallon (1796–1822), laureate of the Rome Prize for Historical Landscape in 1817, who had recently returned from Rome. Corot sketched with Michallon in the environs of Paris, but their work together ended when Michallon died in September 1822. He next turned to Jean-Victor Bertin (1767–1842), a more rigorous classicist, who in the course of three years thoroughly initiated him to his methods, but from whom Corot had the wit to absorb only what suited his own vision. He set up his easel on the quays of Paris, sketched from nature in Normandy, in the forest of Fontainebleau, and at Ville-d'Avray, where his parents owned a country house. His early development was rapid and sure. The studies from 1822–1825 already contain, in their modest directness and lucidity, the essence of his personal style.

To further his education, he started in the fall of 1825 on the obligatory voyage to Italy. Arriving in the rainy Roman winter, he began with studies of street people whom he posed casually in his room at the Spanish Steps. In his small, candidly direct pictures of Italian folk he avoided the picturesque or sentimental conventions then in vogue among his French colleagues, who in their turn regarded him with friendly condescension. Rome's art treasures did not greatly interest him. He spent little time in the churches and galleries but was drawn to the Roman townscape with its tawny brickwork under azure skies. In the spring of 1826 he worked daily in the Farnese Gardens painting the prospect of Roman ruins spread before him in the slanting light of morning or afternoon. With an instinctive sense of arrangement, conditioned by the lessons of his former teachers, he gave his studies a seemingly natural harmony and balance, responding as much to the light and atmosphere of these views as to their material features. In the fair-weather months of 1826 and 1827, he searched the environs of Rome for motifs, and found one, the bridge at Narni, on which he based the picture with which he made his debut at the Paris Salon of 1827 (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa). After further excursions and a visit to

Naples, he left Rome in September 1828 and returned to Paris by way of Venice. Back in France, he settled into an annual routine of travel and open-air sketching in spring and summer, followed by winter work in the studio to elaborate his sketches into exhibitable compositions. The outbreak of revolution in July 1830 briefly disturbed his rounds, sending him for shelter to Chartres, where he accomplished one of the most serene of his architectural landscapes, *Chartres Cathedral* (Louvre).

Corot understood that to be noticed on the crowded walls of the Salon he must work on an impressive scale and introduce interesting subject matter into his foregrounds. Using studies gathered in Italy and in the forest of Fontainebleau, he composed landscapes of increasingly large size for exhibition, enlivening their foregrounds with rustic genre motifs. His first success came at the Salon of 1833, where his *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau* (location unknown), reminiscent of John Constable's (1776–1837) *Hay Wain* (exhibited in Paris in 1824, National Gallery, London), won a silver medal. His simple landscapes nevertheless attracted little notice and no purchasers. To give his work something of the prestige of "historical" landscape, Corot in 1834 introduced a biblical motif, a meditating Magdalene, into the composed landscape of unusually large size that he sent to the Salon of that year, the National Gallery's *Forest of Fontainebleau* (see pp. 29–36).

In May 1834 he set out on a six-month tour of northern Italy, traveling along the Mediterranean coast to Genoa, Pisa, and Volterra, and continuing to Florence and Venice. His studies from this second Italian voyage, fewer in number, are larger and more richly furnished than those of his first stay. Back in France, he resumed his effort to go beyond pure landscape in his Salon exhibits by giving them a narrative content. His yearly submissions to the Salons, starting with *Hagar in the Wilderness* (1835, MMA) and continuing through the end of the 1830s with *Diana and Actaeon* (1836, also MMA), *Saint Jerome in the Desert* (1837, church, Ville-d'Avray), *Silenus* (1838, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts), and *Flight into Egypt* (1840, church, Rosny-sur-Seine), gradually gave him visibility as a painter of "historical" landscape. Classicist training and an innate disposition enabled him to integrate various studies in one well-ordered design,

without strain or recourse to formulas. His *View near Volterra* of 1838 at the National Gallery (see pp. 39–44), blending earlier landscape studies with discreet borrowings from the masters, preserves the freshness of observed reality.

Until his mid-forties, Corot, still dependent on his parents who fondly regarded him as a talentless amateur, lived on his small allowance, cheerfully productive despite the public's indifference. But among artists he was beginning to find admirers. The first signal of official recognition was given him at the Salon of 1840 when the government bought his *Le Petit Berger* (La Cour d'Or, Musées de Metz), an early example of what came to be known as his "lyrical" style. In May 1843 he departed on his third and last Italian voyage, traveling directly to Rome for a six-months' stay, during which he took excursions to Tivoli, Genzano, and Lake Nemi. In a number of the relatively few paintings from this journey—*The Gardens of the Villa d'Este (Tivoli)* (Louvre), a study of early twilight, and *The Goatherd of Genzano* (The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.), an impression of hot sunlight—his naturalism attained its ultimate refinement.

On his return to Paris in 1844 he resubmitted his *Destruction of Sodom* (MMA) to the Salon from which it had been rejected the year before and had the satisfaction of seeing it hung. The following year, he showed *Homer and the Shepherds* (1845, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Saint-Lô) in which the landscape setting, though based on a drawing from nature, is more artificial and poetically vague than the backgrounds of his earlier historical compositions. His *Forest of Fontainebleau* (exhibited as *Vue des gorges d'Apremont* at the Salon of 1846, MFA), by contrast, indicates the persistence of a robustly naturalist strain in his work, reflecting his encounters with Théodore Rousseau and Jules Dupré at about this time. In 1846 the government awarded Corot the cross of the Legion of Honor. Major state commissions now came to him, among them a large *Baptism of Christ* (1847, Saint-Nicolas de Chardonnet, Paris). When his father died in 1847, Corot interrupted his study travel to devote himself to his mother with whom he went to live at Ville-d'Avray. The Revolution of 1848 passed him by, as had that of 1830. At the jury-free Salon of that year he showed no fewer than nine paintings and received

a second-class medal. In 1851 his mother died. Corot, now orphaned at fifty-five, warded off loneliness by staying with hospitable friends in various parts of France. Between these adoptive homes he traveled in yearly rounds, combining landscape study with the pleasures of cordial domesticity.

Corot's work from this time on fell into three main categories: private studies from nature of landscape or of the human figure; historical compositions destined for the Salon; and work for sale—composed landscapes in hazily atmospheric settings for which there developed a strong demand. Studies from nature Corot usually secreted in his studio, to be seen only by friends. His *Port of La Rochelle* (1851, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven) is exceptional in being a finished study that he chose to show at a Salon (1852). For public exhibition he preferred narrative figural compositions on religious or literary subjects, such as his *Saint Sebastian Aided by the Holy Women* (1853, The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore), in which he placed figures of remarkable expressive vigor in shadowy dream landscapes that were only remotely derived from his nature studies, but perhaps owed something to his enjoyment of the theater and its scenery. For sale, he produced what came to be expected of him: harmonious arrangements of diaphanous trees, crepuscular skies, and distant sheets of water, nostalgic memories of favorite sites in Italy or France. The steady, rising demand for these landscape-poems by collectors and dealers tempted him into repetition. Soon, his own large output was augmented by a flood of vulgarizing imitations and forgeries.

The Universal Exposition of 1855, at which six of his paintings were shown, confirmed his popular success and won him a gold medal. Napoleon III put the official seal on the fashion for Corot's lyrical landscapes by purchasing his *Souvenir de Marcoussis* (1853, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) for his personal collection. Corot sometimes combined his "lyrical" manner with subjects taken from reality, composing foregrounds of feathery trees through which, as through a screen, he opened views into distances occupied by buildings as concrete and clearly defined as those in his early townscapes. The visual precision evident in such later paintings as *Mantes Cathedral* (c. 1865, Musée Saint-Denis, Reims), *The Bridge of Mantes* (c. 1868, Louvre), and

the National Gallery's *Ville-d'Avray* (pp. 57–60) proves that, despite his concessions to decorative or poetic effect, Corot had lost nothing of his keenness of observation.

Portraits and figure studies, painted on the side throughout his life, took on a new importance in his private work of the 1850s and 1860s. While in his imagined landscapes he cultivated a hazy indefiniteness, he went in the opposite direction in his paintings of the figure. Posing models in costume or in the nude, he stressed their physical presence, defining their bodies with sculptural vigor and their costumes with strong color. In 1866–1870 he suffered attacks of gout that forced him to curtail travel and outdoor work. Confined to his Paris studio, he painted landscapes from memory and posed models in portraitlike arrangements, sometimes on a monumental scale, as in the National Gallery's *Agostina* (pp. 61–67). In a series of interiors from 1865–1872, among them the Gallery's *Studio of the Artist* (pp. 68–74), he represented young women in Italian costume seated in his studio, in solitary meditation before an easel that holds one of his “lyrical” landscapes.

About 1870 he recovered his health and worked with undiminished energy, sustained by a robust constitution. Throughout the Franco-Prussian War and the siege of Paris (1870–1871), he remained at work in his Paris studio. The civil war of the Commune in 1871 drove him to the provincial quiet of Douai, where he painted a masterly townscape, *The Belfry, Douai* (1871, Louvre), as subtle in color and firm in handling as any of his architectural views of the 1830s. When peace returned, he resumed his migratory life, spending the year of 1872 in constant travel and outdoor painting. In his final years, his early, naturalist tendencies reasserted themselves in subjects taken from reality, such as his *Interior of Sens Cathedral* (1874, Louvre), which show that he preserved his clarity of vision and noble refinement of color to the end. He died on 22 February 1875 after a brief illness.

For half a century, Corot's fame rested entirely on his late, composed landscapes. His studies from nature remained largely unknown. A drastic reevaluation occurred after 1900, when critics, surfeited with the “poetic” manner, discovered his early sketches and judged their freshness preferable to the repetitiousness of the later compositions. Meanwhile, this estimate is itself being revised; the qual-

ities of Corot's best composed landscapes, no longer obscured by overfamiliarity, are being valued once again.

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1963.10.8 (1672)

Italian Peasant Boy

1825–1827

Oil on paper glued to canvas, 25.4 × 32.5 (10 × 12^{3/4})
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: Corot

Technical Notes: X-radiographs reveal that the image is painted on a roughly white-primed piece of paper, originally of rectangular shape and measuring about 22.3 × 28.9 cm, the top and bottom edges of which have suffered large losses (figs. 1 and 2). Tack marks, created before its adhesion to a lining fabric, follow the irregular contours of the paper. Surrounding this original painting on paper is a margin of unprimed paper precisely cut to silhouette its contours and repainted to create a more regularly shaped composition. Both paper systems were adhered to fabric, which was then further lined to a second fabric and mounted on a wooden stretcher.

Microscopic examination shows that the original piece of primed paper that contains the main image was painted with a palette different from that of the surrounding, unprimed silhouetting paper. An effort was

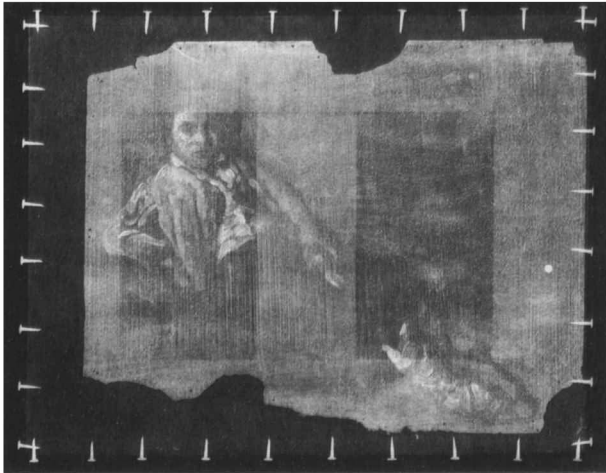


Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1963.10.8



Fig. 2. Diagram showing position of the original paper support within the enlarged picture surface

made to mask the borders between the original and the added marginal areas and to simulate, in the latter, the rough texture of the ground beneath the original painted paper. Infrared reflectography does not reveal any underdrawing, but it does show that the nose and mouth were moved slightly to the left from underpaint to final paint stage. The painting is covered with varnish that is uneven because it has been selectively thinned.

Provenance: Alexandre Blanc, Paris; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 3–4 December 1906, no. 39, 2,000 francs). (Moderne Galerie Heinrich Thannhäuser, Munich, by 1913 until at least 1916). Private collection, Germany, in 1927. (Galerie Etienne Bignou, Paris) by whom sold to (Chester Johnson Gallery, Chicago).

(John Levy Gallery, New York); by whom sold 4 February 1929 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MOMA, *Corot–Daumier*, 1930, no. 5, repro. Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, *Corot*, 1936, no. 4. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Corot*, 1936, no. 3. NGA and New York, Wildenstein & Co., *The Serene World of Corot*, 1942, no. 1, repro. NGA, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, 1965, unnumbered checklist.

COROT arrived in Rome in late November or early December 1825. During the rainy Roman winter he kept himself occupied painting studies of casually engaged models—country girls from Albano, street urchins, a Franciscan monk—posed artlessly in his little room near the Piazza di Spagna.¹ Studies of popular “types” were part of the normal self-training of aspiring landscape painters traveling in Italy. Corot’s former teacher, Achille-Etna Michallon, had painted many such studies during his stay in Rome in 1817–1821 and, like his contemporary Léopold Robert (1794–1835), had made every effort to secure authentic models, going so far as to obtain permission from the papal authorities to paint the bandits and their women imprisoned at the Termini.²

The twenty-five studies of Italian models that date from Corot’s first Italian voyage (1825–1828) were painted in his Roman studio or in some country lodging during his travels, most likely in the winter or at times when bad weather made outdoor work impossible.³ It is noteworthy that while some of Corot’s studies show an interest in picturesque costumes worn by young women, not a few feature old men, monks, or children—figures of no very pronounced local character. In selecting his models, he evidently acted without much choice, contenting himself with sitters who were both readily available and inexpensive. The surly little boy who with a bad grace posed for his study of an Italian peasant boy, resting on a paint box, with the easels and umbrellas he had been hired to carry leaning on the wall behind him, was at any rate neither especially picturesque nor strikingly Italian. Like the child that sat for the rather similar sketch of a boy wearing a top hat (fig. 3), which may have been painted before the Italian voyage,⁴ he was one of the little “slaves”⁵ whom Corot employed as carriers on his sketching tours and on days of bad weather used indoors as models. A boy



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Italian Peasant Boy*, 1963.10.8

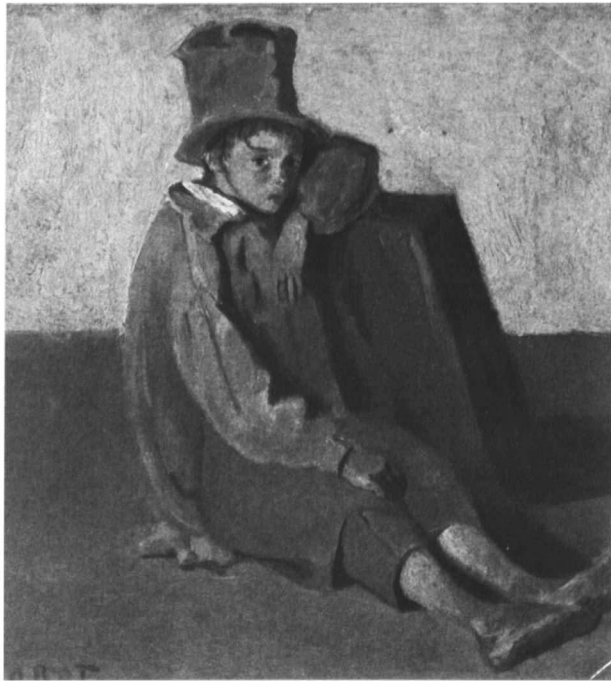


Fig. 3. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Boy Wearing a Top Hat* (*Jeune Garçon coiffé d'un chapeau haut de forme, assis par terre*), oil on canvas, 1827?, France, private collection

Fig. 4. Karl Blechen, *Shepherd Boy*, oil on canvas, c. 1828, Berlin, Stiftung Archiv der Akademie der Künste



of similar appearance and perhaps similar employment posed for the German painter Karl Blechen (1798–1840) in Rome during the winter of 1828–1829 (fig. 4).⁶

An unsigned study of an Italian peasant boy figured as no. 12, *Petit Italien assis étendu*, in the sale of the contents of Corot's studio, held after his death in 1875.⁷ A photograph taken of it in 1872 documents its appearance at the time (fig. 5).⁸ Robaut gave it an illustrated entry in his catalogue of Corot's work, under no. 57, as *Jeune Italien assis (dans la chambre de Corot à Rome)*.⁹ The picture passed through several private collections in the following decades.¹⁰ Its last public showing occurred in 1892, at the sale of the Dillais collection in Paris.¹¹ Thereafter it vanished into the obscurity of a private collection. Meanwhile there appeared at a Paris sale in 1906 a picture of the same subject, inscribed with Corot's name, and similar to the picture catalogued by Robaut, though of somewhat larger size.¹² This is the version that ultimately came to the National Gallery. The disappearance of the one followed shortly by the emergence of the other gave rise to some doubt whether Corot had actually painted two distinct, closely similar studies of the same subject: it seemed possible that the picture now in the National Gallery, which had turned up in 1906, was none other than the picture that had dropped from sight a little earlier, altered in the meantime by enlargements and retouches, some of them visible in its surface.¹³ This supposition gained further credibility when X-ray examination in 1990 of the picture's underlying, damaged paper support (see figs. 1 and 2) indicated that its dimensions, prior to apparently recent repairs, had been close to those reported by Robaut for the original study.¹⁴ The absence from the National Gallery's picture of the curious, barely legible inscription in the picture's background that Robaut had read in the original as "fait avec le pauvre Plumkett" seemed explicable as a deletion made in the course of those later repairs.¹⁵

But in 1995 the original study, not seen since 1892, suddenly reemerged in a French private collection from which it was acquired by the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Reims, making it possible to include it in the retrospective Corot exhibition of 1996.¹⁶ Still in the condition in which Robaut had described it (fig. 6), it proved the version in Wash-

ington to be a close replica and raised questions about the copy's authorship and date. Robaut, in discussing the original, had mentioned "the existence of several repetitions" but put none of them into his catalogue, except for one variant of the subject that transformed this studio portrait into a rustic genre scene showing the young Italian reclining in a landscape setting, as a shepherd guarding his flock.¹⁷ Robaut dated this adaptation to about 1855, which suggests that he considered some of these repetitions to be of much later date than the original, which he believed to have been painted in 1825–1826.

Though it has not been possible to trace it to an earlier date than 1906, and despite the fact that it was generally regarded as a second version, Corot's authorship of the National Gallery's *Italian Peasant Boy* seems never to have been doubted. But this acceptance can evidently apply only to the damaged fragment containing the figure in the middle of the picture's repaired and enlarged surface (see fig. 2), since the surrounding areas are additions made in the course of that later repair. These additions include the "signature" in the lower left corner, evidently supplied by the restorer of the copy to fill the space occupied in the original by the stamp of Corot's studio sale.¹⁸ A number of replicas by Corot of studies of peasants painted during his first Italian voyage are

Fig. 5. *Jeune Italien assis*, photograph taken by Charles Desavary, 1872, Paris, Archives du Musée du Louvre



Fig. 6. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Jeune Italien assis dans la chambre de Corot à Rome*, oil on paper mounted on canvas, c. 1825–1827, Reims, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 995.1, photograph by Devleeschauwer

known,¹⁹ though none quite so literal as that of *Italian Peasant Boy*. Robaut's claim that there existed several repetitions of this picture is therefore credible, and the fact that the fragmentary copy imbedded in the picture at the National Gallery is executed on prepared paper, the support Corot commonly used for sketching during his Italian stay, suggests that it may be contemporary with the original. The damaged state of this copy, however, makes a positive attribution hazardous. The close comparison with the original that is now again possible reveals differences, particularly in the boy's face—the curious cast of the mouth, the large nostril, the heavy cheek and chin—which can perhaps be blamed on the re-touching that the picture suffered during its restoration sometime before 1906.²⁰ But differences of handling, less readily explained, are also apparent in the articulation and modeling of the figure itself, in the treatment of the jacket, shirt, and hands, in all of which the original in Reims shows a decision and energy that the copy in Washington lacks. The decrease in quality, perhaps inevitable in a copy, does not rule out Corot's hand, but urges caution in following an attribution thus far unquestioned.

Notes

1. See Galassi 1991, 143–146.
2. For the figure studies painted in Italy by Michallon, see Vincent Pomarède et al., *Achille-Etna Michallon*, Les Dossiers du Musée du Louvre (Paris, 1994), 40–41, 122–126; for those of Robert, who often painted in Michallon's company, F. Feuillet de Conches, *Léopold Robert: sa vie, ses oeuvres et sa correspondance* (Paris, 1854), 39–47.
3. Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 57–64, 86–94, 104–113, 168. This total of 28 painted studies includes three repetitions, presumably painted after Corot's first Italian stay of 1825–1828.
4. Robaut 1905, 2: no. 56, *Jeune Garçon coiffé d'un chapeau haut de forme, assis par terre*, oil on paper, 21 × 22 cm; until recently (1987) in the Georges Renand collection, Paris. Relying on information given him by Corot, Robaut believed that this sketch was painted in 1822 or 1823, on an excursion in the forest of Fontainebleau. Lately, commentators have questioned this date in view of Corot's drawings from 1827 of similarly top-hatted Italian urchins shown carrying his landscaping gear (Toussaint 1975, no. 86; see also note 5 below).
5. The expression is Corot's own. His drawing of two small boys carrying painting equipment, drawn in 1827 on a sketching tour with his friend Léon Fleury (1804–1858), is inscribed by him, "l'esclave de Fleury à Ariccia" (Robaut 1905, 1: no. 40).
6. P. O. Rave, *Karl Blechen* (Berlin, 1940), 405, no. 1605, repro.
7. Corot sale 1875a, no. 12. The entry mentions "une ligne d'écriture sur le fond" and gives the dimensions as 23 × 29 cm.
8. The photograph by Charles Desavary (1837–1885), pupil and son-in-law of Corot's friend Constant Dutilleux, is one of some 600 photographs that Desavary took in 1872 at Alfred Robaut's request. Robaut's file of annotated photographs, the basis of his catalogue of Corot's work (1905), was formerly preserved in the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Dc.282.o 4to and Dc.282.t 4to), and is now in the archives of the Louvre (Département des Peintures). It contains important evidence of paintings subsequently altered, damaged, or lost. The photograph of the *Petit Italien assis étendu* bears the notation in Robaut's hand, "Le maître en a fait plusieurs copies (une chez Surville avec fond de paysage). Une réplique est vendue." The "copy" then in the Surville collection is the (lost) transformation of the study into an outdoor setting (see note 17 below).
9. Robaut (1905, 2:23, no. 57, repro.) gave its measurements as 24 × 30 cm.
10. The dealer Hector Brame, Paris, bought the picture for 620 francs in 1875 and sold it to Jules Paton, Paris. At the latter's sale (Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 24 April 1883, no. 34, 770 francs) it was bought by Charles Leroux, Paris. From the Leroux collection (sold at the Hôtel Drouot, 27–28 February 1888, no. 23, 350 francs) it was bought by the dealer Tempelaere who sold it to a Paris collector by the name of Dillais. It last appeared

at auction in the Dillais sale (Hôtel Drouot, 30–31 May 1892, no. 12), where it was sold for 2,000 francs.

11. In the Dillais sale catalogue, the picture is described: "Jeune modèle italien assis sur une malle dans l'atelier de Corot, à Rome," with dimensions given as 23 × 27 cm.

12. *Jeune Paysan de la Campagne romaine*, 25 × 32 cm, sold 3–4 December 1906 at the Galerie Georges Petit, Paris (*Catalogue des tableaux modernes; Collection de M. Alexandre Blanc*, 24, no. 39, repro.).

13. The picture's identification with the work catalogued by Robaut in 1905 as no. 57 seems not to have been questioned for some time. Meier-Graefe in 1913 and 1930 still identified it with Robaut 57, and so did the catalogue of the 1930 Corot–Daumier exhibition at MOMA in New York. At the time of his sale of the picture to Chester Dale, John Levy, of John Levy Galleries, New York, gave its provenance as the Paton, Leroux, and Dillais collections (invoice of 4 February 1929 in NGA curatorial files). That it was in fact not identical with the study published by Robaut, but a repetition, was first stated in the catalogue of the 1936 Corot exhibition in Paris, under no. 4.

14. The catalogue of the Corot sale (1875) gave the dimensions of the original study as 23 × 29 cm. At the Dillais sale (1892) they were given as 23 × 27 cm. Robaut later revised them to 24 × 30 cm. The present dimensions of the copy at the National Gallery, 25.4 × 32.5 cm, are the result, as X-radiographs show (fig. 1), of marginal enlargements and repairs, made sometime before 1906, that do not affect the central image. What still remains of the piece of primed paper on which the copy was painted measures 22.3 × 28.9 cm, smaller than Robaut's measurements of the original by only 1.7 cm in height and 1.1 cm in width, a difference easily accounted for by the trimming to which the original, badly damaged paper support was subjected when it was remounted to a larger fabric backing. Original and copy thus seem initially to have had the same dimensions.

15. An earlier reading of this barely legible inscription, in the catalogue of the Paton sale of 1883 (see note 10 above), gives it as: "Fait avec mon pauvre ami Bousotte." The name read by Robaut, "Plumkett," seems improbable. When he compiled his catalogue, he relied on the photograph taken by Desavary in 1872 (fig. 5) with which he illustrated his entry. In that photograph the inscription is extremely indistinct. If "Bousotte" is preferred, as being more likely, then it may be that the name intended is that of Bouchot, who was among Corot's acquaintances in Rome. François Bouchot (1800–1842), winner of the Rome Prize in 1823, was a pensioner at the French Academy at the time of Corot's Italian voyage. He was among the artists mentioned by Corot's friend the landscape painter Prosper Barbot as having participated in sketching tours in the vicinity of Rome in 1827 (see Galassi 1991, 242 notes 12 and 17). Whichever way the inscription is read, it is not likely to refer to the posing model but to the companion in whose presence Corot painted the picture.

16. Pantazzi, Pomarède, and Tinterow 1996, no. 18, color repro.

17. Though Robaut referred to "several repetitions of this study," he included only one in his catalogue (no. 58) as *Jeune Italien assis*, 30 × 40 cm, a picture now unlocated that last appeared in a sale in 1884. Dated by Robaut to "about 1855," that copy repeated the figure of the original sketch, placing it in an open landscape with a flock of sheep in the distance. No other repetitions have ever come to light.

18. The picture's entries in the early sales catalogues (Corot sale 1875a; Paton 1883; Leroux 1888; Dillais 1892) make no mention of a signature. The earliest mention occurs in the catalogue of the Blanc sale of 1906, which was also the first to describe and illustrate the picture in its present, enlarged format. According to a report by the NGA Painting Conservation Department (16 January 1990), "A signature inscription in the lower left corner reads 'COROT.' The first two letters, the 'C' and the 'O,' are written with a light, opaque pigment; whereas the following letters have been executed in a transparent, dark brown pigment."

19. Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 58, 87, 90, and 112.

20. The enlargement and partial repainting of the copy occurred before its appearance in the Blanc sale in 1906 (see note 12 above) when it was in its present condition. Its torn paper support (fig. 1) suggests that the reconstruction was intended to preserve the fragile, damaged picture. The extensive retouching, undertaken at the time to blend the newly added areas of paper with the color and texture of the copy, affected the upper part of the landscape on the wall behind the boy and other areas in the picture's background. In enlarging the area to the left of the boy, the restorer failed to continue the line that marks the juncture of wall and floor on the right side of the picture. Lesser retouches modified the contour of the boy's hat and left sleeve, and accentuated his pout. After the enlargement of the original paper along its irregularly torn bottom edge, Corot's signature was feigned, in the lower left corner of the new paper, in the place of a large loss in the earlier support.

References

- 1913 Meier-Graefe: 16, repro.
1913 Bierman, Georg. "Gemälde aus dem Besitz der Modernen Galerie Thannhäuser, München." *Der Cicerone* (1 May): 323, fig. 17.
1916 Hausenstein, Wilhelm. *Katalog der Modernen Galerie Heinrich Thannhäuser, München*, no. 29. Munich: pl. 14.
1924 *Camille Corot, Briefe aus Italien*. Leipzig: repro. opp. 80.
1930 Meier-Graefe: pl. 1.
1931 Teriade, C. "Jeunesse!" *Cahiers d'art*, no. 1: 18, repro.
1936 Faure, Elie. *Corot*. Paris: pl. 13.
1965a Dale: 35, repro.
1965 NGA: 30, repro.
1966 Leymarie, Jean. *Corot*. Geneva: 34, repro.

- 1968 NGA: 24, repro.
1972 Hours: 37, fig. 35.
1975 NGA: 76–77, repro.
1976 Walker: 432, no. 620, color repro.
1979 Leymarie, Jean. *Corot*. New York: 34, repro. (rev. English trans. of 1966 ed.).
1985 Hours, Madeleine. *Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot*. New York: 33, fig. 31.
1985 NGA: 96, repro.
1988 Selz: 64, repro.
1996 Pantazzi, Pomarède, and Tinterow: no. 18, color repro.

1963.10.109 (1773)

Forest of Fontainebleau

1834

Oil on fabric, 175.6 × 242.6 (69¹/₈ × 95¹/₂)

Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: The painting was executed on a heavy-weight, plain-weave fabric that was subsequently lined onto fabric. The original tacking margins are missing, but cusping at the edges, visible in the X-radiograph, indicate that the painting is very near its original dimensions. A thick white ground covers the fabric. Over this, a thin imprimatura of warm brown has been applied, on which the main forms of the composition were originally sketched out, initially in darker brown tones alternating with lighter passages of thicker, more pastose paint. This brown imprimatura shows through the thinly painted shadows, where it serves as a middle tone. Infrared reflectography does not reveal any underdrawing. The area adjacent to the lower left corner of the picture, which now contains the figure of the young woman reading, was extensively reworked by the artist. X-radiographs show foliage, small plants, and tufts of grass in place of this figure and of part of the surface of the stream behind her (fig. 1). There is also evidence that a tree trunk has been painted out farther to the right. It is apparent that the painting was begun as a pure landscape, with the figure added at a later stage in its execution. A network of drying craquelure, much of it disguised by retouching, is the only significant sign of deterioration in the otherwise good condition of the picture. A hazy, discolored varnish distorts the tonal relationships of the paint layer lying beneath it (1998).

Provenance: Louis-Alfred Binant [1823–1904], Paris, by 1855;¹ (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 20 April 1904, no. 18); purchased by (Bernheim-Jeune, Paris).² Léon Orosdi, Paris, sometime after 1913.³ (Galerie André Weil, Paris);⁴ (Etienne Bignou, Paris); by whom sold 25 June 1934 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Musée Royal des Arts, Salon, 1834, no. 974, as *Une Forêt*. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1875, *Exposition de l'oeuvre de Corot*, no. 138, as *Jeune Femme lisant près d'un cours d'eau entouré de rochers*. Paris, M. A. Binant, 70, rue Rochechouart, 1876, *Exposition de deux tableaux importants par Corot et Gustave Courbet*, no. 1, repro. Paris, Universal Exposition, 1889, no. 173, as *La Forêt de Fontainebleau*. Paris, Palais Galliera, 1895, *Exposition du centenaire de Corot*, no. 18. London, Grafton Galleries, 1908. Basel, Oeffentliche Kunstsammlung, 1913, no. 60. Zurich, Kunsthau, 1917, *Französische Kunst des XIX. u. XX. Jahrhunderts*, no. 58, from collection A. V., i.e., André Weil? NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist.

BETWEEN two opposing groups of trees that fill the canvas with their dark foliage, a deep vista opens like a river of light into the sunlit distance, where—a surprising touch—two deer are seen racing along the forest's edge. More distant still, barely visible on the far horizon, appears the minuscule silhouette of a third deer. A shallow body of water describes a wide curve between boulders overshadowed by ancient oaks. In the left foreground, precariously close to the picture's lower edge, lies a young woman wearing a loose-fitting dress, reading in a book. Her figure, couched on a patch of flowering weeds, is bathed in light brighter than that filtering through the foliage above her. The heavy, well-bound volume in which she reads has the look of a sacred text. She is evidently not a country girl on a Sunday stroll in the forest. Early commentators, expressing the sentiment of the time, and no doubt Corot's own intention, saw her as a "Magdalene in the Wilderness."⁵ Barefoot and lightly dressed, her bosom slightly exposed and her

red skirt a vivid accent amid the surrounding greenery and the darker gloss of the flowing water behind her, she is a puzzling presence in this setting. The smallness of her figure, somewhat out of proportion to the landscape elements around her, causes the nearby boulders and tree roots to appear unnaturally large. Nor does she, in her marginal position, fit very comfortably into the shape and perspective of the surrounding terrain. She appears as an insertion into the landscape, and X-ray examination confirms that Corot added her as an afterthought, painting her figure over what had originally been an area of shrubbery, flowers, and water (see Technical Notes, above).

Much confusion surrounds the history, and hence the proper title and date, of this painting, which in the literature of Corot has been variously identified with his Salon submissions of 1831, 1833, and 1834. Most commentators have taken it for the *Vue prise dans la forêt de Fontainebleau* that Corot showed at the Salon of 1831,⁶ though some early accounts also identified it as another picture of similar title, the *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau* with which he won a second-class medal at the Salon of 1833.⁷ The entry that Alfred Robaut devoted to the National Gallery's picture in his basic catalogue of Corot's work equivocally speaks of it as having been exhibited in either 1831 or 1834,⁸ when the Salon again included a landscape by Corot, titled simply *Une Forêt*.⁹ Robaut clearly preferred to identify it as the picture shown in 1831, and most modern authors, following his suggestion, have accepted as a fact that the National Gallery's *Forest of Fontainebleau* is the painting that was put on view at the Salon in May 1831, and therefore probably

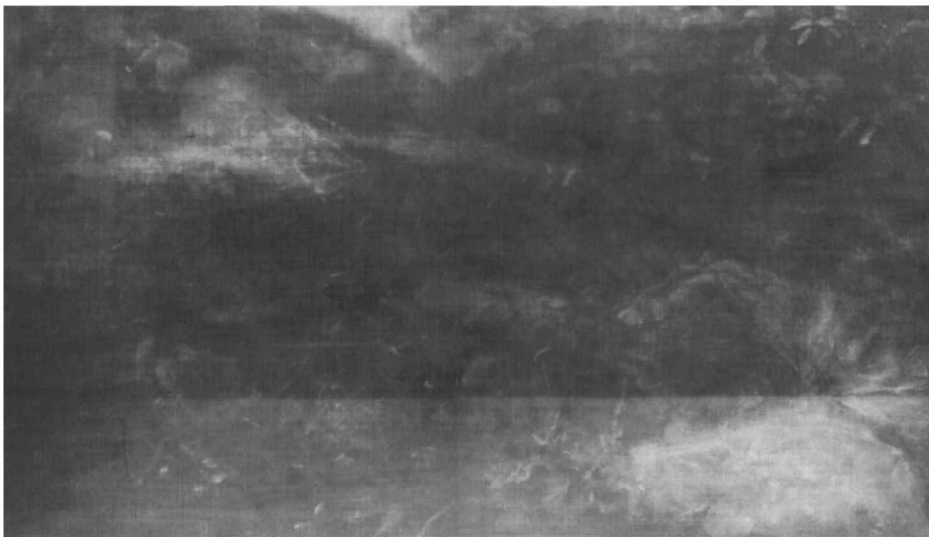


Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1963.10.109, detail of lower left area, showing foliage beneath the figure of the woman reading



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Forest of Fontainebleau*, 1963.10.109

painted sometime in 1830.¹⁰ But this can be proven to be an error. The Louvre's registers of the Salons of 1831, 1833, and 1834 in which the dimensions of the exhibited paintings are recorded indicate that Corot's Salon entry of 1831 was a small canvas, no more than a tenth the size of the landscape at the National Gallery.¹¹ *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau* shown in 1833 has meanwhile been firmly identified as another picture (fig. 2).¹² But the dimensions of the National Gallery's *Forest of Fontainebleau*, which correspond closely to the documented measurements of Corot's submission to the Salon of 1834, establish beyond reasonable doubt that it is the painting exhibited as *Une Forêt* in the Salon of that year.¹³

Not only does this fact determine its place in the chronology of Corot's work, but it also gives a clue to the picture's meaning. On the walls of the Salon, *Une Forêt* was paired with *Une Marine*, a view of the harbor of Rouen (fig. 3).¹⁴ Though this second painting was of somewhat smaller size, the two were evidently meant to be understood as counterparts: the landscape juxtaposed to the seaside view. But what chiefly linked them was their common dependence on Dutch models. *Une Marine* was intended as a Dutch subject, as Corot acknowledged in a letter written at the time: "I have started a marine of Rouen. It is on a five-and-a-half-foot canvas, and consists of small ships, with factories and cottages in the distance. If Ruisdael and Van de Velde should wish to help me, it wouldn't hurt a bit."¹⁵ In *Une Forêt*, Ruisdael's

"help" is very evident, justifying the observation of a contemporary critic, Etienne Delécluze, that Corot's Salon entries depended closely on "the use of devices borrowed from the Dutch school."¹⁶

Designed specifically for exhibition at the Salon, the National Gallery's *Forest of Fontainebleau*, which Corot himself called simply "A Forest," does not in fact represent a particular site¹⁷ but is a synthetic landscape, a gathering of individual motifs from different sources brought together into one "view." Though Corot did often sketch in the forest of Fontainebleau during the early 1830s,¹⁸ he based this Salon picture, his second effort at a landscape of such exceptionally large size,¹⁹ in part on memories of Jacob van Ruisdael's (1628/1629–1682) picturesque forest scenes (fig. 4),²⁰ in part on his own studies from nature, some of them recently gathered in France,²¹ others drawn in Italy some six or seven years earlier (fig. 5).²² Its compositional arrangement and the somber ruggedness of its vegetation, unusual in Corot's work, are deliberate reminders of the great Dutch landscape painter to whom French artists had begun to pay renewed attention after the success of John Constable's (1776–1837) Ruisdael-inspired *Hay Wain* (1821, National Gallery, London) at the Salon of 1824.²³ The splintered trunk of a beech, grazed by sunlight, that juts out from the shadow of the large oak at the right is a borrowing from Ruisdael.²⁴ Corot had already used this motif to great effect in his painting of the previous Salon, the prize-winning *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau* of 1833 (fig. 2). But



Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Vue de la Forêt de Fontainebleau, le gué*, oil on canvas, 1832, location unknown (Robaut 1905, 1: no. 257)



Fig. 3. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Les Quais marchands de Rouen* (*The Quay at Rouen*), oil on canvas, 1834, Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. D.951.2

for the tangled roots and branches that give the scene its aspect of wildly flourishing vegetation, Corot had recourse to some sketches of trees growing among boulders at the edge of a stream that he had drawn in the forests near Civita Castellana during his Italian stay (see fig. 5). Remarkably, no preparatory studies directly related to this large and ambitious composition have ever come to light.

Philippe Burty, writing in 1875, expressed the belief that it was the ruggedness of the setting that gave Corot the idea of placing “a Magdalene” in it,²⁵ the traditional image of a female hermit saint doing her solitary penance in the wilderness. The identification of this figure as the penitent Magdalene can at any rate scarcely be in doubt, in view of Corot’s similar treatment of this subject in paintings of later date that represent the Magdalene half-nude, reclining in a somber landscape, deeply absorbed in her reading.²⁶ His purpose in introducing this figure into what would otherwise have been a simple landscape, though one of unusually large dimensions, was to give his forest scene the interest of a narrative subject. A recognizable, quasi-historical theme, as he well knew, would

raise his picture in the hierarchies of the Salon to a rank superior to that of a mere landscape and would justify its size.²⁷ Corot’s earlier large exhibition pictures, shown at the Salons of 1827, 1831, and 1833, had been composed landscapes with foregrounds enlivened by ordinary genre staffage, Italian or French country folk at their everyday tasks. The *Forest of Fontainebleau* of 1834, with its discreet insertion of a religious subject, marks a turning point in his career: still predominantly a landscape of essentially realistic, “Dutch” character, little disturbed by the human presence, it points to his subsequent efforts to support the increasing monumentality of his Salon landscapes by the introduction of narrative contents and prominent figural compositions.²⁸ With it begins the great series of *historical* landscapes by which he attempted to win successes at the Salons of the following years: *Hagar in the Wilderness* (Salon of 1835, MMA), *Diana and Actaeon* (Salon of 1836, MMA), *Saint Jerome* (Salon of 1837, church, Ville-d’Avray), *Silenus* (Salon of 1838, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts), and *Flight into Egypt* (Salon of 1840, church, Rosny-sur-Seine).

The *Forest of Fontainebleau* also had another less



Fig. 4. Jacob van Ruisdael, *Woodland Morass with Travelers*, etching, 17th century, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 26.72.9



Fig. 5. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Rocks in the Forest, Civita Castellana*, pencil, 1826, Paris, Département des Arts Graphiques, Musée du Louvre, RF 5220, Photo RMN

immediate consequence for Corot's further work. It initiated the motif of the solitary reader in a landscape, which, divested of its original religious significance, later became in its own right one of his favorite "lyrical" subjects: the Magdalene of 1834 prefigures the *lisenses* that are shown, dreaming, in many of Corot's paintings of the 1850s and 1860s.²⁹

The ambitious size and dense detail of this studio-bred landscape confronted Corot with difficult problems that may have prevented him from giving his picture all the freshness of atmosphere and subtlety of light that he had achieved with little effort in smaller landscapes painted directly from nature. The picture, ignored by the reviewers of the Salon at the time, has since been criticized for what some have seen as its labored complexity. Etienne Moreau-Nélaton found it "artificial and cold" and thought that Corot's personality was not as yet fully apparent in it.³⁰ Julius Meier-Graefe dismissed it as an "inappropriately enlarged design" and blamed the seduction of the Salon for having distracted Corot from the simpler naturalism that was his real strength.³¹ Corot himself was of a different opinion. According to the critic Philippe Burty, "he often spoke of it to his friends as one of his works that he esteemed above all" and made an effort to buy it back from the collector who owned it, to bequeath it to the Louvre, where it would honorably represent him to posterity.³²

Notes

1. Robaut 1905, 2:90, no. 255.
2. Robaut 1905, 2:90, no. 255, *New York Herald*, 21 April 1904.
3. Chester Dale papers, in NGA curatorial files.
4. Chester Dale papers, in NGA curatorial files.
5. Philippe Burty attributed the figure's identification as Magdalene to Corot himself: "[Corot] se plaisait à designer [la jeune femme] comme une Madeleine" (Burty 1875, quoted in Binant 1904, 14, no. 18).
6. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture des artistes vivans* (Paris, 1831), 30, no. 400. This picture, now known to have been of much smaller dimensions (57 × 70 cm with frame, see note 11 below) than the large landscape at the NGA, is at present unlocated. A highly finished oil study, formerly in the George Renand collection, Paris, *Forêt de Fontainebleau—le Rageur* (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 266), representing a solitary oak standing in the rocky plain near Barbizon known as Le Dormoir, agrees in its dimensions and proportions (48 × 59 cm unframed) with those of Corot's Salon entry of 1831, suggesting that it may possibly be the picture exhibited that year.
7. Robaut 1905, 2:90, no. 257. Signed and dated 1832, Corot's prize-winning entry figured at the Salon of 1833 as no. 468. It subsequently came to be known by the title of *Forêt de Fontainebleau—le gué*. Its whereabouts since 1894, when it was sold by the Galerie Georges Petit, are unknown. Among the authors who mistook the picture now in the NGA for the work exhibited at the Salon of 1833 are Daliphard 1875, Burty,

in Paris 1876, and the anonymous cataloguer of the 1889 Universal Exposition, no. 173. It is noteworthy that this painting had nearly the same exceptionally large dimensions as the NGA's *Forest of Fontainebleau* exhibited the following year: 180×245 cm, according to Robaut. The register of the Salon of 1833 (Archives des Musées Nationaux, KK 27, Exposition de 1833, no. 138) records its dimensions, including frame, as 210×276 cm. The number 138 refers to the picture's place in the order of submissions, not to its listing in the Salon catalogue.

8. "A figuré soit au Salon de 1831, soit à celui de 1834 sous le titre *Une Forêt*." Elsewhere (1905, 4:167), Robaut lists the NGA's picture among the works shown at the Salon of 1831.

9. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture*, Musée Royal des Arts (Paris, 1834), 40, no. 371.

10. Among the authors who accepted the exhibition date of 1831 are Moreau-Nélaton (in Robaut 1905, 1:56), Bouyer 1909, Lafargue 1926, Meier-Graefe 1930, Dale 1941, Dale 1942, Engel de Janosi 1953, Novotny 1960, Walker 1976, Wissman 1989, Clarke 1991, and Pantazzi, Pomarède, and Tinterow 1996. Based on the Louvre's registers of the Salons, Toussaint 1975, 38–39, no. 28, first drew attention to the fact that the dimensions of the NGA's *Forest of Fontainebleau* prove that it is not the picture exhibited in 1831, but rather Corot's entry of 1834 (see note 13 below). This incontestable correction has been overlooked in all the recent literature.

11. Archives des Musées Nationaux, KK 26, Exposition de 1831. Enregistrement des ouvrages. No. d'ordre de réception: "1498. *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau*, hauteur: .57; largeur: .70" (with frame). Information kindly furnished by M. Silvain Laveissière of the Musée National du Louvre.

12. See note 7 above.

13. Its dimensions, including the frame, are given in the register of submissions to the Salon as 222×280 cm (87³/₈×110¹/₄ in.). See Archives des Musées Nationaux, KK 28, Exposition de 1834: "974. id. *Une Forêt*." The present measurements of the picture, without frame, are given in the data in the heading of this entry.

14. Robaut 1905, 2:90, no. 256. Exhibited at the Salon of 1834 under no. 373 as *Une Marine*, it now bears the title *Les Quais marchands de Rouen*. Robaut erroneously described it as bearing the date of 1832 at the lower left, but it is in fact dated 1834. According to the register of the Salon, it was submitted as no. 973, at the same time as *Une Forêt*, and its measurements, framed, were recorded as 133×190 cm (its actual measurements, unframed, are 110×173 cm). See also Toussaint 1975, 38, no. 28.

15. See Corot's letter of 26 February 1833, addressed to Achille Debray, quoted, not entirely correctly, in Toussaint 1975, 38, no. 28, and more exactly in Wissman 1989, 18. Corot's picture was in fact modeled on Ruisdael's *Damrak, Amsterdam* (Frick Collection, New York; see Walford 1991, 166, pl. 167). Concerning the larger question of Dutch influence on Corot's land-

scape painting of the period, see Chu 1974, 21–23, and Wissman 1989, 7–33.

16. *Journal des débats*, 4 May 1834, quoted by Miquel 1975, 2:19.

17. Burty 1875 (quoted in Binant 1904, 14–15) nevertheless claimed to recognize in the body of water in the foreground, toward the left, one of the ponds, or *mares*, that formerly existed in the forest, and in the distant, rocky eminence in the background of Corot's picture one of the familiar sights of the area, the hill flanking the so-called désert de Franchard near the eastern edge of the forest. He also pointed to the "characteristic color of the ferruginous sand along the path" in the picture's immediate foreground as evidence of Corot's topographical realism.

18. As is evident from the large number of drawings and painted studies of the forest and of the nearby, rock-strewn plains that date from this period (see Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 262–278; Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 1:29; and Baud-Bovy 1957, 87–89). All these studies were executed out-of-doors and appear entirely unaffected by the formulas of the classicist or Dutch landscape traditions on which Corot relied when working up his Salon pictures in the studio: "Je pars de bonne heure à la forêt; je rentre tard, un peu fatigué. . . Je cherche la nature des beaux chênes de la forêt. Je fais bien de m'en contenter; car il ne serait pas facile d'en chercher d'autre par ici. Plus tard, je m'en occuperai," Corot wrote from Chailly in July 1831 in a letter to his friend Abel Osmond (Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 2:153).

19. See note 7 and fig. 2 above.

20. On the influence of Ruisdael's woodland scenes on Corot's Salon landscapes of the early 1830s, see Chu 1974, 21–23, and Wissman 1989, 27–33. Chu noted the resemblance of the composition to Ruisdael's etching *The Great Beech, with Two Men and a Dog*. Wissman rightly observed that it resembled another etching by Ruisdael, *Woodland Morass with Travelers*, even more closely (fig. 4). Since these prints were more easily accessible to Corot than Ruisdael's actual paintings, they are the most likely to have had an immediate influence on him, as they are known to have had on John Constable (see R. B. Beckett, *John Constable's Correspondence*, 4 vols. [Ipswich, 1962], 2:8–9). The resemblance of Corot's Salon landscapes of 1833 and 1834 to Ruisdael's painted forest scenes is, however, close enough, both in general effect and in particular details, to suggest that Corot also had direct knowledge of paintings by Ruisdael.

21. Writing to Abel Osmond from Trois-Got near Saint-Lô in Normandy on 23 July 1833, Corot mentioned making studies of rocks and vines at the edge of a stream: "sous les arbres. . . des détails de rochers et de lierre, pour des premiers plans, d'une grande beauté. . . Et puis une étude de ces fragments de roches éboulées dans le ruisseau. . ." (Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 2:155). These studies, now apparently lost, may have served him, a little later, for the foreground of the NGA's *Forest of Fontainebleau*.

22. See particularly the pencil drawings *Civita Castellana, sous-bois avec rochers*, c. 1826 (Louvre, RF 5220, Robaut 1905, 4: no. 2505), and *Civita Castellana. Ruisseau* (1827, Louvre, RF 3405, Robaut 1905, 4: no. 2623). Engel de Janosi 1953, 391–392, first related these drawings to NGA 1963.10.109.

23. Corot's previous Salon entry, *Forêt de Fontainebleau—le gué* of 1833, closely paraphrased John Constable's *Hay Wain*. His painting of 1833 marks an important step in Corot's development, being his first landscape of very large dimensions and his first large landscape of definitely "Dutch" character (see Baud-Bovy 1957, 201–202). In both respects, it appears as the immediate precursor of the NGA's *Forest of Fontainebleau*.

24. On the prevalence and significance of the motifs of the dead tree and of the "stricken beech among thriving oaks" in the work of Ruisdael, particularly of the 1660s, see Walford 1991, 33–38, 133–140. There can be no doubt that the dead or damaged beech trees in Ruisdael's landscapes were intended as symbols of transience in the midst of nature's flourishing, but there is no reason to suppose that Corot invested them with the same meaning.

25. "Ce fut sans doute ce caractère de désert qui frappa aussi vivement Corot et qui l'amena à coucher une Madeleine sur le premier plan du site robuste qu'il avait choisi" (Burty 1875, quoted in Binant 1904, 15).

26. See *Madeleine lisant*, 1854 (Louvre, RF 1592, Robaut 1905, 2: no. 1036), and *The Magdalene Meditating*, 1855–1860 (Cortland Hill, Los Angeles, Robaut 1905, 2: no. 1047).

27. Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 1:30, reports that after Corot had received a second-class medal at the Salon of 1833 for his *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau—le gué* and had some expectations that the government might purchase the picture, the director of the Beaux-Arts, M. de Cailleux, announced his refusal to purchase with the kindly warning, "Mon ami, il ne faut pas faire de toiles si grandes," by which he meant to remind Corot that his picture exceeded the size considered appropriate for simple landscapes. In preparing his next Salon submission, the NGA's *Forest of Fontainebleau*, Corot again used a very large format, but, perhaps mindful of the director's advice, gave his landscape a historical subject.

28. Burty 1875 (quoted in Binant 1904, 15) concluded that it was in the NGA's *Forest of Fontainebleau*, which he evidently dated to 1831, that Corot first broke with the Poussinesque tradition of "historical" landscape to devote himself to "natural" landscape, as also exemplified by his subsequent Salon picture of 1833, *Forêt de Fontainebleau—le gué*. But this is an error that hinges on Burty's mistaking the correct date of the picture at the NGA which, painted only in 1834, in fact followed rather than preceded the more plainly naturalist *Forêt de Fontainebleau—le gué* and indicates the beginning of what, from the point of view of pure naturalism, was a retrograde development, namely the reintroduction of historical subject matter into landscape.

29. For Corot's *liseuses* of the 1850s and 1860s, see Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 113, 275, 389, 393, 1027, 1032, 1036, 1058, 1265, 1274; 3: 1336, 1378, 1422, 1426, 1431, 1508, 1554, 1563, 1567, 1570, 1576, and 1586.

30. Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 29–30.

31. Meier-Graefe 1930, 44–45.

32. Burty 1875, "Notice biographique," quoted in Binant 1904, 15.

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- 1991 Clarke: 49, 51, repro.
- 1992 NGA Guide: 182, repro.
- 1994 Gale, Iain. *Corot*. London: 58, repro. 59.
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1970.17.22 (2394)

Bridge on the Saône River at Mâcon

1834

Oil on paper, 25 × 33.6 (9^{7/8} × 13^{1/4})

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left, by a later hand, in brown ink: Corot 1834; below this, the autograph signature in pencil, *Corot Pingebat 1834*.

Technical Notes: The picture's support is a heavy sheet of primed laid paper that has been mounted on a sheet of wove paper. These two paper layers have been lined to fabric that is mounted on what is probably the original stretcher (butt-joined, with a vertical crossbar). The paper has been prepared with a thick, creamy white ground covered by a thin, light brown imprimatura layer. Infrared reflectography reveals a pencil underdrawing that very freely sketches out the main contours of the image. The latter is formed by a thin, liquidly applied paint layer, which, in the areas of sky, water, and foliage, allows the toned ground to appear through the overlying washes and glazes. In the sun-struck houses, the bridge, and the foreground figures, the paint thickens into impasto. A clear varnish covers the painting, which is well preserved.

Provenance: Captain Edward H. Molyneux [1894–1974], Paris; by whom sold 15 August 1955 to Ailsa Mellon Bruce [1901–1969].

Exhibited: NGA, 1952, *French Paintings from the Molyneux Collection*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1961, *French Paintings of the Nineteenth Century from the Collection of Mrs. Mellon Bruce*, no. 15, repro. NGA, 1966, *French Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon Bruce*, no. 1, repro. Venice, Ala Napoleonica e Museo Correr, and Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1989, *Impressionisti della National Gallery of Art di Washington*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. Munich, Neue Pinakothek, 1990, *Französische Impressionisten und ihre Wegbereiter aus der National Gallery of Art, Washington, und dem Cincinnati Art Museum*, no. 1, repro. Munich, Haus der Kunst, 1996, *Corot, Courbet, und die Maler von Barbizon: Les Amis de la nature*, no. B8, repro. London, National Gallery, 1997, *Seurat and The Bathers*, no. 53, repro.

IN BRIGHT SUNLIGHT, under a cloudless sky, a wide ramp rises from the banks of a river toward a group of houses from which the arches of a large bridge supported on massive piers extend across the shallow water. Painted on paper¹ in thin washes of oil over a rapid pencil sketch on a yellowish

ground, the picture has the luminosity and transparency of a watercolor. An impression rapidly noted at the site, its evident informality oddly contrasts with the ceremoniousness of the penciled signature, *Corot Pingebat 1834*, a form otherwise unknown in Corot's work, and probably used in jest on the occasion of the casual gift of this sketch to a friend.

Not known to Robaut, this study only came to light in the 1950s.² The site represented, long in doubt, was identified in 1996 by Marcel Prade,³ the historian of French bridge architecture: it is the west bank of the Saône at Mâcon, seen from the riverbank, looking north toward a monumental bridge, the Pont Saint-Laurent, that spans the river at that point. Corot passed through Mâcon on his way to Italy in the spring of 1834.⁴ After spending the early months of that year in Paris, finishing the picture that he was to submit to the Salon, the National Gallery's *Forest of Fontainebleau* (see pp. 29–36),⁵ he started on his journey in late April with a visit to his niece, Louise-Laure Baudot, at Lormes, in the region of Nivernais.⁶ Here he was joined by the painter Charles Grandjean⁷ with whom he had arranged to travel to Italy. Departing from Lormes in mid-May, they stopped at Beaune in Burgundy, then followed the course of the Saône southward as far as Valence, passing through Chalon, Mâcon, and Lyon on their way. From Valence, they continued along the Rhône to Avignon, then turned eastward to Marseille and Toulon, and entered Italy via Monaco and San Remo on the last day of May.⁸ Corot's stop at Mâcon, a few days earlier, can only have been brief. It has left no other trace among the sketches or notes of his voyage.

Setting up his easel on a ramp that rises on the river's right bank toward the bridge, Corot painted the view looking northward along Mâcon's riverfront.⁹ The light falling from the upper left, which is to say from the southwest, indicates that the time he chose was the early afternoon. The sun, still near its meridian, brightly illuminates the southern facades of the houses and the side of the bridge; the river's surface mirrors the intense blue of the sky. It is customary to attribute the special airiness and luminosity of the landscapes Corot painted during his Italian voyage of 1834¹⁰ to the renewed impressions of brilliant sunlight and limpid atmospheres that he received there. But his *Bridge on the Saône River at Mâcon*, painted before he



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Bridge on the Saône River at Mâcon*, 1970.17.22

set foot on Italian soil that summer, already has these qualities and proves that he brought them with him on his journey.

Notes

1. For oil sketches painted out-of-doors while traveling, Corot in 1834 often used paper rather than canvas, as he had also done during his earlier Italian stay in 1825–1828. His *View of Genoa* (AIC; Robaut 301), was painted in oil on paper (29.5 × 41.7 cm) in early June 1834, within a few days of the NGA's river scene.

2. In NGA 1952, *French Paintings from the Molyneux Collection*.

3. Letter of 18 January 1996, in NGA curatorial files; see also Marcel Prade, *Les Ponts, monuments historiques: Inventaire, description, histoire des ponts et ponts-aqueducs de France* (Poitiers, 1986), 316–317.

4. A sketchbook kept by Corot on his Italian voyage of 1834 (Louvre, RF 8714), the so-called *Carnet 37* catalogued by Robaut (1905, 4:93, no. 3074), contains sketches and notes that refer to the successive stages of Corot's journey. On its first part, leading through southern France to Italy, the localities mentioned or sketched include Clamecy, Lormes, Beaune, Lyon, the Rhône ("après Valence"), Marseille, Toulon, Antibes, Nice, Eza, Turbia, Monaco, Roccabruna, Menton, Ventimiglia, San Remo, Taggia, Oneglia (30 May), and Genoa (1 June).

5. The Salon of 1834 opened on 1 March 1834.

6. Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 1:157.

7. See Moreau-Nélaton's account in Robaut 1905, 1:66–72.

8. See note 4 above. Corot did not pass through Mâcon again on his return voyage in the fall of 1834. Starting from Milan, on 27 September 1834, he passed through Como, Baveno, and Domodossola, crossed the Simplon, and was in Geneva on 8 October, from where he continued via the Jura and Dole to Paris, arriving in mid-October.

9. The topography of this site as it was in Corot's time is detailed in a hand-drawn map dating from 1826, *Plan d'alignement de la ville Mâcon*, communicated by Marcel Prade. It indicates the ramp, the trees, and the individual houses lining the quai du Midi leading to the Pont Saint-Laurent and shows that Corot, while representing these features accurately, slightly foreshortened the distance between the immediate foreground and the bridge.

10. For the extant oil studies from that voyage, see Robaut 1905, 2:106–114, nos. 300–302, 326 (Genoa); 303–307 (Volterra); 308 (Como); 309–311 (Florence); 312 ("an Italian town"); 319 (Riva); 320–323 (Venice); 324 (Domodossola); 325 (Tirol); 327 ("Italian landscape").

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1978 *Small French Paintings from the Bequest of Ailsa Mellon Bruce* [Exh. cat. NGA.] Washington: 2.

1984 Walker: 428, repro.

1985 NGA: 98, repro.

1963.10.111 (1775)

A View near Volterra

1838

Oil on fabric, 69.9 × 95.5 (27½ × 37⅝)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT. / 1838

Technical Notes: The painting is on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been removed, and there is no cusping along the edges. The paint, composed of fairly coarse pigment particles, is applied over a creamy white ground of medium thickness. Infrared reflectography reveals a faint underdrawing, in chalk or charcoal, used to place the composition on the canvas. X-radiographs reveal that a seated figure was originally located in the lower left corner but was later painted out. There are many lesser changes in the rocks and foliage of the foreground. Paint and ground layers are, on the whole, in good condition. The painting underwent conservation treatment in 1996, during which a discolored varnish was removed. The painting is covered with a clear varnish applied following that treatment.

Provenance: Baronne Thénard, Paris; (her estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 19 November 1931, no. 22, as *Souvenir d'Italie*);¹ purchased by (Paul Rosenberg & Co., London, New York, and Paris); by whom sold 2 November 1932 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Musée Royal des Arts, Salon of 1838, no. 342, as *Vue prise à Volterra; Toscane*. London, Royal Academy of Arts, 1932, *French Art, 1200–1900*, no. 298, pl. 32. AIC, 1933, *A Century of Progress*, no. 234, pl. XLVIII. Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, 1936, *Corot*, no. 35, pl. VII. Musée de Lyon, 1936, *Exposition de Corot*, no. 28, pl. VII. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE VIEW OPENS ON a wide expanse of partially wooded, rock-strewn terrain. A rutted country lane rises in a long curve toward a grove of trees at the top of an eminence that overlooks a valley bordered by mountains in the hazy distance. Prominently placed at the roadside in the immediate foreground lies the trunk of a tree, sawn off at

the bottom, splintered at its top. The low-lying woods that border the road at the left are filled with the cool dusk of approaching evening, but the light of late afternoon still warms the road and casts long shadows across the path of the solitary horseman—evidently a hunter—who, with his rifle slung across his back, rides toward the wooded hilltop. Half-hidden in the green foliage at the crest appears the small figure of a man, perhaps a monk, who turns his back to the road.

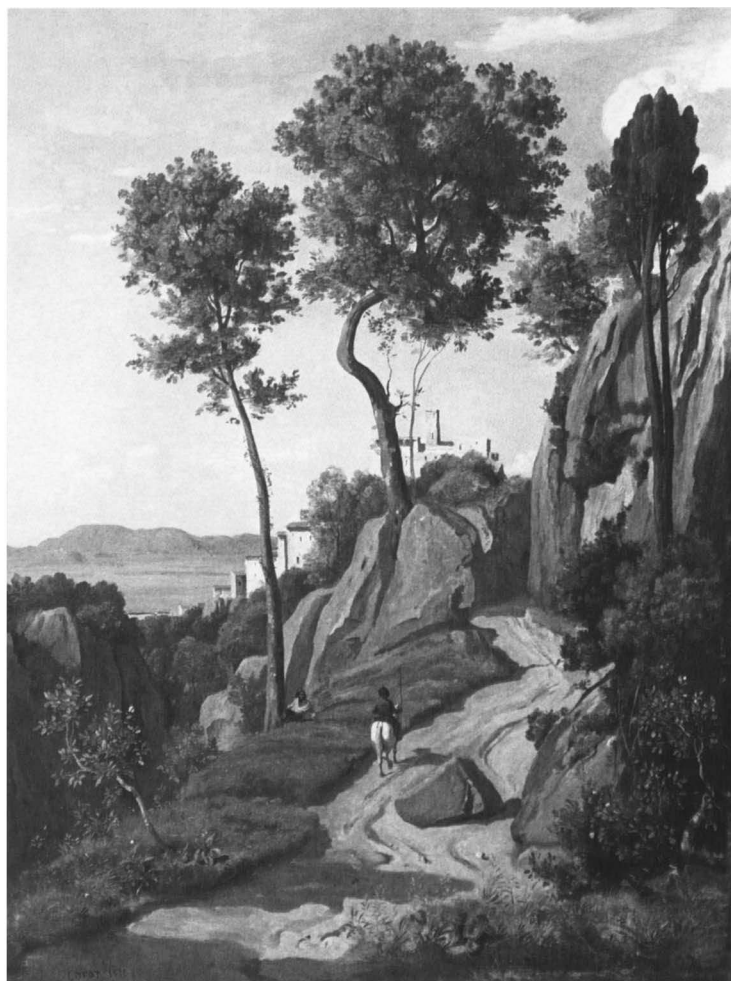
Painted in Paris in 1838, four years after Corot's second Italian voyage, *A View near Volterra* is a composite *souvenir* of Italian countryside, rather than the picture of a particular locality. Corot had visited Volterra in June 1834 and spent nearly a month in the small hill town. At that time he had represented it in two panoramic views of striking immediacy, *Volterra, the City* and *Volterra, the Citadel* (both, Louvre),² as well as in a rougher, less

resolved sketch, *The Road near Volterra* (private collection, France).³ This last, a modest work, which shows a man leading a horse or mule down a tree-lined way, with Volterra in the distance, is of some interest because it may contain the germ of the National Gallery's picture. In the years following his Italian stay in 1834, Corot often used landscape motifs brought back from that voyage for the settings of his exhibition pictures—compositional inventions that recalled Italy by their qualities of atmosphere and light rather than by particular topographical features.

At the Paris Salon of 1838, he exhibited a picture listed, under no. 342, as *Vue prise à Volterra; Toscane*.⁴ The identification of this painting has caused much confusion. When Alfred Robaut published his catalogue of Corot's work in 1905 he had no knowledge of the painting now in the National Gallery but was familiar with another, much larger picture of a similar subject, also dated 1838, which he included in his catalogue, under no. 367, as *Cavalier gravissant une montée rocheuse (Souvenir d'Italie)* (fig. 1).⁵ In his description of this picture, now in the Timken Museum of Art in San Diego, he ventured the plausible guess that it was perhaps Corot's Salon entry of 1838. This supposition had come to be accepted as a fact, when the sudden appearance of the painting now at the National Gallery, at a Paris auction in 1931,⁶ raised the possibility that this smaller, previously unknown version might actually be the picture Corot had shown in 1838.⁷ The uncertainty as to which of the two versions of *Volterra* was the one exhibited at the Salon persisted until recently, though the San Diego version must be ruled out for a very simple reason: the register of submissions to the Salon of 1838 gives the dimensions of Corot's entry as 85 by 110 centimeters (with frame),⁸ much smaller than those of the tall, vertical picture in San Diego (159.1 × 119.3 cm, without frame), but of a size and horizontal format corresponding to those of the National Gallery's *View near Volterra*.

Though their subjects are very similar, the pictures in San Diego and in Washington present striking contrasts, not only in the matter of execution but also in their treatment of landscape. Said to have been painted as part of a decorative ensemble,⁹ the canvas in San Diego is of exceptionally large size and of unusual vertical format. It gives the effect of a scenic improvisation of rapid

Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *View near Volterra*, oil on canvas, 1838, San Diego, Timken Museum of Art, The Putnam Foundation





Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *A View near Volterra*, 1963.10.III



Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Rider and Peasant Woman in a Valley* (*Marino: Vallée avec un cavalier et une Italienne*), oil on canvas, 1827, formerly collection of the late Richard Davis, Minneapolis (published in Faison and Merrill 1960: 31, no. 148)

execution, its colors laid on broadly and succulently with a heavily charged brush. The intense blue of the sky and the vivid reds and yellows of the road and rocks create a strong sense of hot daylight, mitigated by the space-filling silhouettes of the improbably tall trees that dominate the scene and contribute a note of decorative fantasy. It seems unlikely that this exuberant performance, clearly designed for a special location and function, would have passed the Salon jury. The picture in the National Gallery, by contrast, is marked by its restraint in the matters of color and arrangement, and by its particularly refined execution. Muted, closely blended tones, quiet accords of greens and grayish blue in the foliage, set off against the warmer yellow of the sandy road and the light-struck rocks, give it an effect both harmonious and richly evocative of the atmosphere of late afternoon. Its paint texture is more finely worked than that of the painting in San Diego, particularly in the trees in its middle distance, which in their tufted, minutely serrated foliage, grazed by the low, slanting light, faintly recall the manner of Jean-Victor Bertin, Corot's former master.

A curious trait of the National Gallery's *View near Volterra* is Corot's avoidance of any specifically Italian elements. The town of Volterra is not seen, and the vegetation along the path is lush and green, very unlike that which appears in the more naturalist studies of Volterra and its arid environs

that Corot had painted at the site in 1834. The rich greens of the foliage, together with the bluish shadows cast by the trees, are suggestive of cool and humid atmospheres, ready to overtake the warmth of the declining sunlight that still lingers on the road. The effect strangely combines hints of northern and southern climates. In this respect, the two versions of *Volterra* differ strikingly: the midday brightness of the picture in San Diego is in complete contrast to the subdued afternoon light that gives the landscape in Washington its character of tranquil order and serene clarity.

But the picture is not simply an ideal landscape built according to Bertin's neoclassical recipes. It is a complex blend of effects from different sources, among which memories of Italian nature—some of them reaching back more than ten years—are overlaid by more recent impressions of northern landscape art. The motif of the horseman riding along a rocky path, with a steep hillside on his right and a plunging view into a wide valley at his left, had occurred to Corot ten years earlier and appears among drawings made at Marino in May 1827, during his first Italian voyage (fig. 2).¹⁰ An oil study painted at that time of the same or a very similar setting (fig. 3) broadly anticipates the illumination and spatial layout of the landscape at the National Gallery.¹¹

Despite the specificity of the title it bore at the Salon, *Vue prise à Volterra; Toscane*, the picture is

a composite of recollected atmospheres and moods that reflects Corot's earlier travels in other parts of Italy as much as his more recent visit to the area of Volterra. Why Corot should have chosen this title, when the memories embodied in his painting are of Marino, in the region of the Castelli Romani, rather than of Volterra in Tuscany, remains a mystery. His imaginative evocation of aerial distances and sun-struck terrain give it the persuasive concreteness of actual visual experience. But it is a constructed landscape, and while the echoes in it are not of Poussin or Claude, as some commentators have thought,¹² it does contain an element of tradition, though not one that we should expect in a *souvenir* of Italy: Corot has managed to remember Volterra through the medium of Dutch landscape painting. The dead trunk of a beech, splintered at the top, that he has placed, perhaps as a memento mori, across the path in the foreground of his picture, is derived from the landscape symbolism of Jacob van Ruisdael (1628/1629–1682) whose work was much on his mind in the 1830s.¹³ The image of the horseman who follows a deeply rutted path into the forest finally may itself reflect, as Fronia Wissman has pointed out, seventeenth-century Dutch prototypes, such as Philips Koninck's (1619–1688) *Entrance to a Forest* (fig. 4).¹⁴

Notes

1. *Succession de Mademoiselle T... [Baronne Thénard], Catalogue des tableaux modernes...* [auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] (Paris, 19 November 1931), 11, no. 22, repro.

2. RF 1618, *Volterra, vue prise en regardant le municipe* (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 303), and RF 1619, *Volterra, vue prise en regardant la citadelle* (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 304).

3. *La Route de Volterra*, 1834, Robaut 1905, 2: no. 305. See also Wissman 1988, fig. 15.

4. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure et lithographie des artistes vivans exposés au Musée Royal le 1er Mars 1838* (Paris, 1838), 44, no. 342.

5. Robaut 1905, 2:130, no. 367: "Ce tableau est peut-être celui, non identifié, qui a figuré au Salon de 1838 sous le titre *Vue de Volterra*."

6. At the Baronne Thénard sale, 19 November 1931 (see note 1 above). The picture's ownership and whereabouts between 1838 and 1931 are unknown. The other version of *Volterra*, now in San Diego, first appeared about 1898, when it was owned by Durand-Ruel, Paris.

7. This possibility was first mentioned in the picture's entry in the Baronne Thénard sale (notes 1 and 6 above) and again shortly thereafter in the catalogue *French Art* 1932, no. 298.



Fig. 3. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Autumnal Landscape near Marino*, oil on canvas, c. 1827, Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, inv. 1499, photograph by Ursula Edelmann



Fig. 4. Philips Koninck, *Entrance to a Forest*, oil on canvas, c. 1660, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, Gift of M. H. de Young Endowment Fund, D 43.9.2

8. Archives des Musées Nationaux, Paris, KK 32, Exposition de 1838. Enregistrement des ouvrages, "1558, Vue prise à Volterra, .85 × 1.15." Hélène Toussaint, who published this document (1975, 41), noted that these dimensions are similar to those of Corot's *Volterra, le municipe* (Robaut 303), causing her to wonder whether this open-air study, painted during Corot's Italian voyage of 1834, might not be the picture shown in 1838, making it "the first Salon entry by Corot of a landscape taken from nature and not composed in the studio." A note found among Robaut's unpublished papers seemed to support this guess, but in his catalogue of Corot's work, Robaut pointedly refrained from identifying that painting with the Salon exhibit of 1838. Toussaint's suggestion has found no acceptance. It should be noted that *Volterra, le municipe*, a broadly executed study painted from nature, is of the kind that Corot was notoriously unwilling to exhibit, while the NGA's *View near Volterra*, dated 1838 and of the dimensions recorded for his Salon submission of that year, exemplifies the composed, highly finished studio landscapes that Corot considered suitable for public exhibition.

9. Robaut (1905, 2:130, no. 367) mentioned that the person who sold this painting to Durand-Ruel in about 1898 also owned its pendant, a painting of the same dimensions, the work of a friend of Corot, into which the latter had inserted the foreground figure of an Italian lounging at the roadside. For his half of the pair, dated 1838, Corot merely adapted the subject of his Salon exhibit of the same year.

10. *Marino: Vallée avec un cavalier et une Italienne* (Robaut 1905, 4: no. 2582), signed and dated "Marino mai 1827," was formerly in the Henri Rouart collection, Paris, and subsequently in that of the late Richard S. Davis, London (Chicago 1960, 28, no. 148, repro. 31). A pen drawing that closely repeats this composition is in the Cabinet des Dessins at the Louvre (see Selz 1988, 93, repro.). Another drawing dated "Marino mai 1827" shows a very similar horseman riding along a village street (Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins; Selz 1988, 39, repro.). The motif of the horseman seen in back view on a path leading into the distance became a device that Corot in later years frequently used in his landscapes (see page 97). It is perhaps significant that its earliest occurrence dates from his first Italian voyage, suggesting that this motif was associated with Italy in Corot's mind.

11. Robaut 1905, 1:56, no. 158. This view of a wooded valley, with the houses of a village lining the crest of a rise at the right, is similar to that shown in the Marino drawings of May 1827.

12. George 1937, 23: "Corot fait du Poussin sur nature."

13. On the influence of Ruisdael on Corot's paintings of the 1830s, see Chu 1974, 21–23, and Wissman 1989, 27–33; on the motif of the felled beech in the work of Ruisdael, see Walford 1991, 33–38, 133–140; on Corot's adoption of this motif, see p. 36n. 24.

14. The resemblance to Corot's *View near Volterra* was first noted by Wissman 1988, figs. 16 and 17.

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 1941 Dale: 2, pl. III.
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 1944 Cairns and Walker: 154, repro.
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 1955 Cooke: 319, repro.
 1957 Shapley, Fern Rusk. *Comparisons in Art: A Companion to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.* New York: 151, repro.
 1963 Walker: 47, 248, repro. 249.
 1964 Walker, John. *National Gallery Washington*. Paris: 47, 244, repro. 245 (German ed.: 45, 244, repro. 245).
 1965 Roberts, Keith. *Corot*. London: 42, color pl. 16.
 1965 NGA: 31.
 1965a Dale: 37, repro.
 1968 NGA: 23, repro.
 1975 NGA: 78, repro.
 1976 Walker: 434, no. 627, color repro. 435.
 1979 Leymarie: 69, color repro. without text.
 1984 Walker: 430, no. 615, repro.
 1985 NGA: 98, repro.
 1988 Wissman, Fronia E. *J.-B.-C. Corot: View of Volterra*. [Exh. cat. Timken Art Gallery.] San Diego: fig. 16, note 15.
 1989 Wissman: 20–21.
 1991 Clarke: 46, 49, fig. 49.

1963.10.9 (1673)

Portrait of a Young Girl

1850 or 1859
 Oil on fabric, 25.2 × 21 (9⁷/₈ × 8¹/₄)
 Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT / 1850 or 1859

Technical Notes: The painting's original support, a very fine, plain-weave fabric, has been lined onto fabric. X-radiographs show that the original tacking margins along all edges of the picture have been flattened out and are now incorporated in the picture surface.¹ A

white ground of medium thickness covers the entire support including the expanded tacking margins, suggesting it was commercially applied before stretching. Infrared reflectography reveals extensive pencil underdrawing outlining the eyebrows, the bridge of the nose, the shadow along the nose, and the lips. The left contour of the torso has been narrowed and the seams of the dress changed from underpaint to final paint layer. The rich paint layer is of medium thickness in the figure, slightly thicker in the face. The leaner background paint slightly overlaps the left edge of the figure. The X-radiograph indicates that paint reserves were left for the body, head of the sitter, and the chair. The plaid pattern of the dress is built up of intersecting strokes of thicker paint. The signature and date are written with what appears to be the same paint, though slightly diluted. The picture is covered with a slightly yellowed varnish. It is very well preserved.

Provenance: (Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 25 March 1922, no. 57); purchased by Frederick Manaud, Paris.² Dr. Alfred Gold, Paris;³ sold 1926 to (Alex Reid and Lefevre Ltd., London); by whom sold 1927 through (Hodebert) to Dr. Albert C. Barnes [1873–1951], Merion, Pennsylvania; sold to (Etienne Bignou, Paris); by whom sold 1930 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MOMA, 1930, *Corot–Daumier*, no. 24, repro. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE SITTER, a young woman about twenty years old, is shown at bust length, her head turned full-face toward the viewer, her body in profile to the left. The contrasting directions of her body, face, and gaze animate the portrait with a suggestion of impending motion. She wears a plaid dress, buttoned high on the chest, trimmed with a narrow white collar and provided with ample sleeves. Her brown hair, parted in the middle, is laid smoothly around the oval of her head. The face is finely modeled by the light that, falling on it from the left, illuminates her wide forehead, her large gray-blue eyes, and her full mouth. Slashing strokes of vivid red, blue-green, and white form the pattern of her plaid dress and give shape to her body. In the intimate closeness of its presentation of the sitter, the picture is exceptional among Corot's portraits. Contrary to his usual practice, he has shown her in very near view—head, shoulders, and bust, without hands—giving her face a striking prominence and immediacy within the picture's small format.



Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, detail of inscription and date, *Le Château de Rosny*, oil on canvas, 1840, Paris, Musée du Louvre, Photo RMN

The date inscribed at the lower left has been variously read as 1850⁴ and 1859.⁵ The earlier commentators, who consistently saw it as 1850, regarded the small, raised *o* as the date's final digit, in keeping with other date inscriptions by Corot (fig. 1).⁶ But the blurry oblique downstroke next to the *o* can make that numeral appear as a *9*, and as such it has been accepted in most of the more recent literature. It is difficult to determine whether this oblique mark is an accident, like the line that partly defaces the *8* in the same date inscription, or a deliberate stroke, intended to make this numeral read as a *9* and the date as 1859.⁷ The sitter's coiffure and costume, possible at either date, do not settle the matter, and the question of the picture's exact date remains open.

Portrait painting played a relatively minor role in Corot's work. He regarded it initially "as a simple amusement"⁸ but in time came to think of it as a useful exercise and as a way of obliging relatives and friends. His portraits, invariably of small format and unassuming plainness in their presentation of the sitters—nearly all of them members of his family, a few close friends, and the children of friends—were usually painted as gifts or tokens of gratitude. He never intended to have them exhibited. The total number of his true portraits, as distinct from the portraitlike studies of professional models, does not exceed fifty. Many date from before 1845, a few from after that time. Germain Bazin, who believed the National Gallery's *Portrait of a Young Girl* to have been painted in 1850, considered that date an exceptionally late one for a portrait of this kind.⁹

The picture's history prior to its first appearance in a Paris sale in 1922¹⁰ is unknown and so, in consequence, is the identity of its subject. It seems not unlikely that the young woman whose features it records with affectionate simplicity was a member



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Portrait of a Young Girl*, 1963.10.9

of Corot's own family. But between 1850 and 1859 this included only one relative whose age agreed with that of the woman in the picture, Corot's grandniece Laure Baudot, born in 1836, who would have been fourteen at the earlier and twenty-three at the later date.¹¹ She was the daughter of Corot's niece Louise-Laure Baudot, née Sennegon (1815–1836), whose portrait Corot had painted in 1831 and 1837.¹² Between the faces in these portraits and that in the National Gallery's *Portrait of a Young Girl* it is possible to see a faint family resemblance, though not close enough to justify a positive identification of this picture's sitter as Laure Baudot.

Notes

1. The relatively early references to the picture (Paris sale 1922, no. 57; Bernheim de Villers 1930, no. 342; Schoeller and Dieterle 1948, no. 50) gave the dimensions as 24 × 20 cm. Somewhat larger dimensions were published from the time of the picture's first public exhibition (New York 1930)—10³/₄ × 9¹/₄ in. (27.4 × 23.2 cm)—which may indicate that the flattening of the tacking margins and their incorporation in the picture surface occurred about that time. Bazin in 1942 and 1951 gave the dimensions as 25 × 21 cm. The publications of the NGA from 1965 onward consistently specified 27.4 × 23.2 (Dale 1965a, NGA 1965, 1968, 1975, 1985). The correct measurements, established by the Painting Conservation Department, 25.2 × 21 cm, are almost exactly those first given by Bazin in 1942.

2. Annotated copy of sale catalogue in Knoedler library.

3. Letter from Reid and Lefevre, dated 20 July 1964, in NGA curatorial files.

4. Paris 1922 sale, no. 77; Bernheim de Villers 1930, 65, no. 342; Bazin 1942, 120, no. 83 (reprinted in the 1951 edition, 129, no. 95); Fosca 1956, 73. In their first supplement to Robaut's catalogue, Schoeller and Dieterle (1948, 56, no. 50) curiously misread the date as "1857."

5. New York 1930, no. 24; Tietze 1935, 344, no. 277; Dale 1965a, 38; NGA 1965, 31; NGA 1968, 22; NGA 1975, 78; NGA 1985, 97.

6. As for instance in the date inscription 1840 in *Le Château de Rosny* (see p. 45, fig. 1).

7. Elizabeth Walmsley, NGA Painting Conservation Department, 7 September 1994: "Examination with a stereomicroscope found that the signature and date are contemporary with the rest of the painting (... meaning that cracks in the lower paint layer were found also in the signature)... I read the date as 1859, with the 9 looking almost like a % symbol."

8. Concerning Corot's early attitude toward portrait painting, see the remark, in a letter of 1829, by his friend Alexandre Clérembault whose portrait he painted in 1829: "Au commencement il en faisait une plaisan-

terie; mais en travaillant il s'est animé et y met une ardeur vraiment risible" (Baud-Bovy 1957, 121).

9. Bazin 1942, 59, "les portraits deviennent très rares. La jeune fille... à New York, datée de 1850, avec son autorité digne d'Ingres, est une exception." (Robaut, in fact, dates a fair number of portraits to the 1850s, e.g., his nos. 1048–1059.) Bazin referred to *Portrait of a Young Girl* erroneously as being in the "galerie Dundesing à New York," an evident confusion with another portrait that he listed under no. 104, "*Portrait de jeune femme*, Galerie Valentine Dudensing, New York," dating it to 1865–1870, and also qualifying it as being an "exception" at this late date. He mistakenly listed the New York gallery under two different spellings.

10. *Catalogue des tableaux modernes* [auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] (Paris, 25 March 1922), no. 57, "signé à gauche, en bas: Corot, 1850."

11. Corot's only female relative of that generation, Laure Baudot (1836–1870) came to be doubly related to him by her marriage to a cousin, Emile Corot.

12. Louise-Laure Sennegon, the daughter of Corot's sister, Annette Octavie, was first painted by Corot in 1831 at age sixteen, before her marriage to Philibert Baudot in 1833. This portrait is now in the Louvre (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 249). Corot painted a second—posthumous—portrait of her in 1837, after she had died in 1836 giving birth to Laure Baudot. This second portrait is in the Musée de Semur (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 249).

References

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 1931 McBride, Henry. "The Chester Dale Collection at New York." *Formes* 14 (April): 57, repro.
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 1935 Tietze: 344, no. 277, repro. (English ed.: *Masterpieces of European Painting in America* [New York, 1939], 328, no. 277, repro.).
 1941 Cheney, Sheldon. *The Story of Modern Art*. New York: 87.
 1942 Bazin: 59, 120, no. 83, pl. 83.
 1948 Schoeller and Dieterle: 56, no. 50, repro.
 1951 Bazin: 129, no. 95, pl. 95.
 1951 Morse: 27, repro. 28.
 1956 Fosca, François. *La Peinture française au XIX^e siècle*. Paris: 72–73, repro. (English ed.: *French Painting: Nineteenth-Century Painters, 1800–1870* [Paris, 1960], 72–73, repro.).
 1957 Baud-Bovy: 124, pl. XXXVII.
 1965a Dale: 38, repro.
 1965 NGA: 31.
 1975 NGA: 78, repro.
 1976 Walker: 432–433, no. 623, repro.
 1984 Walker: 428, no. 611, repro.
 1985 NGA: 97, repro.

1942.9.13 (609)

View near Epernon

1850–1860

Oil on fabric, 33.8 × 55.3 (13 1/4 × 21 3/4)

Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a single piece of plain-weave fabric of medium weight. It was lined in 1944, at which time its tacking margins were removed. Cusping present along all edges suggests it retains its original dimensions. A thin creamy white ground covers the original fabric. Infrared reflectography reveals a few lines of sketchy underdrawing with charcoal or pencil along the horizon. The paint layer forming the image is thickly applied, rich with medium, and it is applied wet-into-wet in broad, flat brushstrokes. The sky was painted with a dense white paint, with much impasto, leaving reserves along the horizon for the houses and trees. The X-radiograph indicates that at the far right the sky originally extended lower and was later partly covered by the crowns of the trees of the foreground. No paint reserves were left for the figures, all of which were painted on top of the landscape. The varnish applied in 1944 has yellowed. Aside from a few small holes in the original support along the upper and lower left edges and the lower right edge, the painting is well preserved.

Provenance: (Sale, 3 May 1876, 1,200 francs). (Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 29 January 1877, no. 11, as *Laboureur et cavalier dans la campagne*, 520 francs). (Marchand sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 31 March 1890, no. 13, as *La Charrue*, 7,000 francs); purchased by Foinard. (Galerie Georges Petit, Paris) by whom sold 1891 to Peter A. B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from the estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park.

THE VIEW OPENS ON a wide sweep of gray-green gently undulating fields in the midst of which flows a small stream, which is spanned in the distance by the arches of a bridge. On the horizon at the left appear the roofs of houses silhouetted against the bright, lightly clouded sky. In the left foreground, a farmer walks behind his horse-drawn plow. To the right, a horseman rides toward the stand of willows that closes the view toward the right.

Robaut identified the site as being near Epernon,¹ a small town situated some sixty-four kilo-

meters by mail coach southwest of Paris² on the post road to Nantes via Chartres, the route probably taken by Corot for visits to the area. At Epernon, Corot had an acquaintance in the person of M. Herbault, the son of a celebrated modiste who had been the friendly rival of Corot's mother in the Parisian fashion trade in the days of the Empire and the Restoration.³ Corot is known to have set up his easel near Epernon in the 1850s and again in 1863⁴ when a guest of M. Herbault in what were certainly not his only visits. Not far from Epernon lived Mme Castaignet, née Herbault, another old family friend, at whose estate at Montlhéry Corot vacationed in August 1859. "Their acquaintance has lasted fifty years. A gentle friendliness pervades this house... where, in the evening, Corot comfortably smokes his little pipe beside the piano from which the hostess draws enchanting harmonies."⁵

View near Epernon belongs to a numerous group of landscape studies painted from nature that forms a distinct, though not well recognized, part of Corot's work in the 1850s and 1860s,⁶ a time when he was in constant motion traveling the length and breadth of France. In contrast to his composed "lyrical" landscapes of the time, painted for public exhibition and for the market, these mainly private studies, of modest size⁷ and rapid execution, are based on outdoor work and record particular sites, observed at certain seasons and under specific conditions of sunlight and weather. Wayside impressions of pastoral scenes, rather than poetic inventions, they generally lack identifying topographical features and are therefore difficult to localize. Like the National Gallery's *View near Epernon*, they often include details of everyday rural life and agricultural labor. Fortuitous products of Corot's rounds among his hospitable provincial friends, they were painted for their own sake: notes taken in passing, rather than preparations for more ambitious work.⁸ But in their very immediacy, these direct landscape studies of Corot's later years, radically different from his formulaic "poetic" inventions of the same period, give proof of his continuing effort to seize actual visual experience and offer insights into his methods.

His *View of Epernon*, sketched in broad areas of contrasted tones, to which the muted colors in field, foliage, and sky are kept subordinate, exemplifies his practice of initiating the work of repre-



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *View near Epernon*, 1942.9.13



Fig. 1.
Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot,
Epernon. La Route au laboureur,
oil on canvas, 1855–1865,
private collection (illustrated in
Wildenstein 1969: no. 39)

sensation by laying in the main forms in nearly flat monochrome, with little modulation, to be enlivened in the end by the addition of small foreground figures that serve to establish scale and distance: “What one sees in paintings, or rather what I look for in them, are the form, the ensemble, the tonal values. Color, so far as I am concerned, comes after.”⁹

Robaut assigned the National Gallery’s *View near Epernon* to the decade of 1850–1860, grouping it with two other, unrelated Epernon views.¹⁰ He gave a slightly later date (1855–1865) to three further studies of rural scenes from this area,¹¹ one of which, *Epernon. La Route au laboureur* (Robaut 1328), shares with the picture in the National Gallery the motif of the plowman (fig. 1). His dating is confirmed by two of Corot’s travel sketchbooks that contain landscape notations taken in the area of Epernon about 1855 and 1850–1865.¹²

Notes

1. Robaut 1905, 2:294, no. 946, *Epernon (Eure-et-Loire), fermier à cheval surveillant le labourage*. Earlier publications merely called the picture *Laboureur et cavalier dans la campagne* (anon. sale, Paris, 29 January 1877, no. 11) or *La Charrue* (Marchand sale, Paris, 31 March 1890, no. 13). Robaut’s information, based on notes taken during his long, intimate acquaintance with Corot, has documentary value.

2. A rural market town of fewer than 1,600 inhabitants in Corot’s time, Epernon, according to the contemporary *Guide pittoresque portatif et complet du voyageur en France* ([Paris, 1844], 557), “est dans une belle situation et possède un joli château bâti au milieu de belles prairies arrosées par plusieurs ruisseaux.”

3. Moreau-Nélaton in Robaut 1905, 1:19.

4. A letter sent by Corot from Epernon bears the date of 6 June 1863 (Moreau-Nélaton in Robaut 1905, 1:220). The study *Epernon. La Route au laboureur* (fig. 1), which Robaut dated to 1855–1865, was, according to him, painted “aux environs d’Epernon pendant un séjour de Corot chez M. Herbault” (Robaut 1905, 3:30, no. 1328). Robaut in addition identified several further rural subjects as having been painted near Epernon: *Epernon. Le Chemin près la vanne* (Robaut 945) and *Epernon. Chemin montant dans la campagne* (Robaut 947), both dated by him to 1850–1860, and two versions of *Epernon. La Petite Vanne* (Robaut 1330 and 1331), to which he assigned the slightly later date of 1855–1865.

5. Moreau-Nélaton in Robaut 1905, 1:197.

6. Among the fairly numerous pastoral landscapes of the 1850s and 1860s that correspond to the NGA’s *View near Epernon* in conception and style are *Saintry*, about 1860 (Robaut 909); *Carrefour dans la campagne, environs de Marcoussis*, 1850–1860 (Robaut 810); *Plaine aux environs d’Etampes*, 1855–1860 (Robaut 883); *La Vallon*, 1855–1865 (Robaut 986); *Prairies dominant le village (Marcoussis)*, about 1865 (Robaut 1396); *Charrette de foin longeant une rivière*, 1865–1870 (Robaut 1416); *Route à Sèvres-Brimborion*, 1855–1865 (Robaut 1464); *La Route au bord de l’eau*, 1865–1870 (Robaut 1472).

7. Nearly all these studies, whether on canvas or on

panel, belong to one of two formats, the smaller measuring roughly 22 × 40 cm and the larger about 40 × 60 cm, small enough, at any rate, to be carried along comfortably while traveling by carriage.

8. Although he occasionally made studio replicas of some of these landscape studies; see note 11 below.

9. Quoted in Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 2:45.

10. *Epernon. Le Chemin près la vanne* (Robaut 945) and *Epernon. Chemin montant dans la campagne* (Robaut 947), both dated to 1850–1860 by Robaut, who notes that Corot retouched the latter picture toward the end of his life.

11. *Epernon. La Route au laboureur* (fig. 1); a reduced replica of this painting (Robaut 1329); *Epernon. La Petite Vanne* (Robaut 1330), and a larger, more finished version (Robaut 1331).

12. Both Paris, Louvre, Carnet 52, about 1855 (Robaut 3089) and Carnet 23, 1860–1865 (Robaut 3060).

References

- 1905 Robaut: 2:294, no. 946.
- 1915 Widener: unpaginated.
- 1923 Widener: unpaginated.
- 1931 Widener: 206, repro.
- 1948 NGA: 104, repro.
- 1965 NGA: 30.
- 1968 NGA: 24, repro.
- 1975 NGA: 74, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 94, repro.

1963.10.110 (1774)

Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau

1860–1865

Oil on fabric, 45.9 × 58.5 (18 × 23)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT

Technical Notes: The support consists of an extremely fine plain-weave fabric, lined onto fabric. The original tacking margins are preserved and contain two sets of tack holes. A second set of tack holes also present on the stretcher suggests it is probably the original auxiliary support (keyed and butt-joined, with horizontal and vertical crossbars). The thick white commercially prepared ground extends onto the tacking margins. Infrared reflectography reveals no trace of an underdrawing. The paint has been applied with swift, loose brushstrokes in layers of varying thickness, ranging from thin scumbles, through which the ground is evident, to pastose highlights. Grains of sand seem to be imbedded in the paint at the upper left. The tree branches are for the most part drawn with the brush over the paint. In the foreground, leaves of grass have been scribbled into the wet paint with the butt end of

the brush. The painting's surface is covered with a yellowed varnish. There is a tiny tear at the lower left and minor damage along all edges. The top right and left corners are retouched, and some of the impasto has been flattened by a careless lining.

Provenance: Given by the artist to Mme Camille Cornélie Isbert [1825–1911], Paris.¹ Paul Tesse, Paris, by 1881.² Alfred Robaut [1830–1909], Paris, before 1905.³ (Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 12 June 1930, no. 28); purchased by (Etienne Bignou, Paris) for Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Lille, Exposition,⁴ 1881. MusFrA, 1931, *Renoir and His Tradition*, no. 8. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE PICTURE is of a wilderness of young trees, an irregular struggling growth precariously rooted in crevices between massive boulders. Corot set up his easel in their midst, beneath a ceiling of translucent foliage through which sunlight filters, trembling in bright spots on stems and stones. At the right a huge boulder covers a dark hollow that may be one of the several grottoes in the forest of Fontainebleau.⁵ The precise locale shown has not been identified, and may not be identifiable, since it resembles many sites in the forest.⁶ There can be no doubt, however, that this vividly realistic study represents a particular place and was painted on the spot—grains of sand imbedded in the paint along the upper edge of the canvas testify to its execution in the open air. Robaut reports that Corot presented it to a fellow artist, Mme Camille Cornélie Isbert, née Paillard (1825–1911), portrait painter and miniaturist.⁷

From about 1822 onward, Corot made frequent sketching stays in the forest of Fontainebleau. During the 1830s and 1840s the forest furnished him with the main subject matter or the important background detail for several of his major paintings.⁸ This dependence ceased in the late 1840s, when Ville-d'Avray took the place of Fontainebleau as his main source of landscape motifs, but Corot continued to sketch informally in the forest, and in the late 1850s and the early 1860s his visits again became more frequent and lengthy, coming to an end only in 1873.⁹ In these later years, when his work for exhibition and sale consisted mainly of idealized landscapes composed in the studio, he went to the forest for casual study only, and for the periodic, refreshing immersions in nature that

he seems to have needed as an antidote to indoor work.

Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau exemplifies his private landscape practice of these later years. Robaut dated the picture to 1860–1865 and in his catalogue of Corot's work grouped it with a number of other woodland subjects of similar conception and style,¹⁰ intimately naturalist observations of motifs encountered in the woods that Corot painted without stylistic embellishments or any thought of putting them to further use. Evidently little tempted by the famous sights of the forest of Fontainebleau, its millennial oaks and giant rocks, Corot in these sketches concentrated on its unspectacular, secluded aspects and rendered them with a truthful directness that admitted only of the most discreet compositional adjustments.

When compared with the bituminous gloom of forest interiors by the painters of Barbizon, and especially by such specialists of the *sous-bois* as Narcisse Virgilio Diaz de la Peña and Théodore Rousseau, Corot's *Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau* seems luminous, bathed in a subdued light and dappled with bright reflections playing over tree trunk and rock face. Its effect is atmospheric, very unlike that of the dense, heavily material forms of which the Barbizon painters composed their woodlands. Air and light circulate beneath the translucent canopy of foliage in Corot's forest. Placing himself in the midst of its scattered vegetation and jumbled boulders, he painted it from within its formless depth, without attempting to order these fragments of undisturbed nature into a compositional harmony.

When Corot painted at Fontainebleau in the 1860s, the formerly wild and untidy forest was being regulated and groomed for the benefit of tourists.¹¹ Extensive reforestation and the introduction of footpaths and signposts were beginning to change its primordial character, causing alarm among lovers of its ancient wildernesses and spurring efforts to record what still remained of its unspoiled state. The painters working in the forest particularly deplored its domestication. Corot's studies of the 1860s seem purposely to seek out its most irregular aspects and to avoid the appearance of aesthetic choice.

Their naturalism, unlike his own earlier, still romantic treatment of woodland subjects, has affinities with contemporary literary and photographic

accounts. The descriptions of the forest by the brothers Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, in their novel *Manette Salomon* (1867), abound in sharp observations of its humbler aspects, its struggling vegetation, its saplings strangled between boulders, which are remarkably like the detail of Corot's *Rocks in the Forest*.¹² Similar motifs also occur in the work of the photographers who in the 1850s and 1860s worked beside the painters at Fontainebleau.¹³ It is not likely that Corot's woodland sketches were directly influenced by photography, but it is certain that he was aware of the work of these photographers, with several of whom he was acquainted. Among Corot's papers, Robaut found a collection of some two hundred photographic prints.¹⁴

Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau represents a powerful resurgence in the 1860s of the naturalist strain that had already marked Corot's outdoor painting of the 1820s and 1830s but that now, no longer confined to preparatory studies, asserts itself as the independent expression of a direct experience of nature. In its unself-conscious, observant privacy it ranks among the high achievements of his painterly genius and shows him to have been, at seventy, an artist still in the avant-garde of the time.

Notes

1. According to Robaut 1905, 3:26, no. 1313.

2. According to Robaut 1905, 3:26, no. 1313.

3. The painting was not, however, in the sale of the Robaut collection, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 28 November 1919, which included another, considerably smaller (23 × 31.5 cm) sketch, no. 6, *Dans la forêt de Fontainebleau*.

4. According to Robaut 1905, who mentions that the painting was loaned by Paul Tesse.

5. A smaller oil study (31 × 44 cm) of a similar site, inscribed on its stretcher in an old hand, "original de Corot—Grotte et rocher de Franchard—Forêt de Fontainebleau avec portrait de Français dans la grotte," was sold in Paris, Palais Galliera, 11 June 1966, no. 200, repro. Not catalogued by Robaut, this picture, which in style and motif bears a certain resemblance to the NGA's *Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau*, was described as having formerly been in the collections of Ambroise Vollard, André Derain, and Henri Rouart. Its present whereabouts are unknown.

6. A possible location of the scene is the sparsely wooded rocky terrain of Apremont to the south of the valley that leads from the village of Barbizon into the forest. A painting by Diaz, *Dans la forêt de Fontainebleau* (Rijksmuseum H. W. Mesdag, The Hague), believed to



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau*, 1963.10.110

represent a portion of the Gorges d'Apremont seen from within the forest, presents a similar view of slender, twisted trees growing among boulders; see *De School van Barbizon* [exh. cat. Gemeentemuseum.] (The Hague, 1985), 157, no. 46. At the Salon of 1846, Corot had exhibited *Vue des gorges d'Apremont* (now called *The Forest of Fontainebleau*, MFA), an arranged view of the heights of Apremont, but as seen from the valley below rather than from within their wooded crest. Another site in the forest that resembles the setting of the NGA's picture is the rocky, lightly wooded ridge of Franchard some 2.5 km to the south of Apremont (see note 5 above).

7. Variouslly described as a pupil of Henri Scheffer (1798–1862) and François Meuret (1800–1887), Mme Isbert exhibited three of her miniatures at the Salon of 1857 (no. 1399). Her address at 54, Faubourg-Montmartre places her in the close vicinity of Corot's studio in the rue Paradis-Poissonnière.

8. Salon of 1831, *Vue prise dans la forêt de Fontainebleau* (probably Robaut 266); Salon of 1833, *Vue de la forêt de Fontainebleau—le gué* (location unknown; Robaut 257); Salon of 1834, *Forest of Fontainebleau*, NGA (see pp. 29–36); Salon of 1846, *Vue des gorges d'Apremont* (MFA; Robaut 502). Landscape elements taken from the area of Fontainebleau also appear in the backgrounds of his paintings at the Salon of 1835, *Hagar in the Wilderness* (MMA; Robaut 362), and the Salon of 1840, *The Flight into Egypt* (church, Rosny-sur-Seine; Robaut 369).

9. In addition to brief visits, Corot made stays in the forest in 1858, 1859, 1861, 1865, 1872, and 1873.

10. Robaut 1905, 3:26–28, nos. 1314, *Fontainebleau. Le Chaos*; 1317, *Chênes et bouleaux*; 1318, *La Chambre verte*; 1319, *La Vallée de la Solle*; 1320, *Sommet de carrière boisée*; 1321, *Vallonements boisés au forêt*; 1322, *La Vallée de la Solle*; 1323, *La Clairière au Chien Noir*; and 1324, *Une Mare à Franchard*.

11. The transformation of the forest of Fontainebleau was most effectively promoted by Claude-François Denecourt (1788–1875) who, from the early 1830s, worked tirelessly to attract visitors to the forest through the publication of maps and guidebooks, the marking of routes, the designation of the forest's obligatory "sights," and the naming of its most spectacular trees and rocks. His *Promenades dans la forêt de Fontainebleau* (1844) and *Guide du voyageur et de l'artiste à Fontainebleau* (1850) instructed tourists, whose numbers vastly grew after the opening of railway lines to Corbeil (1842) and to Fontainebleau (1849), in the proper enjoyment of the forest.

12. "Alors, quittant le grand chemin, il grimpeait à l'aventure au hasard de la route serpentante. Il se glissait entre les pierres d'où se dressait l'arbre sans terre et sans ombre, le grêle bouleau. Il s'enfonçait dans les fougères... se glissait entre des écartements de roc, marchait sous des tortils d'arbres étouffés, étranglés entre deux blocs et poussant de côté une branche sans feuille qui courait en l'air comme une mèche de fouet." Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *Manette Salomon*, 2d ed. (Paris, 1897), 243. The chapter describing a walk

through the forest from Bas-Bréau to the Gorges d'Apremont, to which the passage cited refers, and farther on to the Rochers et Gorges de Franchard, was written after a stay at Barbizon in 1865.

13. See Daniel Challe and Bernard Marbot, *Les Photographes de Barbizon* (Paris, 1991), 14–23. The key figure in Corot's involvement with photography was his close friend Constant Dutilleux (1807–1865), the owner of a lithographic printing firm in Arras and an active amateur photographer who produced a series of photographs of the forest of Fontainebleau between 1851 and 1864. Dutilleux' pupil, Eugène Cuvelier (1837–1900), also of Arras, became one of the chief photographic artists working in the forest, befriended and appreciated by Jean-François Millet and the painters of Barbizon. Corot's actual engagement with photographic processes was due to Cuvelier's father, Adalbert Cuvelier (d. 1871), the co-inventor with Constant Dutilleux and Léandre Grandguillaume (1807–1855) of the process of cliché-verre, a technique of photographic printmaking which Corot practiced under their guidance from 1855 to 1858. Of the two sons-in-law of Dutilleux, the one, Charles Desavary (1837–1885), became the photographer of Corot's work, the other, Alfred Robaut (1830–1909), his biographer and the cataloguer of his work.

14. Challe and Marbot 1991, 18, note 20.

References

- 1905 Robaut: 3:26, no. 1313, as *Fontainebleau, rocher dans l'ombre sous la feuille*, 1860–1865.
 1942 Dale: 22, repro.
 1953 Dale: 30, repro.
 1965 NGA: 31.
 1965a Dale: 39, repro.
 1969 Durbe, Dario, and Damigella, Maria. *La Scuola di Barbizon*. Milan: 52, color pl. XXVI.
 1972 Hours: 48, fig. 54.
 1973 Bouret, Jean. *The Barbizon School*. Greenwich, Conn.: 81, color repro. (French ed.: [Neuchâtel, 1972]).
 1975 NGA: 78, repro.
 1984 Walker: 432, no. 619, repro.
 1985 NGA: 98, repro.

1943.15.1 (761)

The Eel Gatherers

1860–1865

Oil on fabric, 60.5 × 81.5 (23³/₄ × 32)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. P. H. B. Frelinghuysen in memory of her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer

Inscriptions

At lower right: COROT

Technical Notes: The painting was executed on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The original tacking margins have been removed, but cusping evident along all edges suggests the painting has not been cut down. The warm off-white ground is allowed to show through in the scumbles in the top left corner and in the half-tones in the trees. Infrared reflectography reveals no preparatory underdrawing or changes. The paint layer, applied in a fluid and loose manner in the foliage in the background, thickens to an appreciable impasto in the highlights of the figures and tree trunks, and in patches of luminous sky. A clear varnish covers the picture surface. The painting is very well preserved.

Provenance: Alfred de Knyff [1819–1885], Paris, by 1878. Erwin Davis, New York; sold 1 May 1893 to (Durand-Ruel et Cie., New York), as *Les Pêcheurs d'anguilles*; sold that same day to Henry Osborne Havemeyer [1847–1907] and his wife, née Louisine Waldron Elder [1855–1929], New York; their daughter, Mrs. P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, née Adaline Havemeyer [1884–1963], Morristown, New Jersey.

Exhibited: Paris, 1878, Universal Exposition, no. 204, as *La Rive verte*. Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais; Ottawa, Musée des Beaux-Arts du Canada; MMA, 1996–1997, *Corot, 1796–1875*, no. 122, repro.

THE VIEW leads into the green depth of a forest of young, slender trees. A tall stem, rising near the middle of the foreground, divides the picture space into two unequal parts. At the left, its recession is walled off by dense forest growth, while at the right a stream, flowing beneath arching branches, opens a deep passage into a remote, sun-lit distance. The picture's two sides are not clearly related; the tree rising between them divides them and at the same time masks their division. In the undergrowth at the left, a young woman kneels, holding her baby, and faces a girl who approaches her carrying a small load in her upgathered apron. A boy climbs a tree in the shadowy forest

behind them. To the right, farther along the stream, a man wading in the water may be “gathering eels,” as the picture's current title would suggest, though his action is not entirely clear. At its first exhibition, in 1878, the painting was called *La Rive verte (The Green River)*, a descriptive title that Robaut retained for his catalogue raisonné.¹ Its present title goes back only to the New York sale by Durand-Ruel in 1893, when it was somewhat misleadingly labeled *Les Pêcheurs d'anguilles (The Eel Gatherers)*.²

The picture's right half, with its stream flowing beneath a canopy of foliage, has the lively accuracy of a study from nature. It is probable that this part originated in a sketch painted out-of-doors,³ which would account for the vividness of its effects of sunlight and reflections on water. The added figure of a fisherman wading in the forest stream beneath arching branches occurs also in another painting of the same period, *Le Pêcheur d'écrevisses sous bois*,⁴ which largely corresponds to the right half of the National Gallery's *Eel Gatherers*.

By contrast, the picture's other half, structureless and spatially unresolved, has the look of a studio improvisation that has been joined, somewhat incoherently, to an actual landscape study. Corot seems to have left this part of the composition in a state of only partial completion. The wire-thin tree that rises to the left of the picture's middle, behind the figure of the walking girl, dematerializes into a long wavy line drawn with the brush. Similarly, the web of branchings in the picture's upper part, very summarily suggested by lines of dark paint, has remained at the stage of a monochrome underdrawing and was undoubtedly intended to be worked out more fully in color.⁵ The group of mother and child in the picture's foreground is a variant of a motif that Corot had used earlier, and in a similar woodland setting, in *Les Premiers pas dans la verdure* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, La Rochelle) which Robaut dated to about 1860.⁶

Notes

1. Robaut 1905, 3:104, no. 1532bis.

2. Frelinghuysen et al. 1993, 309, no. 109.

3. Similar views along forest streams flowing under arched branches occur occasionally among Corot's naturalist studies of the 1850s and 1860s, as for instance in the two versions of *Cours d'eau sous les arbres* (Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 789 and 795; 1850–1855) and in *Bord d'une rivière sous les arbres* (Robaut 1455; 1860–1870). In other



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *The Eel Gatherers*, 1943.15.1

studies of very similar conception, a wet, light-reflecting path running between trees takes the place of the stream, as in *Chemin humide à travers bois* (Robaut 1533 and 1534).

4. Robaut 1905, 3:70, no. 1458, dated by Robaut to 1860–1870.

5. Excessively slender, sparsely foliated trees, with trunks and branches that undulate as if windswept are among the distinctive mannerisms that are found in Corot's late landscapes. But when fully realized his stylized trees still possess a degree of material substance, suggested by highlit contours and edges of shadow. In *The Eel Gatherers*, especially in its only partly finished left and upper areas, many of the stems and branches are indicated merely by guiding lines and are as yet without body.

6. Robaut 1905, 3:40, no. 1356. The picture was acquired by the museum in 1865. Robaut dated it to about 1860.

References

- 1905 Robaut: 3:104, no. 1532bis, as *La Rive verte*.
1931 Havemeyer: 332.
1965 NGA: 30.
1968 NGA: 24, repro.
1975 NGA: 74, repro.
1982 Weitzenhoffer, Frances. *The Creation of the Havemeyer Collection, 1875–1900*. Ph.D. dissertation, City University of New York: 199, 217, no. 3.
1984 Walker: 432, no. 617, repro.
1985 NGA: 95, repro.
1993 Frelinghuysen et al.: 309, no. 109.

1955.9.1 (1418)

Ville-d'Avray

c. 1865

Oil on fabric, 49.3 × 65.5 (19^{3/8} × 25^{3/4})

Pecci-Blunt Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a very fine plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric with a gauze interleaf. The tacking margins have been removed. Narrow strips were inadvertently trimmed from all four edges of the painting when the tacking margins were cropped and subsequently realigned to the painting, laid down on the gauzelike interlining and adhered to the lining fabric. A thick, creamy white ground covers the original support. On this, a light tan layer of underpaint has been brushed in some places. Infrared reflectography reveals traces of a sketchy graphite underdrawing and contour adjustments in the buildings at the left. It also shows small changes in the foreground trees (fig. 1). Thin, dry paint has been

scumbled over the toned ground to suggest the water of the lake. A slightly thicker paint of more fluid consistency forms the passages that describe the land in the foreground and in the distance. Paint reserves for the major forms in the composition are visible throughout the painting, indicating that no major changes occurred in the course of execution. Impasto is present only in the scattered, thickly dabbed highlights in the clouds and in the figures, flowers, and trees of the foreground. A slightly grayed varnish, applied in 1956, covers the picture's surface. Under ultraviolet light, some retouched paint losses become visible along its left, upper, and right edge. Otherwise, the paint layer is well preserved.

Provenance: (Boussod Valadon, Paris) in 1890. M. Bruneau, Paris, by 1895. Ferdinand Blumenthal [d. 1914], Paris. Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt [d. 1965], Paris, by 1941.

Exhibited: Paris, Palais Galliera, 1895, *Exposition du centenaire de Corot*, no. 23, as *Maison de Corot à Ville d'Avray*. Washington, The Phillips Memorial Gallery, 1941, *The Functions of Color in Painting*, no. 17. New York, Wildenstein & Co., 1942, *The Serene World of Corot: An Exhibition in Aid of the Salvation Army War Fund*, no. 52, repro., as *L'Etang de Ville d'Avray*. PMA, 1946, *Corot*, no. 52, repro., as *L'Etang de Ville d'Avray*. Oslo, Munch Museum, 1980, on loan with permanent collection. Washington, The Phillips Collection, 1988–1989, *The Pastoral Landscape: The Modern Vision*, no. 108, repro. Munich, Neue Pinakothek, 1990, *Französische Impressionisten und ihre Wegbereiter aus der National Gallery of Art, Washington, und dem Cincinnati Art Museum*, no. 3, repro. Athens, Pinacothèque Nationale Musée Alexandre Soutzo, 1992, *From El Greco to Cézanne: Masterpieces of European Painting from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*, no. 38, repro. Munich, Haus der Kunst, 1996, *Corot, Courbet, und die Maler von Barbizon: Les Amis de la nature*, no. B21, repro. Mexico City, Museo Nacional de Antropología, 1996–1997, *Obras maestras de la National Gallery of Art, Washington*, unnumbered catalogue.

IN THE DISTANCE, beyond a sheet of still, reflecting water, the houses of Ville-d'Avray emerge from a wooded slope. In the foreground, on a bank covered with tall grasses and flowers, a woman carrying a basket on her back stands near two willows that display the first, tender foliage of spring. Farther to the right, half-hidden in the grass, an angler has cast his line.

Ville-d'Avray, a small town in a suburban, park-like setting, about ten kilometers southwest of Paris, was Corot's favorite summer residence. In 1817 his father had bought a country house there,



Fig. 1. Infrared reflectogram (1.5–2.0 microns) of 1955.9.1 showing a painted-out figure of a girl to the left of the tree

a substantial, three-storied structure built in the eighteenth century, surrounded by a garden that contained a small pavilion. The property still exists next to one of Ville-d'Avray's large ponds from which it is separated by a causeway that, running along the water's edge, connects the Corot estate with a cluster of buildings, known as the Maisons Cabassud, some way farther on.¹ Setting up his easel at a window of his parental home, Corot often painted the view down this causeway toward the Cabassud houses.²

Even more frequently, he moved to a position on the pond's opposite shore from which the Cabassud and Corot houses are seen lying a short distance apart on a wooded slope reflected in the water below. This is the view he took in the National Gallery's *Ville-d'Avray*. The large pond occupies the middle distance, and above it, at the left, the Cabassud houses rise, an impressive, complex mass, cream and reddish ocher in the mild sunlight. Corot's own house, half-hidden by foliage, appears in the picture's middle, framed by the forked branches of the smaller of the two trees in the foreground.

Corot had chosen much the same view, some forty years earlier, in about 1825, for one of his earliest paintings of Ville-d'Avray (fig. 2), when the sparse growth of recently planted trees still allowed an unobstructed view of the family estate. In later years, he was fond of revisiting this prospect, imbued for him with deeply personal associations. In the versions of the scene painted in the 1860s and early 1870s, he progressively distanced the buildings, reminders of his youth and family, behind screening trees and expanses of reflecting water, while retaining the division of the image into three receding, spatially distinct zones—an immediate foreground with figures and trees, a sheet of water in the mid-distance, and houses half-hidden in foliage on the far horizon.³

But in the National Gallery's *Ville-d'Avray*, he not only gave unusual prominence to the Cabassud houses but lent their complexity an almost palatial



Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Ville d'Avray—The Pond, The House of M. Corot Père and Its Kiosk*, oil on canvas, 1825, Courtesy of Richard Green, London



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Ville-d'Avray*, 1955.9.1



Fig. 3. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Vue de Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang au bouleau devant les villas*, oil on canvas, 1872–1873, Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 874.1

aspect, recalling Italy. This view of the distance with its sunlit buildings was evidently painted, or at least started, on the spot, in the realistic style Corot used when face to face with a particular motif in nature. By contrast, the foreground is a studio improvisation in the familiar, feathery manner of his late, composed landscapes. Corot's practice of editing landscapes begun out-of-doors by the addition, in the studio, of imaginary foregrounds was designed to convert private nature studies into exhibitable pictures.⁴ By this method, he reconciled the disparate tendencies of his landscape painting—direct work from nature and compositional arrangement. His chief device for achieving this fusion was the careful spacing of the framing trees in his foregrounds, by which he imposed an artificial order and balance on studies freely painted from nature. He painted these trees—disposable elements drawn from a personal repertoire of ideal forms—in a hazily suggestive manner, in contrast to the materiality of the more distant buildings. The effect is a strange reversal of ordinary visual experience: the faraway appears more distinct and substantial than the near.

Robaut dated the National Gallery's *Ville-d'Avray* to 1860–1865,⁵ possibly a little too early. Its closest relatives among Corot's many versions of the scene include *Ville-d'Avray. Paysans au bord de l'étang en vue de villas*, formerly in the Faure collection, which Robaut dated to 1865–1870,⁶ and *Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang au bouleau devant les villas* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Rouen (fig. 3),⁷ which is known to have been painted in 1872–1873. Corot

elaborated the compositional scheme basic to all these views in his largest painting of the subject, *Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang vu à travers la feuillée*, which he showed at the Salon of 1870.⁸

Notes

1. Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:28; see also Toussaint 1975, 18, no. 3, and Clarke 1991, 11–13.

2. An early instance of his choice of this view is *Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang, la maison Cabassud*, Louvre (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 284), of which Toussaint (1975, 18, no. 3) established the date as about 1825. Among the later versions are *Ville-d'Avray. Le Chemin entre l'étang et la propriété Corot*, private collection, about 1835 (Robaut 916), and a study of the same view painted about 1850, in a private collection (Robaut 516). A still later example, *Ville-d'Avray. Le Chemin entre la propriété de Corot et l'étang* (Robaut 1487) was dated by Robaut to 1865–1870. (For a chronology of Corot's successive views of the site, see Toussaint 1975, 18, no. 3, and 45, no. 36.)

3. Among Corot's many views of the pond behind trees, with the villas on the far shore, the ones most closely related to the NGA's *Ville-d'Avray* in arrangement of foreground, water, and distance, are those catalogued by Robaut (1905, 3:80) as nos. 1488–1491, 1497–1498, all dated by him about 1865–1870. Corot's entry at the Salon of 1870, *Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang vu à travers la feuillée* (Robaut 2003) is the largest and most elaborate of this series. See note 8 below.

4. Concerning Corot's addition of stylized, imaginary foregrounds to views taken from nature, Toussaint (1975, 60, no. 57) observes, instancing his views of Mantes cathedral, "On constate que pour beaucoup de vues prises sur nature, comme celle-ci, le peintre, à partir de 1860, adapta à une représentation fidèle du site un parti décoratif qui donne à ces oeuvres un caractère

intermédiaire entre le paysage composé et le paysage réaliste.”

5. *Ville-d'Avray. Une Paysanne debout auprès de deux saules sur le bord de l'étang (villas au fond)*, Robaut 1905, 3:88, no. 1505.

6. Robaut 1905, 3:80, no. 1488.

7. Robaut 1905, 3:266, no. 2062. Robaut reports that Corot began this painting, working at the site, in the winter of 1872 when the trees were still leafless (a photograph taken at the time illustrates that state, 3:267). As the season advanced, Corot filled in their foliage, and in May 1873 gave the completed picture to Robaut. The arrangement and stylization of the foreground trees, nevertheless, are entirely artificial.

8. Robaut 1905, 3:244, no. 2003. This picture of exceptionally large dimensions, according to Robaut 96 × 123 cm, was formerly in the Bartlett collection, Boston.

References

- 1905 Robaut: 3:88–89, no. 1505, repro.
1962 Cairns and Walker: 154, repro.
1963 Walker: 323, repro.
1965 NGA: 30.
1966 Cairns and Walker: 2:414, repro.
1968 NGA: 24, repro.
1972 Hours: 47, fig. 52.
1975 NGA: 76, repro.
1984 Hours: 43, fig. 48.
1984 Walker: 432, no. 621, repro.
1985 NGA: 96, repro.
1991 Coman: no. 2, repro.

1963.10.108 (1772)

Agostina

1866

Oil on fabric, 132.4 × 97.6 (52 1/8 × 38 3/8)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT

Technical Notes: The picture is painted on a medium-fine plain-weave fabric that is lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been flattened and incorporated into the face of the painting. Although the painting is therefore slightly expanded, the tacking margins have not been retouched to match the design. Instead, they have been painted beige, forming a narrow light-colored border around the picture. The support has been commercially primed with a creamy white ground that extends onto the flattened tacking margins. In some areas, a brown toning has been applied over the ground. Infrared reflectography reveals no underdrawing. The paint has been applied wet-on-wet in multiple layers. X-radiography indicates that the sitter's left

hand originally held a round object close to her body (fig. 1). It was next moved slightly to the right, still holding the object. In the final stage, the object was abandoned and the hand lifted to its present position, resting lightly on the ledge against which the figure leans. Other changes affected the sitter's hair, which originally lacked the looped braid that hangs along the right side of her head and did not shade her forehead as deeply as in the finished painting (fig. 2). A decorative trim initially was attached to her dress below the level of her hands. These earlier design elements are clearly visible in raking light as raised lines of paint that do not correspond to the surface design. The large building at the extreme left of the background was added as an afterthought. A discolored varnish covers the picture. The painting is well preserved, with retouching confined to the extreme edges and a few scratches in the sitter's bosom.

Provenance: Breysse, Paris, by 1875. Jean-Baptiste Faure [1830–1914], Paris; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 29 April 1878, no. 15). Jules Paton, Paris, by 1884.¹ (Bousod, Valadon et Cie., Paris). With Goupil, London, by 1907. Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, by 1909; from whom purchased June 1931 by Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1875, *Exposition de l'oeuvre de Corot*, no. 52, as *Etude de femme*. London, Goupil Gallery, 1907, *Exposition d'art français*.² Paris, Salon d'Automne, 1909, *Retrospective de figures de Corot*, no. 11, as *L'Italienne Agostina*. Paris, Galeries Bernheim-Jeune, 1925, *Exposition d'oeuvres des XIX^e et XX^e siècles*, no. 16, repro., cover. Paris, Galerie La Renaissance, 1928, *Portraits et figures de femmes, Ingres à Picasso*, no. 43. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist.

COROT painted this imposing portrait of a costumed artist's model in his Paris studio during February 1866. Alfred Robaut, who, in his catalogue of Corot's work, surprisingly referred to the exceptionally large and highly finished painting as a “study,”³ received confirmation of its date from Eugène Lavieille (1820–1889), a pupil and frequent painting companion of the master, who had witnessed its execution while painting his own version of the model's pose, which he inscribed “Dans l'atelier de M. Corot, février 1866.”⁴

Agostina, a tall, amply proportioned, mature woman dressed in the costume of the Roman countryside, stands impressively dominant, as if personifying Italy. She stands at a low parapet that overlooks a hill town in the hazy distance. Shown



Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1963.10.108, detail of sitter's left hand

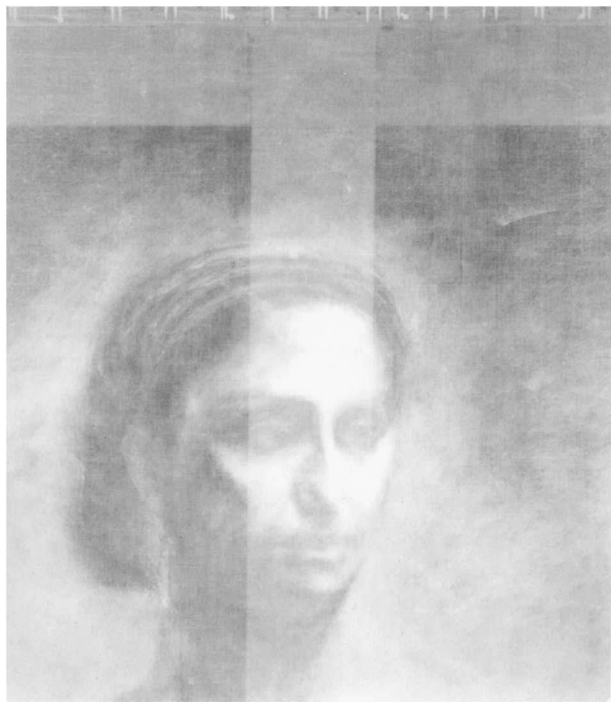


Fig. 2. X-radiograph of 1963.10.108, detail of sitter's face

life-size, at knee-length, she wears her country clothes with aristocratic dignity. A low-cut white shift beneath a black bodice exposes her shoulders and part of her broad chest. Her arms are sheathed in detached blue sleeves. With her right hand she raises a corner of the richly brocaded apron that covers her black skirt. Her head and bust are modeled by the play of shadows cast by the studio light that, descending from the upper right, underlines the salience of her figure against the more sketchily suggested, imaginary background.

Figure painting was Corot's private recreation in the last two decades of his life, when he was overwhelmed by the commercial demand for his landscapes.⁵ For the pleasure of working, without giving any thought to sale or exhibition, he often booked a model for a week, dressed her in one of the Italian costumes that were among his studio properties, made her assume a simple pose, and painted her against the background of an imaginary landscape. Made for their own sake, these studies, numbering about three hundred, form an important part of his work. In his lifetime, they remained secreted in his studio, known only to his intimates.⁶ They express the privacy of his intention by their modest size, freedom of handling, and quiet intimacy of feeling, qualities that in his diffidence Corot believed made them unsuitable for display to the wider public.

Within this long series of individual female figures, to which it is thematically related, *Agostina* occupies an exceptional position: its assertive monumentality,⁷ statuesque pose, and Roman gravity are, in fact, without close parallel in Corot's work. He usually showed his models as withdrawn into their privacy, reading, dreaming, lost in thought. Their young faces, though quietly expressive, revealed little of their personality. *Agostina*, by contrast, confronts the viewer unmistakably as a portrait. Corot made no effort to soften the severe individuality of his model's appearance. Her face, with its low, wide brow, its heavily shaded, deep-set eyes, and its long, slightly aquiline nose above the small, unsmiling mouth, expresses a distinct character rather than conventional beauty. In type and physical stature—large, regal, somewhat masculine—she stands in striking contrast to the more delicately feminine figures he normally favored. The professional model who posed for the picture, though certainly found in Paris, was Italian, as



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Agostina*, 1963.10.108

were many artist's models posing in Parisian studios. She evidently appealed to Corot because of her strongly marked Mediterranean features, which accord well with the costume in which he chose to dress her. Exhibited posthumously as *Etude de femme* in 1875⁸ and labeled *L'Italienne* in the sale of the Faure collection in 1878,⁹ the picture was first published as *L'Italienne Agostina* in Robaut's catalogue of 1905.¹⁰

Its exceptional position in Corot's work may account for the fact that his biographers and commentators have found little to say about it. *Agostina* has often been illustrated but rarely discussed in the Corot literature. Its formal qualities, when considered at all, have called forth an incoherent variety of associations. Cipriano Oppo likened it to a work of "antique sculpture, robust and gracious at the same time."¹¹ Julius Meier-Graefe stressed its painterly richness but also mentioned its "powerful expression" and asked, "was there perchance an *Agostina* on Corsica before Napoleon's time, when the island fought for its liberty?"¹² Others compared the "impassive beauty of the majestic figure" to the "greatest paintings of the Renaissance."¹³

Fiske Kimball and Lionello Venturi, on the other hand, found grounds for criticism in what they saw as a conflict between the picture's painterly and sculptural qualities.¹⁴ Its style has been attributed to a wide diversity of influences. Corot's large figure paintings reminded Fritz Novotny of "the two greatest Dutch masters, Rembrandt and Vermeer."¹⁵ John Walker likened *Agostina* to "the heroic women of Piero della Francesca" but admitted that she was "much closer to actuality, to the living model, than her fifteenth century forebears."¹⁶ To Daniel Baud-Bovy she expressed "the calm nobility of the women of Trastevere" and was a memory of Corot's youthful travels in Italy.¹⁷

A more immediate influence than that of Renaissance Italy or seventeenth-century Holland may have been the romantic genre of heroized portraits of women in Italian costume that had originated with French painters working in Rome in the early 1820s, not long before Corot's first Roman stay. Among its initiators were Léopold Robert (1794–1835), Jean-Victor Schnetz (1787–1870), and Corot's teacher, Achille-Etna Michallon (1796–1822). Searching for local color in Rome, in the years of the papal government's campaign to stamp out banditry, these artists discovered the untamed beauty of the wives of imprisoned brigands, fierce young women, seen loitering near the jails or begging in the streets, whom they persuaded to pose for them.¹⁸ Surrounded by an aura of outlawry, passion, and persecution, several of these women achieved a personal celebrity. Pictures of bronzed, raven-haired brigands' wives in their handsome costumes became for many seasons a staple of the Paris Salons. Committed to landscape painting, Corot showed little interest in the dramatic possibilities of picturesque genre at the time. His early studies of Italian women in folk costume, dating from 1825–1828, were modest exercises in painting from life, probably intended for future use as accessories in landscape compositions.¹⁹ Nor did he look back to the grand romantic tradition later, when in the 1850s and 1860s he posed models in Italian costume in his Paris studio, showing them at a distance, in imaginary landscapes, quietly absorbed in reading, music making, or meditation.²⁰ But in the last decade of his life he occasionally departed from this formula by posing his models in emphatically close view, as bust-length portraits of nearly life-size, giving them a weighty

Fig. 3. Anselm Feuerbach, *Nanna with a Fan*, oil on canvas, 1861, Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie, inv. 1426



physical and emotional presence that distinguishes them from his idyllic *rêveuses*.²¹ It is to these late paintings that *Agostina* is more closely related, though she stands apart among them, recalling by her proud bearing the Italian heroines of the earlier romantic tradition and raising the possibility that Corot may have been passingly influenced by that tradition's mid-century revival in works by artists of a younger generation, such as Frederic Leighton (1830–1896)²² and Anselm Feuerbach (1829–1880),²³ who were active in Rome at the time Corot painted *Agostina*. It is, at any rate, to their exactly contemporary portraits of Italian women of the people, grandly costumed and heroically posed, that Corot's *Agostina* bears a suggestive resemblance (fig. 3).

Corot's biographers are agreed that he painted his Italian costume pieces for his own amusement, without thought of exhibition.²⁴ Modern commentators, noting their lack of a definable content, have sometimes concluded that he composed them without attaching any particular meaning to the figures in them and using them merely as pretexts for pure painting.²⁵

It is no doubt significant that in fifty years of regular exhibiting at the Paris Salon, Corot showed only a single picture of this kind.²⁶ But *Agostina*, by its challenging format, its high finish, and brilliance of effect, has all the appearance of a show-piece calculated for the Salon.²⁷ It is without any doubt a work for the public, not a private experiment or a casual improvisation. Begun in February 1866, the picture could have been entered in that year's exhibition, which included two landscapes by Corot, one of which was purchased by the emperor.²⁸ What held Corot back from submitting this picture, so eminently suitable for public display, remains unknown;²⁹ it is difficult to believe that when painting it he did not think of the Salon, where it would have revealed him as a master of the figure to a public accustomed to think of him only as a painter of landscape. The immediate circumstances of his life at the time offer no clue to his intentions. Corot visited the Salon of 1866, in the company of his friends Charles-François Daubigny and François-Louis Français, to examine Courbet's pictures on view there and to admire his own.³⁰ Shortly thereafter, while staying with a friend at Noisy-le-Grand in June, he suffered the severe attack of the gout that immo-



Fig. 4. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Woman Reading in a Landscape*, oil on canvas, 1869–1870, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Louise Senff Cameron, in memory of her uncle Charles H. Sneff, 1928.90

bilized him for the rest of that year and for most of 1867.³¹ It was only in 1869 that—for the first and only time—he ventured to submit a figure painting to the Salon, choosing for the purpose *Woman Reading* (fig. 4), a work of much smaller size and more modest ambition than *Agostina*.

Notes

1. According to Chester Dale papers in NGA curatorial files. The painting does not appear in the only recorded sale of the Paton collection, held 24 April 1883.

2. Gabriel Mourey, "Une Exposition d'art français à Londres," *Les Arts* 66 (June 1907): 30.

3. Robaut 1905, 3:114, no. 1562.

4. Robaut 1905, 3:114, no. 1562. Moreau-Nélaton (in Robaut 1905, 1:243) specifies: "La semaine de modèle

était sa récréation favorite. Il y conviait volontiers les petits amis: Lavieille, Oudinot, le jeune Badin.”

5. Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:179: “Son délassément favori c’est de prendre une semaine de modèle, d’affubler une de ces faubouriennes qui courent les ateliers d’oripeaux plus ou moins italiens et de s’appliquer à peindre, pour le plaisir de peindre, pour la joie de fixer sur la toile un beau regard noir et d’harmoniser le blanc d’une chemise avec le jaune d’une manche ou le rouge d’un jupon.”

6. Dumesnil 1875, 82–83. “Du reste, Corot faisait ces peintures pour son plaisir, pour lui, et pas pour les montrer” (Baud-Bovy 1957, 127). Realizing that his figure paintings were not appreciated, he kept them in his “armoire secrète” où il gardait ses chefs-d’oeuvre les plus chers, qu’il ne montrait que rarement” (Bazin 1942, 58).

7. Measuring 132.4 × 97.6 cm, *Agostina* is by far the largest of Corot’s figure paintings, only rivaled, at a distance, by *Femme à la grand toque et à la mandoline* (1850–1855; Robaut 1060), which measures 112 × 88 cm. His late, relatively large bust-length figure paintings measure on average 80 × 64 cm.

8. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1875, no. 52. “Agostina” may have been the actual name of the model. Recent studies have sought to identify her as Agostina Segatori (1841–1910), an artist’s model working in Paris, who in later years owned a café, Le Tambourin, in the boulevard Clichy, and was befriended by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) who, in 1887, painted her seated at one of the tables of her café (Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam). Concerning Agostina Segatori, see also *The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh*, 2 vols. (Greenwich, Conn., n.d. [1978]), 2:519, 521; Jan Hulsker, *Vincent and Theo van Gogh* (Ann Arbor, Mich., n.d. [c. 1990]), 254–255; and Matthias Arnold, *Vincent van Gogh* (Munich, 1993), 464.

9. *Catalogue de tableaux modernes dépendant de la collection de M. Faure* [auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] (Paris, 29 April 1878), no. 15.

10. Robaut 1905, 3:114, no. 1562.

11. Oppo 1925, 20.

12. Meier-Graefe 1930, 101.

13. NGA *Art Series: French Painting*, no. 7, 1941–1944, 5.

14. Kimball and Venturi 1948, 168, no. 77.

15. Novotny 1960, 108.

16. Walker 1976, 430.

17. Baud-Bovy 1957, 126.

18. F. Feuillet de Conches, *Léopold Robert, sa vie, ses oeuvres, sa correspondance* (Paris, 1854), 39–47; see also the discussion of this episode, and its effects, by Blandine Lesage, in Vincent Pomarède et al., *Achille-Etna Michalson*, Les Dossiers du Louvre (Paris, 1994), 40.

19. Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 61–64, 86, 88, 109, III.

20. Robaut 1905, 2: nos. 380, 381, 387, 389, 662–668.

21. Robaut 1905, 3: 1426, 1431, 1507, 1513, 1563, 1565, 1566, 1576, 1583, 1995, 2130, 2136, 2147. Dumesnil (1875, 82–83) noted that “En 1865 et plus tard, il se mit à peindre de nouveau des figures et des académies, mais plus grandes que celles qu’on voit d’ordinaire dans ses tableaux; il était éloigné alors de la précision de ses pre-

miers dessins d’Italie... Du reste, Corot faisait ces peintures pour lui, pour son plaisir, et non pour les montrer en public, et si plusieurs, par la suite, sont sorties de l’atelier, nous pouvons assurer qu’il a eu la main forcée.” The influence of Renaissance portraiture is apparent in the poses of several of these studies, most clearly the case in the Louvre’s *Femme à la perle* (1868–1870; Robaut 1507), as Meier-Graefe (1930, 607) and Bazin (1942, 60–61) have shown, but plays no very significant role in that of *Agostina*.

22. The English painter Frederic Leighton, painting in Rome in 1858–1859, discovered a Roman artist’s model, Nanna Risi, a woman of statuesque beauty and markedly Italian type, not unlike the one who appears in *Agostina*, who posed for him in both popular Italian and Renaissance costume. He worked these portrait studies into formal exhibition pictures, several of which he showed at the Royal Academy in 1859; see Leonee Ormond and Richard Ormond, *Lord Leighton* [exh. cat. Royal Academy.] (New Haven and London, 1975), 41–42 and figs. 57–59. Leighton was a close friend of the Italian painter Giovanni Costa (1826–1893) who, during visits to Paris in 1861 and 1862, became acquainted with Corot and may have brought him information about recent artistic currents in Rome’s international milieu.

23. Following Leighton by a year, the German painter Anselm Feuerbach produced no fewer than twenty-five large, heroized portraits of the model Nanna Risi in 1860–1865, posing her in costume or modern dress (see Jürgen Ecker, *Anselm Feuerbach, Leben und Werk* [Munich, 1991], 214–250).

24. See note 5 above. In his late figure paintings, and especially in the large *Agostina*, Corot used the opportunity offered by the Italian costumes to experiment with strong colors in daring combinations, developing a palette entirely different from that by which he produced the silvery tonalities of his landscape compositions. Meier-Graefe (1930, 101) remarked concerning *Agostina*, “das ländliche Gewand strotzt von Farbe” (see also Bazin 1942, 60).

25. Bazin (1962, 11–12) argued that “pour les figures de ses vingt dernières années, l’être qu’il peint ne compte plus que comme un prétexte à faire un tableau... plus qu’en ses paysages [Corot] annonce ici les spéculations du pinceau qui seront le fait de l’âge moderne; il s’apparente à Manet et prélude à Cézanne.” While in the case of *Agostina* the relationship to Manet may seem remote, the painting in fact offers certain analogies to Manet’s *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1882, Courtauld Institute Galleries, London) in the presentation, expression, and corsage of its figure. Madeleine Hours (*Corot* [Paris, 1979], 144) wrote: “It is easy to see from this picture [*Agostina*] why Cézanne was so interested in Corot’s figures. The sense of construction, the search for density, are common goals of both artists.”

26. *Woman Reading*, exhibited as no. 550 at the Salon of 1869 (Robaut 1905, 3: no. 1563).

27. Bazin has suggested that in his late figure paintings Corot “forced his manner” to compete for “the en-

vied position of the official painters," motivated by "une sorte de remords du sens classique de la forme." "La figure est la grande expérience de la fin de la vie de Corot: celle dont il alimente sa curiosité insatisfaite d'artiste, tandis qu'il se laisse aller pour le paysage à la pente facile de l'acquit" (Bazin 1942, 60, 58).

28. At the Salon of 1866, which opened 1 May, Corot showed the landscape compositions *Le Soir* (Robaut 1637) and *Solitude* (Robaut 1638), and an etching, *Environ de Rome* (Robaut 3128). Napoleon III bought *Solitude* for the empress.

29. As a member of that year's Salon jury, Corot was *hors concours* and could have submitted *Agostina* without fear of rejection. It may be noted that, though he did not enter the painting in the Salon, he departed in this instance from his custom of secreting his figure paintings in his studio. The picture was, at any rate, no longer in his possession at the time of his death and therefore did not figure in the sale of his studio in 1875, by which time it was already owned by M. Breysse.

30. Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:228.

31. Corot's incapacitating illness in 1866, recorded by Moreau-Nélaton (Robaut 1905, 1:234) as having begun suddenly in June, cannot have played any role in the execution of *Agostina* during February nor have interfered with whatever plans he may have made to submit the picture at that year's Salon, which had opened on 1 May.

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1942.9.11 (607)

The Artist's Studio

c. 1868

Oil on pine panel, 61.8 × 40 (24³/₈ × 15³/₄); thickness of panel, without cradle, 0.3 (1/8), with cradle, 2.1 (7/8)
Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: COROT

Technical Notes: The painting is executed on a vertically grained pine panel that has been cradled. The pine support consists of six pieces. Two large, thin pine wedges have been sandwiched together, with a smaller third piece butt-joined to this sandwich along the left side of the painting. Three smaller strips have been added along the butt-join and on the right at the back of the support. This construction suggests the panel may have had a prior function such as a shipping crate before being used as a painting support. The paint, applied over a white ground of medium thickness, is loosely brushed in thin and fluid layers throughout the background but thickens in the figure and forms a dry impasto in the highlights. Infrared reflectography does not reveal any underdrawing or design changes. In the application of paint, some areas were reserved for elements of the composition, such as the model's head and the figure of the dog. A discolored varnish covers the picture surface. Except for a small crack in the area of the sitter's shoulder and an 11.5 cm vertical crack extending up from the bottom edge center, the picture is well preserved. Some slight paint detachments along cracks were repaired by re-adhering and inpainting in November 1966.

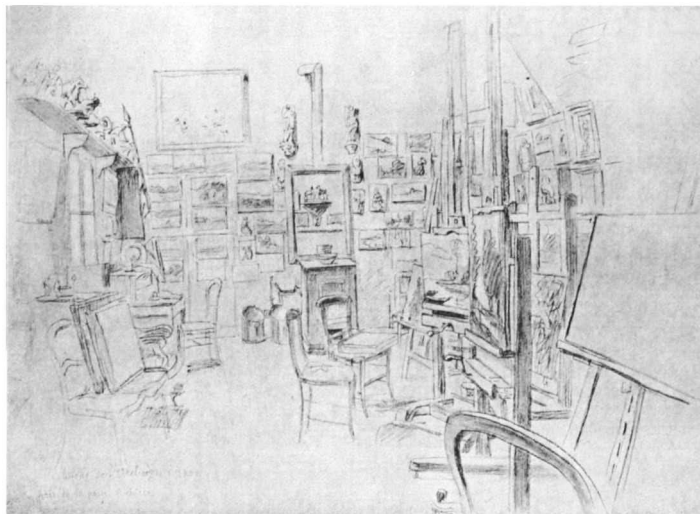
Provenance: The artist; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 26 May 1875, no. 134); purchased by Hector Brame, Paris. Jules Paton, Paris;¹ (his sale, Hôtel Drouot,

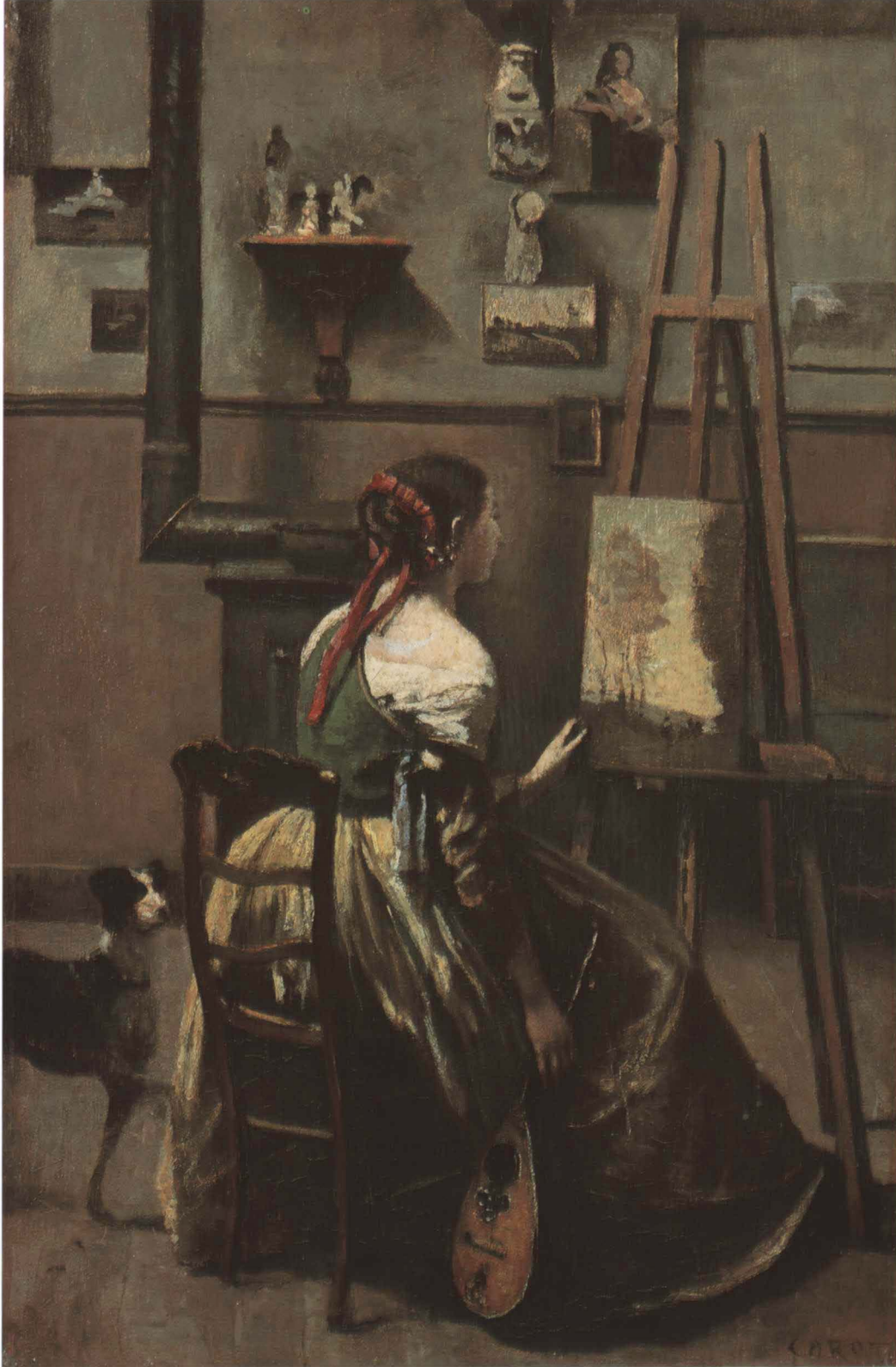
Paris, 24 April 1883, no. 35);² purchased by (Bernheim-Jeune, Paris), in whose possession it remained until at least 1889. Duz.³ Van den Eynde.⁴ (Durand-Ruel et Cie., Paris); by whom sold 1892 to Peter A. B. Widener, Lynnewood Hall, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania;⁵ inheritance from the estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park.

Exhibited: Paris, Universal Exposition, 1889, no. 163. Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais; Ottawa, Musée des Beaux-Arts du Canada; MMA, 1996–1997, *Corot, 1796–1875*, no. 136, repro. (only in Ottawa and New York).

A YOUNG MODEL wearing an Italian peasant costume is shown seated in Corot's studio before an easel that holds one of his landscapes. Her green bodice, trimmed in yellow, has slipped from her right shoulder, revealing the top of her white shift. Tied above her elbow, a blue ribbon holds the detached sleeve that covers her arm. A wide skirt of muted yellow falls in loose folds over the lower part of her body. Leaning forward, she touches the canvas with her left hand, while in her right hand, dropped to her side, she trails a mandolin by its neck. Behind her chair stands a small dog, paw up-lifted, in an attitude of alert attention.⁶ The setting is recognizable as part of the large studio in the rue Paradis-Poissonnière that was Corot's workplace in the last fifteen years of his life. The black iron stove with its pair of vertical pipes (one of which Corot has omitted from the picture for compositional reasons), the chair in which the model sits, and the wall behind her crowded with paintings can all be found in the sketch that Alfred Robaut drew of this room in 1875, at the time of Corot's death (fig. 1).⁷ A console attached to the wall beside the stovepipe holds some plasters and small sculptures. Several of the unframed canvases on that wall are recognizable, among them (from upper left to right) Corot's sketch of the fountain of the French Academy (1826–1828, Robaut 79; private collection), the *Blond Gascon Girl* (c. 1850, Robaut 459bis; Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Mass.), and, below, *The Windmill of La Côte de Picardie near Versailles* (c. 1850, Robaut 861; Louvre).⁸ The three further pictures are unidentified; the painting on the easel is a typical example of Corot's poetic landscape compositions of the 1860s.⁹ The light falls into the room from the upper left, where

Fig. 1. Alfred Robaut, "L'Atelier de Corot, 58 rue Paradis-Poissonnière," pencil, 1875, location unknown (illustrated in Robaut 1905, 1:316–317)





Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *The Artist's Studio*, 1942.9.11



Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *L'Atelier de Corot* (*The Artist's Studio*), oil on canvas, c. 1865–1866, Paris, Musée d'Orsay, RF 3745, Photo RMN



Fig. 3. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *L'Atelier de Corot* (*Jeune femme en robe rose, assise devant un chevalet et tenant une mandoline*) (*The Artist's Studio*), oil on canvas, 1868–1870, New York, Collection of Spencer and Marlene Hays, photograph courtesy of Christie's Images, New York

the studio did, in fact, have a window. It is evident that Corot took pains to make an objective record of his working place, showing it as it appeared when seen from the entrance door.

Interiors are rare in Corot's work. The few that he produced in his earlier years were painted as pastimes when bad weather prevented him from doing more serious work out-of-doors.¹⁰ In his later years, he was fond of posing costumed models in his studio,¹¹ being careful to move these young women into imaginary countrysides and to disguise them as solitary dreamers or engrossed readers. Confident of his powers as a landscape painter, he regarded his small, lyrical figural compositions with diffidence, as private experiments that, with only a single exception¹² in all the years of his long life, he kept from public exhibition.

The Artist's Studio belongs to a distinct subgroup among his late figure paintings, one in which

Corot, reversing his usual practice, replaced the romantic fiction of the sylvan dreamer with the undisguised reality of an artist's model, showing her resting between poses in the prosaic setting of his own workplace. The subject preoccupied him in the years between about 1865 and 1870, when frequent attacks of gout curtailed his travels.¹³ Confined to his studio, he produced these very firmly painted, atmospheric interiors that convey a sense of melancholy, pervaded by memories of Italy and youth, a faintly erotic sentiment, and perhaps something of the invalid's feeling of captivity. In the mundane clutter of the studio, the landscape on the easel seems an evocation of remembered sunlight, and the young woman a visitor from another world, perhaps personifying youth, music, and the artist's longing for the free out-of-doors.

Corot developed this subject in five different

variations. 1) a version at the Orsay (fig. 2; Robaut 1557) shows the model in profile view, facing a painting on an easel and holding a mandolin on her lap; she leans her head on her right hand in an attitude of melancholy reflection. 2) another version, in the Spencer and Marlene Hays collection, New York (fig. 3; Robaut 1560), presents the model sitting erect, in side view, touching the painting on the easel before her with her left hand. She has let her mandolin drop to her side and raises her face expectantly toward the viewer.¹⁴ 3) the version at the National Gallery of Art (Robaut 1558), painted on panel, varies the model's position, almost turning her into back view and causing her averted face to become nearly invisible. There exist two variants of this composition: 3a) a canvas at the Louvre (fig. 4; Robaut 1559), which closely duplicates the painting at the NGA but replaces the dog behind the model with an open paint box; and 3b) a smaller, simplified repetition on panel, at the Bal-

Fig. 4. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *L'Atelier de Corot (The Artist's Studio)*, oil on canvas, 1865–1868, Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF 1974, Photo RMN



timore Museum (fig. 5; Robaut 1559bis), which includes the dog. 4) a fourth version, formerly in the Henri Rouart collection, Paris (Robaut 2148bis), presents the model seated frontally and actually playing her mandolin while facing the easel that now has been moved to the foreground at the left. 5) a painting, dated 1870, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Lyon (fig. 6; Robaut 1561), finally shows the model seated in side view, turned to the right, looking up dejectedly from a book that in this version takes the place of the mandolin.¹⁵

The several versions of *The Artist's Studio* give no evidence of a progressive development. They were posed by different models, some in Corot's main studio (notably versions 2 and 3), others in a smaller, differently furnished and illuminated room (versions 1 and 5).¹⁶ The chronology of the series has been variously interpreted. The version in the Louvre, which was sold by Corot in early 1866 and presumably had been painted in 1865, may well be

Fig. 5. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *L'Atelier de Corot (The Artist's Studio)*, oil on panel, 1865–1868, Baltimore Museum of Art, The Cone Collection, formed by Dr. Claribel Cone and Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore, Maryland, BMA 1950.200





Fig. 6. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *The Artist's Studio*, oil on canvas, 1870, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, B-627, photograph by Studio Basset

the earliest, while that in Lyon, which Corot inscribed with the date of 1870, is perhaps the last. Alfred Robaut, whose view commands attention as that of a contemporary and friend of Corot, dated the picture in the National Gallery and its two variants to the period of 1865–1868 and assigned to the version in the Hays collection the slightly later date of 1868–1870.¹⁷ Germain Bazin (1942) proposed a somewhat different sequence, since, for reasons not made entirely clear, he believed that the composition of the National Gallery's painting derived from a combination of those of the Louvre and Hays versions and therefore had to be of later date than either of them.¹⁸ Hélène Toussaint (1975) advanced the date of this version still further, putting it as late as 1873, after the picture in Lyon, which is dated 1870.¹⁹ She also dissented from the general acceptance of the primacy of the National Gallery's version²⁰ over its double in the Louvre, arguing on the grounds of personal feel-

ing that the picture in Paris must have come before the one in Washington because of its more "authoritative handling."²¹ The question of which of these twin versions is the primary one is of considerable importance, since it is apparent that they are not merely related to one another as compositional variants but as original and extraordinarily precise copy. A comparison of the two paintings by means of superimposed photographic transparencies indicates a coincidence of contours and dimensions so exact in every detail as to rule out freehand copying; it is apparent that Corot must have used a mechanical expedient, such as tracing, to transfer the composition from the surface of the original to that of the copy.²² The fact that he hung the National Gallery's version in his living room²³ may indicate that it had a special value for him and thus weighs in favor of its priority. Why he should have taken the trouble of making a minutely exact copy of it remains obscure.

Whatever their exact date among the successive versions of *The Artist's Studio*, the picture in the National Gallery and its immediate counterparts at the Louvre and in Baltimore occupy a position somewhat apart. They lack the emotional poignancy of the other versions and instead describe a situation of serene calm in an interior presented with elaborate factuality. The young woman in them is alert, attentive, and curious; she touches the landscape on the easel before her as if to move it into a better light—she is not dreaming or meditating. The view of the studio is more inclusive than in the other versions. The even illumination clearly reveals a multitude of objects and gives a cool distinctness to the scene that is very unlike the atmospheric half-light of the other versions.

Commentators have been divided between two slightly different explanations of the meaning of the image, putting their emphasis either on its apparent realism or on its possible symbolism. Some have seen in it a record of Corot's everyday world, inspired perhaps by the painter's casual discovery of an attractive motif in the sight of a costumed model resting between poses,²⁴ or motivated more purposely by the aging artist's wish to leave to posterity a memory of himself in the guise of his place of work.²⁵ The picture's circumstantial descriptiveness and autobiographical flavor have been interpreted as a form of self-portraiture by an artist who, in his extreme modesty, produced only two

regular self-portraits in the course of his long life.²⁶ Bernheim-Jeune (1883), describing it in these terms, searched the picture for traces of Corot's presence: "One wonders—where is Corot? One looks for him, for one feels that he must be there, and it is with profound sadness that one renounces finding him."²⁷ Toussaint pointed out that the pictures on the studio wall and on the easel recapitulate main stages of his career and four main aspects of his work: the Italian views of his youth, the figures from life, French landscapes of his maturity, and the *souvenirs* of his old age.²⁸

Others have read the picture mainly as an allegory, a poetic invention in which Corot contrived to bring together the attributes of the sister arts of painting and music.²⁹ Anthony Janson (1978) described the "seemingly unpretentious little painting" as a profound "allegory... which presents an affirmation of Corot's life-work" and suggested that the young woman at the easel was not an ordinary model but the painter's "muse," contemplating "with rapt attention the creation she has inspired. In all likelihood she is not an actual model, because she corresponds to a frequent picturesque type in Corot's repertoire; instead, she is a vision, the generative force of the art he pursued throughout a career of self-sacrifice, represented here by the ascetic interior. It is her presence that turns the bleak atelier into a dream world."³⁰ The parallel of Courbet's *Studio* (1855, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), described by the artist as "a real allegory summing up seven years of my artistic life," has inevitably been invoked.³¹ The comparison between Courbet's monumental tableau vivant and the contemplative stillness of Corot's personal idyll is in fact significant, because of what it reveals of Corot's self-effacement and his ability to give emotional resonance to simple reality, in emphatic contrast to Courbet's assertive and effortful allegorizing of literal presences.

Notes

1. Robaut 1905, 3:112, no. 1558.
2. Annotated copy of Paton sale catalogue in Knoedler library.
3. According to notes by Edith Standen, in NGA curatorial files.
4. According to notes by Edith Standen, in NGA curatorial files.
5. According to notes by Edith Standen, in NGA curatorial files, and repeated in Roberts 1915 and Berenson et al. 1923.

6. The small, lightly built dog appears to be an Italian greyhound (*levrette*), spotted white and black. The introduction of the dog into the studio scene, an original and rather eccentric touch that hints at some personal significance, argues against the conjecture (Toussaint 1975, 124) that the picture at the NGA is a repetition of the version at the Louvre, in which an open paint box, a more conventional detail, takes its place.

7. Robaut 1905, 1:316–317 and 2:349, fig. 263.

8. In Robaut's drawing of Corot's studio, dated February 1875 (see fig. 1), the unframed sketches that hang on the studio wall behind the stove are not those that appear on this wall in the painting, indicating that Corot either had rearranged the hanging by 1875 or had purposely selected certain canvases for inclusion in his picture.

9. It has been suggested (Pantazzi, Pomarède, and Tinterow 1996, 320, no. 136) that the canvas on the easel may be *La Danse italienne, quatre danseuses sous les grands arbres*, Musée Saint-Denis, Reims (Robaut 1678).

10. As seems to have been the case, for instance, in the series of studies of rustic models posing indoors (Robaut 62, 88, 89, 91, etc.) that Corot painted in Italy during 1826–1828, including the NGA's *Italian Peasant Boy* (see pp. 23–29), and such rare interiors of later date as *Intérieur rustique au Mas-Bilier* (c. 1850–1854, Louvre; Robaut 824), *Intérieur de cuisine à Mantes* (Robaut 826), and *Ménagère dans sa cuisine* (Robaut 1029).

11. See Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:179, "son délassément favori c'est de prendre une semaine de modèle, d'affubler une de ces faubouriennes qui courent les ateliers d'oripeaux plus ou moins italiens et de s'appliquer à peindre pour la joie de fixer sur la toile un beau regard noir et d'harmoniser le blanc d'une chemise avec le jaune d'une manche ou le rouge d'un jupon."

12. The sole exception is his *Woman Reading in a Landscape* (MMA; Robaut 1563), shown at the Salon of 1869 as *Une Liseuse dans la campagne*.

13. In June 1866, during a stay at Noisy-le-Grand on the outskirts of Paris, Corot suffered the first serious attack of gouty rheumatism (Robaut 1905, 1:234), an illness from which he fully recovered only in 1870.

14. Bazin 1942, 113, no. 16, and 122, no. 103, observed that her pose in this version resembled, in reverse, that of one of Corot's Italian figure studies of 1826–1828, *Woman with Mandolin*, formerly G. Renand collection (Robaut 94). Because of this supposed connection with a study of much earlier date, he placed the version in the Hays collection at the beginning of the series (presumably c. 1865), together with the version in the Louvre.

15. In addition to these five most closely connected versions, another painting, *Italienne assise, jouant de la mandoline dans l'atelier* (Robaut 1427) in the Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur, can also be considered to belong to the group of the *Studio* pictures, though it differs from the others in that it does not include the landscape on an easel. Robaut dated it to 1865–1870.

16. Toussaint 1975, 122.
17. Robaut 1905, 3:112, indicated the following dates for the different versions of *The Artist's Studio*: no. 1557, Louvre, "about 1865"; NGA, "1865-68"; no. 1559, Louvre, "1865-68"; Baltimore Museum of Art, "1865-68"; no. 1560, Hays collection, "1868-70"; no. 1561, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, "1870"; and no. 2148-bis, formerly Paris, Henri Rouart collection, "about 1870."
18. Bazin 1942, 122, no. 103.
19. Toussaint 1975, 122 and 124, in agreement with Bazin 1942, believed that the picture in the Hays collection was "the first in the series" and, together with the earlier of the two *Studio* pictures in the Louvre (Robaut 1557), dated from c. 1865. But to the version represented by the second picture in the Louvre (Robaut 1559) and its counterparts at the NGA and in Baltimore she assigned a surprisingly late date, since she found in them a smoothness of handling ("facture lisse, légèrement savonneuse") that she associates with Corot's work of about 1873. She concluded on the basis of this subjective impression that these three pictures must date from Corot's very last years.
20. Although Robaut 1905, nos. 1558-1559bis, assigned the same date of 1865-1868 to all three examples of this composition, he implied by the order in which he listed them in his catalogue that he considered the picture at the NGA, which, as his entry mentions, once hung in Corot's living room, as the prime work in this set. His opinion was shared by most subsequent authors who addressed the question. Bernheim de Villers 1930, 64, 68, believed that the canvas at the Louvre (Robaut 1559) "n'est qu'une réplique du No. 1558" (the panel at the NGA). Jamot 1936, 66, expressed the same opinion, and so, more recently, did Leymarie 1979, 138.
21. Toussaint 1975, 124: "Notre sentiment nous engage à proposer celle-ci [the picture in the Louvre, Robaut 1559] comme la première; elle montre un faire plus autoritaire et plus d'accent."
22. The two paintings differ in their outer dimensions (the canvas at the Louvre, 63 × 42 cm, is wider and taller than the panel at the NGA, 61.8 × 40 cm), but this does not affect the internal dimensions of the two images, which correspond exactly.
23. This was first noted in Robaut's catalogue of the posthumous sale of Corot's studio, Corot sale 1875a, 21, no. 134: "Ce tableau était dans le salon du maître à Paris."
24. Baud-Bovy 1957, 129. This author also assumes the possible influence of Gerard Terborch II (1617-1681) and Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667).
25. Toussaint 1975, 122, who at the same time discounts the likelihood of Dutch influence.
26. The youthful *Self-Portrait at the Easel* of c. 1825, Louvre (Robaut 41), and the *Self-Portrait with Palette* of c. 1835, Uffizi, Florence (Robaut 370).
27. Paton sale 1883, 4-5.
28. Toussaint 1975, 124.
29. Bazin 1942, 122, no. 103.
30. Janson 1978, 314.
31. Janson 1978, 314; Zimmermann 1986, 229-236.

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 1973 Bazin, Germain. *Corot*. Paris: 61, 271, 290–291.
 1975 NGA: 74, repro.
 1975 Toussaint: 124, no. 111.
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 1994 Gale, Iain. *Corot*. London: 104–105, repro.
 1995 Leymarie, Jean. *Corot*. Geneva: 158–160.
 1996 Pantazzi, Pomarède, and Tinterow: 319–321, no. 136, color repro.

1985.64.9 (738)

Young Girl Reading

c. 1868

Oil on paperboard mounted on mahogany panel,

32.5 × 41.3 (12¹³/₁₆ × 16¹/₈)

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

Inscriptions

At bottom right: COROT

Technical Notes: The picture is painted on paperboard¹ that has been mounted on a horizontally grained, cradled wooden panel. Its entire surface is covered by a thick white ground that has a rough texture, like that

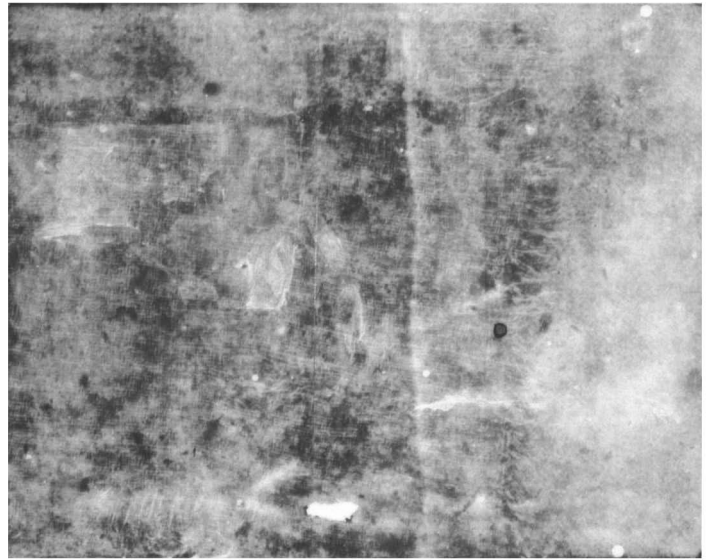


Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1985.64.9 showing fabric used to construct support

made by a paint roller. X-radiographs show that two pieces of very coarse loose-woven fabric, frayed at the edges, have been attached over a large part of the paperboard, but it is not clear whether they are embedded in the ground on the front of the paperboard or attached to the reverse (fig. 1). A dark green imprimatura layer has been thinly brushed over the textured ground. This layer contains particles of what appears to be charcoal, mixed with yellow paint. Infrared reflectography reveals no underdrawing but shows some contour adjustments in the sitter's face, particularly her jaw. Microscopic examination suggests the presence of a thin coat of varnish between the imprimatura and paint layers. The paint forming the image is not built up in several layers but applied in blocks with little overlap between adjoining areas. Beside the brush, the artist has used his finger to manipulate the paint texture along the sitter's right sleeve. The varnish is somewhat discolored. The painting is in good overall condition. Slight retouches are located along all the edges of the panel. Ultraviolet light shows areas of the picture surface to have been selectively cleaned, with a thicker, more discolored varnish over the dark colors.

Provenance: I. de la Rochenoire, by 1875.² Alexandre Dumas [1824–1895]; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 16 February 1882, no. 13, as *La Lecture, figure*). (Dumas sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 12–13 May 1892, no. 22).³ (Dumas sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 2–3 March 1896, no. 12). Gaillard collection, by 1905.⁴ Ferdinand Blumenthal [d. 1914], Paris.⁵ Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt [d. 1965], Paris, by 1936 until at least 1946.⁶ (Wildenstein & Co., New York) by whom sold 27 January 1960 to Paul Mellon [1907–1999], Upperville, Virginia.

Exhibited: Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1875, *Exposition de l'oeuvre de Corot*, no. 135, as *L'Etude*, carton. Paris, Galerie Rosenberg, 1929, *Exposition d'oeuvres de Camille J.-B. Corot*, no. 44. Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, 1936, *Exposition Corot*, no. 92. PMA, 1946, *Exhibition of Paintings by Corot*, no. 60, repro. NGA, 1966, *French Paintings from the Collections of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon and Mrs. Mellon Bruce: Twenty-fifth Anniversary Exhibition*, no. 4, repro. NSA, 1986, *Gifts to the Nation: Selected Acquisitions from the Collections of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Mellon*, unnumbered checklist, repro.

A YOUNG WOMAN, wearing a green bodice with detachable sleeves over a white blouse and a light pink skirt, is seated at a table, her head supported by her left hand, reading in the open book before her. The picture was posed in Corot's studio by an artist's model dressed in one of the Italian peasant costumes from his collection.⁷ The chair with brocaded back on which she sits is recognizable as part of the regular furniture of that studio, known from other paintings.⁸ An easel immediately behind her holds a landscape painting. Its nearly white sky echoes the brilliant whiteness of the young woman's blouse.

By its subject—a costumed model reading in Corot's studio, perhaps while resting between poses—the picture belongs to a series, including the National Gallery's *Artist's Studio*, that occupied Corot between 1865 and 1870.⁹ As a distinct thematic group, these studio interiors have received much attention,¹⁰ but the fact that *Young Girl Reading* is part of this group has not been recognized, perhaps because it differs from the others in its smaller format, the proximity of its figure, and, most of all, the rough spontaneity of its execution. Yet the setting and situation represented prove it to be one of the several versions of a scene in which Corot showed one of his young models seated in his studio, costumed for the pose, but for the moment unemployed and absorbed in private thought.

The poetic intention of Corot's figural paintings is generally expressed in fictional terms, in transformations or disguises of reality: his romantically costumed young women pose in fantasy landscapes, in attitudes suggestive of meditation, melancholy, and nostalgia. Within the large body of work of this kind, some eight studio interiors form a small, special group, exceptional in their admission of the actual reality underlying these

scenes. The young women in them are shown as what they are, professional models earning their pay in the painter's studio, rather than as nymphs or muses in a dreamscape. That they pose in costume does not detract from the realism of these scenes, since posing in costume is their normal work. But the attitudes and expressions that Corot chose for them are artistic inventions, no less than those of his more obviously artificial compositions. All of his studio pictures, with the exception only of *Young Girl Reading*, have as their common theme the encounter between an artist's model and a painting placed on an easel before her. The young women assume meditative or contemplative attitudes, they examine or even touch the paintings put before them. The fact that most of them also hold musical instruments suggests that Corot may have intended them to represent, in a manner at once realistic and allegorical, not painting only but the arts in general.

Young Girl Reading, though one of this group, does not lend itself to such an interpretation. The young woman turns her back to the studio and the paintings in it, entirely absorbed in her book. There is little show of any sentiment in this soberly observed scene. The model who sat for it does not appear in any of Corot's other studio interiors. Her light brown hair, unadorned by the ribbons or scarves worn by the other models in the series, falls loosely about her face, which—unusual for Corot—is set in a look of rather sullen concentration. Exceptional, too, is the picture's execution in a heavy, almost brutal impasto. The paint, applied with broad strokes of the loaded brush, models the forms with transitionless blocks of color. The vehement energy of this sketching technique contributes to an appearance of "modernity" that has few parallels in Corot's work. Combined with the evident spontaneity of its execution, the unusual, makeshift nature of the picture's support—a wooden panel partially covered with two unequal lengths of a frayed fabric (see fig. 1)¹¹—suggests that it was produced in a rush of fortuitous improvisation.

Notes

1. The paperboard is composed of cotton and linen fibers, confirmed by light microscopy. This accords with early accounts (Burty 1875, no. 135; Robaut 1905, 3:116, no. 1570), which describe the painting as being painted on "carton."



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Young Girl Reading*, 1885.64.9

2. Lent by I. de la Rochoenore to Burty 1875.
3. According to an annotated copy of sale catalogue in the Knoedler library, purchased by (Durand-Ruel et Cie., Paris). If, however, this is true, it is unclear how the painting came to be included in the Dumas estate sale in 1896.

4. Robaut 1905 listed the Gaillard collection in the provenance.

5. According to Wildenstein précis, dated 27 January 1960, in NGA curatorial files.

6. Lent by Pecci-Blunt to Paris 1936 and Philadelphia 1946.

7. The same costume is worn by Corot's model in *La Réveuse à la mandoline* (Robaut 1905, 3:96, no. 1513), dated by Robaut to 1860–1865.

8. It appears in the background, at the left, of *L'Atelier de Corot. Jeune femme pensive assise devant un chevalier, une mandoline à la main*, Louvre (Robaut 1557), see fig. 2 on page 70.

9. The series of studio interiors is more fully discussed and illustrated on pp. 68–75. To the paintings discussed on pp. 81–84 are to be added the thematically related *Italienne assise jouant de la mandoline*, Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur (Robaut 1427), and *Jeune Femme jouant de la mandoline dans l'atelier*, formerly Paris, Henri Rouart collection and in 1962 on the New York art market (Robaut 2148bis).

10. See Toussaint 1975, 120–124; Janson 1978, 313–314; Zimmermann 1986, 112–146; Selz 1988, 236–240.

11. This use of inferior materials is a rare occurrence in the work of Corot, who ordinarily selected his supports, whether panels or canvases, with particular care. "Corot n'employait ordinairement que des toiles fines montées sur chassis à clefs. Il aimait qu'elles fussent souples et non couvertes de préparations qui les rendent parfois cassantes. Il attachait une certaine importance à ce point de départ, disant: 'qu'il fallait d'abord, pour exécuter un bon travail, faire choix d'une bonne étoffe, la meilleure possible.'" Burty 1875, 16–17.

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1930 Bernheim de Villers: 68–70, no. 269, repro.
1946 Marceau, Henri. "Corot." *ArtN* (May): 32.

1949.1.2 (1034)

River View

1868–1872

Oil on mahogany panel, 32.2 × 40.6 × 1 (12⁵/₈ × 16 × ³/₈)
Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

Inscriptions

At lower right: COROT

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a 1-cm thick mahogany panel, horizontally grained, whose edges have been beveled at the back. A thick white ground covers its entire surface. Infrared reflectography showed no underdrawing. In blocking out main areas of his composition, Corot left reserves for the sky, the foliage, and the figure. In the course of execution he brought the sky down over foliage originally extending above the lake in the picture's left half. He also changed the slant of the foreground trees from a rightward to a leftward direction. The X-radiograph shows that the cows were painted on top of the shoreline, rather than left in reserve. The paint texture varies from fluid, thin washes in the darker areas of the foliage to scraped strokes of dry paint in the foreground. Scattered highlights in the figures, plants, and foliage are dabbed on thickly. The bright passages in the sky are applied with a wide brush, producing a lively impasto over the slightly darker underpaint. Some retouched paint losses are visible in the X-radiograph along the right and left sides of the panel. A thick, severely discolored varnish covers the surface.

Provenance: Sir John Charles Frederic Sigismund Day [d. 1908], Falkland Lodge, Newbury, Berkshire, by 1891;¹ (his estate sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, Ltd., London, 13 May 1909, no. 11); purchased by Arnold and Tripp.² (E. J. van Wisselingh and Co., Amsterdam); by whom sold 1909 to (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris);³ by whom sold 1909 to R. Horace Gallatin [1892–1948], New York.

Exhibited: Loan for display with permanent collection, Tampa Bay Art Center, University of Tampa, Florida, 1967–1969. Loan for display with permanent collection, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, 1969.

ON THE BANK of a pond or river, a shepherdess stands reading. At her back, two cows move among the rushes at the water's edge. From a stand of densely foliated trees at the right, a dead tree extends its bare branches obliquely into the bright, lightly clouded sky.

The picture is based on a formula that Corot used in many of his composed landscapes of the later 1860s, when he was overwhelmed by the demands of dealers and collectors. The repetitiveness of their arrangements and the frequent recurrence in them of certain stock features make it apparent that he did not paint these saleable pictures from nature but improvised them in the studio, borrowing elements from earlier works and rearranging them according to one or another of his favorite landscape designs.



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *River View*, 1949.1.2



Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang à l'arbre penché*, oil on canvas, 1865–1870, Reims, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 907.19.66, photograph by Devleeschauwer

River View is one of a fairly large number of variants that echo, in smaller format and simpler forms, a compositional idea that Corot had more amply developed in one of his grand showpieces, *Souvenir de Mortefontaine* (Louvre; Robaut 1625), exhibited at the Salon of 1864.⁴ In its general arrangement it exhibits the distinctive features of this group: silhouetted trees, clustered at the right, from among which some slender, almost leafless branches rise at a sharp slant, always leaning toward the left; a view across water in the middle distance; and one or two small figures disposed in the foreground, usually at the picture's left. It is a scheme capable of some formal complexity and romantic suggestiveness, but *River View* represents it in its plainest, most prosaic form, as simple rustic genre, neither idealized nor strikingly realistic. Its one conspicuous feature, the leaning tree in its middle—the “arbre penché” much favored by Corot—is a motif shared by many of these late landscapes.⁵ In its most fully developed form, it figures in his *Ville-d'Avray. L'Etang à l'arbre penché* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Reims (fig. 1), dated by Robaut to 1865–1870.⁶ Rather less common is the very low horizon in *River View*, above which the picture opens to a large, luminous sky that floods its left half with a brightness that more than balances the masses of dark foliage at the right. In this somewhat vacant space, the small shepherdess appears as an isolated figure. Corot sought to give

more weight and interest to this part of the picture by adding, as an afterthought, the two cows at the water's edge.⁷

The execution, particularly of the foliage and the foreground, has the somewhat negligent, improvisational breadth typical of Corot's work for the market. It is a result of the speed with which he produced, under pressure from dealers and collectors, the many hundreds of landscapes of his last years.⁸

Notes

1. Robaut 1905, 3:364, no. 2327 (1865–1872).
2. Annotated catalogue of Day sale in Knoedler library.
3. According to Getty Provenance Index, quoting Knoedler records.
4. Bazin (1942, 53–54) noted the frequent repetition of certain compositional schemes in Corot's late landscapes, and in particular traced the numerous and widely ramified descendance of *Souvenir de Mortefontaine* to which *River View* belongs. Bazin cited, in particular, the following paintings as forming part of the progeny of *Souvenir de Mortefontaine*: Robaut 1669–1672, 1733, 1748, 1765, 1768–1769, 1805, 1878, 1907, 1915, 1918, 2203.
5. Exemplified, in addition to those listed in note 4 above, by the paintings of *L'Arbre penché* (Robaut 1121–1122, dated by Robaut to 1855–1860); *En plein marais* (Robaut 1873, 1860–1870); and *Trois Commères au bord du lac* (Robaut 1915, 1865–1870).
6. Robaut 1497 and its variant, Robaut 1498, together with the corresponding drawing at the Louvre, published by Leymarie (1979a, 166).

7. NGA Painting Conservation Department, in its examination summary of the picture (20 August 1990), observes that Corot left paint reserves for the major elements of the composition. "There is also a reserve for the figure and yet none for the two flanking cows. Microscopic examination reveals that the cows were painted on top of the lake and shoreline pigment, indicating that they were not in the initial composition, in contrast to the figure."

8. The number of Corot's composed landscapes painted in 1860–1875 exceeds 700.

References

- 1905 Robaut 3:364, no. 2327, as *La Paysanne aux deux vaches*.
 1965 NGA: 30.
 1968 NGA: 24, repro.
 1975 NGA: 76, repro.
 1976 Walker: 436, repro.
 1984 Walker: 432, no. 622, repro.
 1985 NGA: 95, repro.

1951.21.1 (1079)

Gypsy Girl with Mandolin

c. 1870

Oil on fabric, 63.5 × 50.8 (25 × 20)
 Gift of Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt

Inscriptions

At bottom left: COROT

Technical Notes: The original support, an extremely fine, plain-weave, handkerchief-weight fabric, has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cut off, and no cusping is visible along the edges. The painting's original measurements, variously given as 65 × 53 cm (Corot sale, 1875a)¹ or 66 × 56 cm (Paton sale, 1883),² were reduced to their present dimensions sometime between 1906 and 1910.³ A creamy white ground covers the fabric of the original support. Infrared reflectography reveals no underdrawing. The paint layer is thin throughout the background and in parts of the figure, becoming more substantial and pastose in the whites and in the highlights of the flesh parts and the costume. The painting is covered with a yellowed varnish. Heavy repainting has considerably altered the landscape background, particularly at the top and the upper left, where a patch of blue sky has been added and where the trunks of two trees and the contours of the foliage have been obliterated (fig. 1).⁴ The earlier state of this area, not visible in the X-radiograph, is revealed in a photograph of the painting taken by Charles Desavary in 1872. Further overpainting is apparent in the flesh tones and dress of the figure. At bottom right, the stamp of Corot's atelier sale, *Vente Corot*, has been covered over. The "signature" at lower left also seems to be repainted.



Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1951.21.1, detail of upper left corner

Provenance: The artist; (his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 26 May 1875, no. 186, as *Bobémiennne debout jouant de la guitare*); purchased by Klotz, Paris.⁵ Jules Paton, Paris; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 24 April 1883, no. 45, as *Bobémiennne jouant de la guitare*); (Galerie Georges Petit, Paris); by whom sold 1900 to Frederick C. Hewitt [d. 1908] and William Francklyn Paris [d. 1954]; (their joint sale, American Art Association, New York, 9–10 March 1910, no. 172, as *Girl with a Mandolin*); purchased by John Fenning.⁶ Frederick Blumenthal [d. 1914], Paris.⁷ Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt [d. 1965], Paris.

COROT has posed the young woman, an artist's model, in one of the picturesque costumes, usually—though not in this instance—of Italian origin, that he used in arranging the evocative figure compositions of his late years.⁸ She is shown in frontal view, knee-length and full face, her head inclined as if in reverie. Her features are strikingly individual, far more than is usually the case in Corot's pictures of costumed studio models. From beneath the red cloth that covers the top of her head, her abundant dark brown hair falls in waves to her shoulders, framing a round-cheeked face,



Fig. 2. photograph of 1951.21.1, taken by Charles Desavary, 1872, location unknown (illustrated in Robaut 1905, 3: no. 1556)

with deep-set eyes, a short nose, and a large, sensuous mouth. She wears an ample garment of soft yellowish gray cloth, belted at the waist with a rose-colored shawl, the end of which hangs down the front of her skirt. A length of crimson cloth, perhaps a scarf attached to her headdress, descends behind her back and appears to the left of her skirt. Corot has put a mandolin of Neapolitan design into her hands, a favorite studio property that he often introduced into subjects of this kind.⁹ She holds the instrument incorrectly, strumming it with her right thumb, instead of playing it with a pick, betraying the fact that she is merely simulating the action of a mandolin player. Vague indications of foliage and branches form the background that opens at the upper left on a patch of blue sky.

The identification of the subject as a “gypsy playing a guitar” first appeared in the catalogue of Corot’s estate sale (1875) and may have been the invention of his friend Alfred Robaut, the catalogue’s author. Though her costume is not of the usual Italian kind, there is little in the young woman’s appearance that would mark her as a gypsy and thus distinguish her from the other professional artists’ models whom Corot regularly employed. In the 1860s and 1870s he painted many pictures of this kind, entirely for his own pleasure, dressing his youthful sitters in odds and ends of folk costume from his collection and posing them in quiet attitudes, without any evident narrative or symbolic significance.¹⁰ Actresses in a private theater of Corot’s imagination, the pensive young women who in his paintings appear as solitary readers or music makers in misty landscapes, but who in fact sat to him in the studio, seem to have expressed his recall of youth, with echoes of music and memories of Italy.

Corot made no effort to exhibit these pictures¹¹ and rarely sold them. They were, at any rate, little appreciated at a time when his landscapes were avidly collected. His figural art remained private, unknown to the larger public, a secret shared with



Fig. 3. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Bobémienne à la mandoline, assise*, oil on canvas, 1868–1871, location unknown (illustrated in Robaut 1905, 3: no. 1555)



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin*, 1951.21.1

friends and a few sympathetic dealers.¹² As a form of subject matter, neither portrait nor genre or allegory, these modest, quietly expressive arrangements of costumed figures had no parallel in the art of their time. Germain Bazin has suggested that Corot indulged private interests in his figure painting, which served him as an antidote to the mass production of landscapes demanded of him by dealers and the public.¹³ Forced to resort to repetition and routine in supplying the market with “lyrical” landscape inventions, increasingly remote from any fresh experience of reality, the aging artist found in figure painting and in the presence of the living model—the young, attractive, female model—a vivifying stimulus and a new challenge to his creative energy.¹⁴

The refined colorism of *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin*, with its harmonies of warm gray, rose, crimson, and brown, offset by the greens and blues of the background, is a reminder of the fact that in these paintings of the figure Corot radically departed from the monochromy of his late landscapes.¹⁵ The bright costumes in which he dressed his models gave him the opportunity of experimenting with effects of color that range from the subtlety and relative restraint evident in *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin* to the daring intensities and clashing contrasts in others.

Corot kept this painting with his other private figure studies until the end of his life. A photograph taken of it in 1872 by Corot’s friend Charles Desavary (see fig. 2), and later published as an illustration to Robaut’s catalogue in 1905,¹⁶ indicates that its background originally showed massed foliage directly behind the head of the figure and, at the upper left, three slender tree trunks silhouetted against an area of light. Sometime later, probably after 1900,¹⁷ almost the entire background was repainted, evidently in an effort to give the picture, which Corot had left in a broadly sketchlike state, a more finished appearance. Of the sky formerly visible at the left, only a vestige of pale blue and an edge of white cloud remain near the picture’s top edge.

Another version of *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin*, published by Robaut but at present unlocated, shows her seated, holding her instrument in her lap (fig. 3). It was apparently posed by the same model wearing the same costume, her abundant hair loosened around her inclined head.

Notes

1. Corot sale 1875a, 27, no. 186.
2. Paton sale 1883, 25, no. 45. Robaut (1905, 3: no. 1556) repeated the dimensions given in the Paton catalogue.
3. The present size of the canvas (63.5 × 50.8 cm) indicates a loss of 1.5 or 2.5 cm in height and of 2.2 or 5.2 cm in width, depending on whether the dimensions given at the Corot or those at the Paton sale (and in Robaut’s catalogue) are taken as a base. By the time of the Hewitt-Paris sale (1910, no. 172), the picture had been reduced in both height and width. The catalogue of that sale gives its dimensions as 24 1/2 × 20 in. (62.3 × 50.8 cm), which, making allowance for some slight inexactness, corresponds to its present size. It is likely that the trimming and restretching of the canvas was undertaken at the same time as the repainting of the picture’s background (see note 18 below).
4. The picture’s appearance before its repainting is recorded in the photograph taken by Desavary in 1872 when he photographed the contents of Corot’s studio, and later used by Robaut for his catalogue (see note 17 below).
5. Annotated sale catalogue in Knoedler library.
6. Annotated sale catalogue in Knoedler library.
7. According to Getty Provenance Index. None of the other sources includes Blumenthal.
8. Concerning Corot’s figure paintings posed by artists’ models wearing Italian costumes, see Moreau-Nélaton in Robaut 1905, 1:179, 243; Bazin 1942, 58–61; and pp. 61–67.
9. This instrument, a mandolin inlaid with mother-of-pearl, of a shape suggesting a Neapolitan origin, first occurred in Corot’s works in his *Femme à la grande toque et à la mandoline* (Robaut 1060), dated by Robaut to about 1850–1855. In this painting, the mandolin player uses a pick, the correct technique. The same instrument, but strummed with the thumb (as in the NGA’s *Gypsy Girl*), thereafter regularly appears in Corot’s many paintings of mandolin players (among them Robaut 1263, 1338, 1387, 1513, 1566, 1571, 1575, 1996, 1997, 2131, 2134, 2136). Merely held by its neck, rather than played, it figures in a number of other paintings, including the National Gallery’s *Artist’s Studio*; see pp. 68–74.
10. Antje Zimmermann (1986) attempted a general overview of Corot’s figural subjects of this kind, placing them in an art-historical context. A particular, medical interpretation of the NGA’s *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin* has been advanced by Dr. Rachel Panush and associates (Panush 1990, 1136–1138) who observed in the girl’s right hand an “anatomically specific deformity” indicating rheumatoid arthritis: “She has boutonnière deformities of the fifth, fourth, and perhaps third fingers; probable swollen metacarpophalangeal joints; possible nodular swelling (perhaps tophi) over the dorsal wrist and metacarpophalangeal joints; a hyperextended first interphalangeal joint; and a possible swollen second proximal interphalangeal joint.” Dr. Panush and her coauthors related Corot’s supposed ob-

servation of these symptoms to his own rheumatic illnesses, suffered intermittently between 1866 and 1870. But the distortions that Corot's rapid brush introduced into the depiction of the young woman's hand are evidently nothing more than an aspect of the picture's broadly sketchlike execution, consistent with the often casual treatment of hands in his figure studies.

11. In the fifty years of his participation in the Paris Salons, Corot submitted only one such painting, *Woman Reading in a Landscape* (MMA; Robaut 1563), which was shown at the Salon of 1869 (no. 550).

12. Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:245.

13. Bazin 1942, 58–59.

14. Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:244: "les Italiennes de la rue Mouffetard alternaient dans la pose avec les coureuses d'atelier de Montmartre. Beautés banales, charmes cent fois vulgarisés déjà, mais qui suffisaient à allumer l'étincelle du génie." The critic Gustave Geffroy, writing in 1902, quoted Corot: "elles étaient venues à mon atelier, me demander si j'avais besoin de modèles. Je ne les ai jamais laissées aller. En elles, j'ai vu la beauté de la vie... J'ai eu autant de plaisir à peindre ces jeunes femmes qu'à peindre mes paysages" (in Courthion 1946, 1:24–25). According to Bernheim de Villers (1930, 66), "C'est la femme, presque exclusivement qui attira le pinceau de Corot, et lui, si peu intellectuel, si peu compliqué l'a représenté comme une énigme, comme un problème à résoudre."

15. Concerning the colorism increasingly apparent in Corot's late figure paintings, Bazin (1942, 60) observed: "La curiosité de Corot peintre de figures... l'orienta dans des voies insoupçonnées de lui jusqu'alors. Du chantre des gris et des nuances, elle fait un coloriste. Il sent qu'il y a là un domaine inconnu de lui, et tandis qu'en ses paysages il s'enfonçait de plus en plus dans les brumes, dans ses figures, il manie les vermillons, les garances, les carmins, les bleus de cobalt et les jaunes de cadmium avec une audace, voire même avec une insolence bien inattendues de lui."

16. Robaut 1905, 3:111–112, no. 1556. Charles Desavary (1837–1885), the son-in-law of Corot's friend Constant Dutilleul, in 1872 took some 600 photographs of paintings then in Corot's studio (Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:266).

17. The catalogue of the Hewitt-Paris sale in 1910 (no. 172; see Provenance) mentions "at the top, on the left, a glimpse of pale blue sky and creamy cloud," indicating that the picture's background had been given its present appearance by that time.

References

- 1905 Robaut: 3:111, no. 1556, repro.
1930 Bernheim de Villers: 63; no. 250, repro. (the picture before changes in the background).
1965 NGA: 30.
1968 NGA: 23, repro.
1975 NGA: 76, repro.
1984 Walker: 428, no. 609, repro.
1985 NGA: 95, repro.
1990 Panush, Dr. Rachel B., Jacques R. Caldwell,

and Richard S. Panush. "Corot's 'Gout' and a 'Gipsy [sic] Girl.'" *Journal of the American Medical Association* 264, no. 9 (September): 1136–1138, repro. on cover.

1954.6.1 (1345)

Italian Girl

c. 1872

Oil on fabric, 65 × 54.5 (25^{5/8} × 21^{1/2})

Gift of the Avalon Foundation

Inscriptions

At bottom right: COROT

Technical Notes: The support is a very fine plain-weave fabric that is unlined and mounted on its original keyed, butt-joint stretcher with vertical and horizontal crossbars. The support has been commercially prepared with a creamy white ground that extends onto the tacking margins. Infrared reflectography reveals traces of pencil underdrawing along the lines of the skirt. The paint layer is thin throughout the background but more substantial in the figure. Thicker impasto occurs in the highlights of cap, blouse, and hands, and throughout the pattern of the apron. The headdress of the young woman, originally a white-and-red kerchief of greater width and square shape (fig. 1), has been reduced to the

Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1954.6.1, detail of headdress



present small yellow cap. Throughout the background, the paint layer has been abraded and slightly retouched, evidently as part of the reworking of the picture by Corot himself that is recorded as having occurred before its sale to M. Brame in 1874.¹ Infrared reflectography indicates minor changes in the woman's eyes and what appears to be a start of the letter *C* of the signature slightly above its present location. The picture's present varnish has been selectively thinned, so that while the coating over the face and whites is clear and thin, it appears thick and discolored in other, darker areas.

The reverse of the fabric bears the stamps: "M.d. de Couleurs fines/Jerome Ottoz/Rue La Bruyere 22," and "Tableaux Modernes/A. Diot/Paris/43 Rue Laffitte/1563." A handwritten label on the stretcher is inscribed in ink: ".175/Corot/italienne."

Provenance: The artist to M. Brame, c. 1874.² Armand-François-Paul des Frisches, comte Doria [d. 1896], château d'Orrouy; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 4 May 1899, no. 55, as *Italienne*). Charles Guasco; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 11 June 1900, no. 13); purchased by Mme Esnault Pelterie;³ (Galerie Nathan, Zurich) and (Sam Salz, New York); sold 10 June 1954 to the Avalon Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, 1910, *Exposition des chefs d'oeuvre de l'école française, vingt peintures du XIX^e siècle*, no. 25. PMA, 1946, *Corot*, no. 71, as *La Morieri*, color repro. on cover. NGA, 1969, *In memoria: Ailsa Mellon Bruce*, no catalogue. Athens, National Gallery, Alexandros Soutzos Museum, 1992, *From El Greco to Cézanne: Masterpieces of European Painting from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*, no. 39.

COROT posed the young model who sat to him for this study with some formality, as a true portrait. *La Morieri*, as she is called in early sources, does not act a part, holds no book, plays no musical instrument, is not lost in reverie or meditation—she merely displays herself and her costume in a portrait pose, fixing the artist with her eyes. In the frankness of her posing, without any pretense of privacy, she stands out among the young women whom Corot more usually arranged in attitudes of apparent self-absorption.⁴ Dressed in one of the Italian costumes that he kept in his Paris studio, she sits beside a table on which she leans her left arm. Her head confronts the viewer in full face, her body is turned to the left in three-quarter view, causing the brocaded apron that she wears over a black skirt to form a powerful diagonal dominating the picture with its accord of sumptuous col-

ors. Corot has taken pains to provide his sitter with jewelry: a pair of large earrings, four strands of necklace, a bracelet, and a ring on the little finger of her left hand.

The arrangement of the picture's discreetly geometric shapes—the horizontal edge of the tabletop, the long oblique of the apron, the converging shapes of her arms and bodice, clad in brilliant white, culminating in the shaded oval of her face—have reminded latter-day commentators of "Cézanne's famous statement made a few years after this picture was painted—the statement that gave the name 'cubism' to art history—that all of nature could be represented in terms of a sphere, a cone, and a cylinder."⁵

The facial type of the model who sat to Corot for this picture somewhat recalls that of the young woman in the National Gallery's *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin* (see pp. 81–85). It is possible that the same model posed for both pictures, though the expression she wears here, a defiantly direct gaze from deeply shaded eyes, is very different. Common to both paintings is the relaxed sketchiness of handling and the suggestive delicacy of touch. Similar, too, is the treatment of their backgrounds. The figure in each, though posed in an indoor light, is backed by the ghost of a landscape, with a hint of blue sky at upper left. The effect is particularly striking in the case of the *Italian Girl*, where the presence of a substantial piece of furniture clashes with the suggestion of foliage, cloud, and sky.

Robaut mentions that Corot retouched its background "légèrement" at the time he sold the picture to Brame in about 1874.⁶ The fact that his friend Charles Desavary photographed the picture, presumably in 1872 when he made photographs of the contents of Corot's studio,⁷ indicates that it was finished by that time. The name *La Morieri*, recorded by Robaut,⁸ may have been the professional name of the Italian model who sat for the picture.

Notes

1. Robaut 1905, 3:296, no. 2146.
2. Robaut 1905, 3:296, no. 2146.
3. According to Georges Petit catalogue, 1910.
4. See pp. 75–78.
5. Morse 1951, 29.
6. Robaut 1905, 3:296, no. 2146: "cette étude, peinte



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Italian Girl*, 1954.6.1

vers 1872, a été légèrement retouchée par Corot, notamment dans le fond, au moment de la livrer à son acquéreur, M. Brame, vers 1874.”

7. According to Moreau-Nélaton (in Robaut 1905, 1:266), Charles Desavary (1837–1885), a son-in-law of Corot’s friend Constant Dutilleux, photographed the contents of Corot’s studio, which had been removed to Arras for the purpose, during August 1872.

8. It may be significant that this name or pseudonym is specified in Robaut’s catalogue of 1905 (3:296, no. 2146), based on notes taken at a time (1872–1875) when Robaut was in daily contact with the master.

References

- 1905 Robaut: 3:296, no. 2146, as *La Morieri*.
1910 Hamel, M. “Exposition des chefs-d’oeuvre de l’Ecole française, vingt peintures du XIX^e siècle chez Petit.” *Les Arts* (August): 12, repro.
1930 Bernheim de Villers: no. 319, *La Morieri*, repro.
1951 Morse: 28–29, repro.
1963 Walker: 323, repro. (French ed.: 315; German ed.: 315).
1965 NGA: 30.
1968 NGA: 23, repro.
1972 *Dr. Fritz Nathan und Dr. Peter Nathan, 1922–1972*. Zurich: no. 41, repro.
1975 NGA: 76, repro.
1976 Walker: 432, no. 624, color repro. 433.
1984 Walker: 428, no. 612, repro.
1985 NGA: 95, repro.

1970.17.23 (2395)

Madame Stumpf and Her Daughter

1872

Oil on fabric, 105 × 74 (41^{3/8} × 29^{1/8})
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

Inscriptions

In bottom right corner: COROT

Technical Notes: The picture’s support is a medium-weight, very tightly woven twill fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cut off. There is some cusping along the right edge. The ground consists of a grayish white layer of medium thickness applied by brush. Infrared reflectography reveals some pencil underdrawing in the child’s dress and several horizontal lines to the right of the child. Thin paint layers form the image. There is little impasto. Painting changes are apparent in the child’s arm, which originally had a more extended reach, and in her dress, originally somewhat longer in front. The painting is well preserved, with retouching confined to a few small spots along the upper edge and over some cracks in

Mme Stumpf’s dress. Its varnish coating has remained clear.

Provenance: Given by the artist to M. F. Stumpf; Stumpf family until at least 1906;¹ Mme Barbier de Saint Hilaire, née Madeleine Stumpf, the child in the painting; sold by 1922² to (Tedesco Frères, Paris, and Paul Rosenberg and Co., New York, London, and Paris);³ acquired c. 1965 by (E. V. Thaw & Co., New York);⁴ sold January 1966 to (Thomas Agnew and Sons, London); sold 26 March 1966 to Ailsa Mellon Bruce [1901–1969], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Palais de Bagatelle, 1909, *Exposition retrospective de portraits de femmes sous les trois républiques*, no. 37, repro. Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, 1925, *Cinquante Ans de peinture française, 1875–1925*, no. 19, repro. Paris, Galerie Paul Rosenberg, 1928, *Exposition d’oeuvres de Camille J. B. Corot (1796–1875): Figures et paysages d’Italie*, no. 49. Paris, Galerie Paul Rosenberg, 1930, *Exposition d’oeuvres de Corot (1796–1875): Paysages de France et figures*, no. 56. New York, M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., 1934, *Loan Exhibition of Figure and Landscape Paintings by J. B. C. Corot*, no. 27, repro. on cover.⁵ New York, Paul Rosenberg and Co., 1956, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings by J. B. C. Corot (1796–1875)*, no. 32, repro. AIC, 1960, *Corot (1796–1875)*, no. 132, repro. Louvre, 1962, *Figures de Corot*, no. 81, repro. The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1963, *Style, Truth, and the Portrait*, no. 83, repro. San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum and California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1964–1965, *Man: Glory, Jest, and Riddle, a Survey of the Human Form through the Ages*, no. 159.⁶ Munich, Haus der Kunst, 1996, *Corot, Courbet, und die Maler von Barbizon: Les Amis de la nature*, no. B24, repro.

MME STUMPF, née Elisa Monot, is shown with her daughter Madeleine on a forest path bordered by tall wooded banks, pausing in her walk to receive a wreath of wildflowers from the little girl who has brought them to her in her upgathered skirt. The young mother is fashionably dressed in a formal satin gown of strong blue.⁷ With her right hand she holds the tip of a slender folded parasol. A rose crowns her dark brown hair, another is fastened to the low-cut neckline of her dress; a black lace mantilla covers her shoulder. She inclines her head pensively toward her daughter who, momentarily distracted, looks past her into the foreground.

The two figures, seen in very close view, stand out with photographic distinctness in the blue and white of their dresses against a hazy gray-green and ocher background that very broadly suggests the path, the forest, and the sky. Landscape and



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Madame Stumpf and Her Daughter*, 1970.17.23

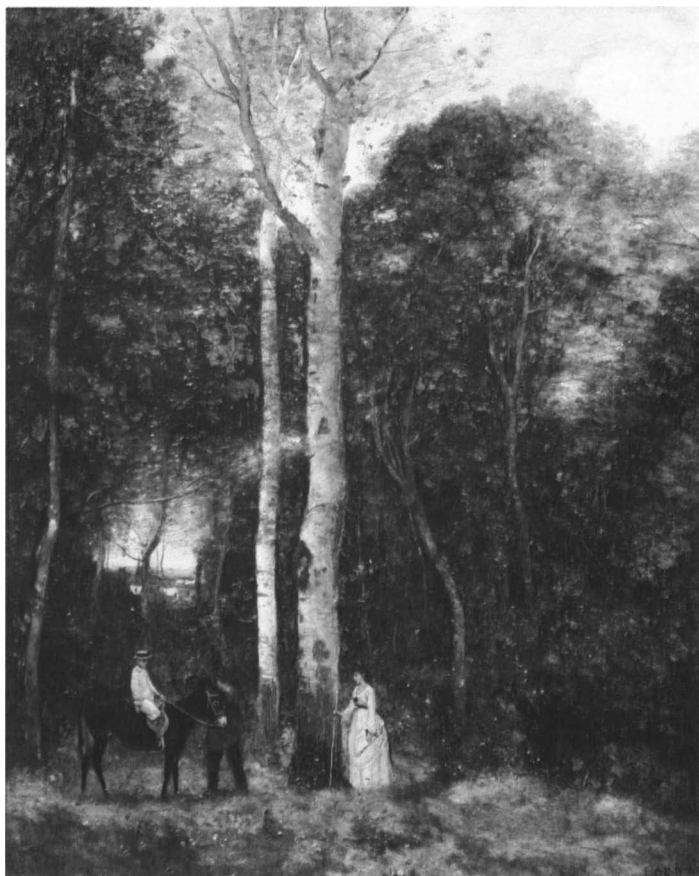
figures belong to two distinct dimensions of reality: the substantiality of the figures emphasizes the misty vagueness of their surroundings. It is apparent that Corot, having painted Mme Stumpf and her daughter in an indoor space and light, finished their portrait by adding an imaginary outdoor setting, just as he often improvised landscape backgrounds for the figural compositions that models posed for him in his Paris studio.⁸

Mme Stumpf, reputed a beauty in her circle, was the wife of an industrialist with whom Corot had been in correspondence since the late 1860s.⁹ Her husband, the owner of a manufactory of fine glassware, the Cristalleries de Pantin, had brought together a fair collection of contemporary paintings by assiduously cultivating a number of painter friends.¹⁰ The Stumpfs occasionally shared dinners and theater visits with Corot. During the famine months of the Prussian siege and the Paris Commune (1870–1871), the Stumpf family and Corot exchanged gifts of food.¹¹ An occasionally important patron, Stumpf took advantage of his acquaintance with Corot to obtain paintings from the

overworked artist which he did not hesitate to turn into cash when in need of money. On his part, Corot seems to have been genuinely fond of the charming Mme Stumpf.¹² As early as 1869 he had announced his intention of making her a gift of “a small sample of his work.” Sometime later, Mme Stumpf reminded him of this promise in a letter of congratulation on a recent Salon success, accompanying her reminder with a gift of glasswares from the Cristallerie.¹³ M. Stumpf meanwhile kept up his pressure on the artist in the summer of 1872 by commissioning five paintings of Corot who, extremely busy at the time, complied reluctantly.¹⁴ During the last weeks of that summer, from 8 to 21 September, Corot stayed as the Stumpfs’ guest at their villa in Etretat on the Normandy coast.¹⁵ It was during this stay that he redeemed his earlier promise by starting the portrait of his hostess. The idea of placing mother and daughter in an atmospheric woodland setting, for which they seem too formally dressed, may be a carry-over from a slightly earlier work, Corot’s *Setting Out for a Promenade in the Parc des Lions at Port-Marly* (fig. 1), which commemorates his visit to his friend Rodrigues-Henriquez in August 1872, two weeks before his stay with the Stumpf family.¹⁶ It, too, combines portraiture with landscape but reverses their relationship, allowing the woodland setting, a vigorous study from nature, to dominate the remote, barely portraitlike figures.

Contemporary dress occurs rarely in Corot’s work, in which artists’ models picturesquely and timelessly costumed as Italian countrywomen or gypsies are the rule. His portrait of Mme Stumpf proves that he had an eye for urban elegance and recalls that his youth was spent in the ambiance of his mother’s millinery business in the heart of Paris. Fashion dates the picture to its period and defines its social milieu with an exactitude that Corot normally avoided. The painting has an exceptional position among Corot’s figural compositions in being neither an intimate portrait nor a poetic invention, neither a private fantasy nor a work for the public. Germain Bazin found in the graceful figure of the mother and the fragile sweetness of the child evidence of a sensibility akin to that of Auguste Renoir (1841–1919).¹⁷ Presented by an artist in his seventy-sixth year to an attractive young woman, the portrait is an affectionate tribute, tinged with melancholy, to beauty and youth.

Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Setting Out for a Promenade in the Parc des Lions at Port-Marly*, oil on canvas, c. 1872, Madrid, Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza



About 1906, it became the property of Mme Stumpf's daughter, Madeleine Barbier de Saint-Hilaire, the small girl in the picture who, before selling it in 1922, had a copy of it made by Emile Delobre.¹⁸

Notes

1. Discussed as part of the Stumpf collection, but not offered for sale, in *Catalogue de tableaux modernes composant la collection de feu M. F. Stumpf* [auction cat. Galerie Georges Petit.] (Paris, 7 May 1906), 6–10.

2. Letter dated 29 July 1970 from Jean Dieterle to David Rust, in NGA curatorial files.

3. According to a letter from Alexandre Rosenberg dated 27 June 1977, in NGA curatorial files, the painting was confiscated with others from the Rosenberg collection in France in 1940, traced to a Swiss collection in 1945, and returned to the Rosenbergs in 1947. The painting is listed as no. 37.954 in the *List of Property Removed from France during the War, 1939–1945*, Groupe française du conseil de contrôle, 1947. Documents from the National Archives in Washington (RG 226, Entry 190, Box 532, copies in NGA curatorial files) indicate that the picture was at one time in the hands of Goering (RG 239, Entry 73, Box 78, list dated 9 April 1943 of paintings delivered to Goering) and that the French dealer Zacharie Birtschansky was involved in selling the picture to Hans Wendland for a Swiss dealer, probably Fischer (see also OSS Consolidated Interrogation Report: The Goering Collection, 57–58, copy in NGA Archives, S. Lane Faison Papers).

4. Letter of 20 April 1995 from E. V. Thaw & Co., Inc., in NGA curatorial files.

5. Though scheduled to be included as no. 140 in the exhibition *Masterworks of Five Centuries*, at the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition in 1939–1940, the picture was not in fact exhibited.

6. Approved for loan to exhibitions at the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, and the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, by the NGA Board of Trustees, 27 December 1985, the picture was not actually shown in these exhibitions.

7. An important instance of Corot's predilection for fashionable dresses is *La Dame en bleu* of 1874 (Louvre, RF 2056; Robaut 2180), Corot's most elaborate portrait study of a woman dressed in a contemporary costume.

8. By way of typical examples, see the NGA's *Gypsy Girl with Mandolin* (pp. 81–85) and *Italian Girl* (pp. 85–88).

9. Lagrange 1906, 6.

10. At the time of F. Stumpf's death in 1906, this collection, though reduced by occasional sales, still included paintings by Boudin, Chintreuil, Courbet, Daubigny, Diaz, Dupré, Fantin-Latour, Guillaumin, Harpignies, Henner, Isabey, Charles Jacque, Jongkind, Lépine, Monticelli, Pissarro, Raffaëlli, Sisley, Vollon, and Ziem, as well as by Corot (see Lagrange 1906). Stumpf lent six paintings to the posthumous exhibition

of Corot's work at the Paris Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1875; see Burty 1875, nos. 203–208.

11. Lagrange 1906, 6.

12. Lagrange 1906, 7–8.

13. Lagrange 1906, 6: "Corot pensait, dès 1869, à un hommage... qui n'était pas de moindre importance... l'artiste annonce qu'il se fera un 'plaisir de donner un petit échantillon' de son travail à Mme. Stumpf. Un peu plus tard, quand elle applaudit au succès de Corot au Salon, et que l'expression bien sincère de la joie de Mme. Stumpf s'accompagne d'un de ces cadeaux affectueux auxquels excelle le ménage, il écrit encore: 'Je suis comblé! Je m'appliquerai bien au souvenir pour Mme. Stumpf et ferai aussi qu'elle soit contente'."

14. Unpublished notes by Alfred Robaut, at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (YB 3 849, II, 55 and 57, cited in Bazin 1962, 186, no. 81) record Corot's complaint, in the summer of 1872, about Stumpf's insistence: "Le 1er août [Corot] partira pour Coubron où il doit séjourner une quinzaine. Il doit faire là entr'autres choses, un tableau pour M. Stumpf qui lui a commandé 5 grands d'un coup et qui a de plus le bonheur incroyable d'avoir décidé le maître à les lui faire. 'Voyez donc,' me dit le maître, 'à quoi m'oblige cet industriel qui se dit aux abois. N'y a-t-il donc que moi pour sauver les déconfitures?'"

15. An account of this visit is given by Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:270.

16. Robaut 1905, 3: no. 2127.

17. Bazin 1962, 186, no. 81.

18. After Mme de Saint-Hilaire's death in 1942, the copy surfaced on the art market, where it caused some confusion, particularly since the original had disappeared for some years after its seizure by the Gestapo in 1940 (see note 1 above). The facts concerning the copy are stated, in a letter of 7 March 1973, by Alexandre Rosenberg, the son of Paul Rosenberg who had bought the original directly from Mme de Saint-Hilaire and, at her request, commissioned the copy (correspondence in NGA curatorial files). After recovering the original painting in 1947, Paul Rosenberg sold it to E. V. Thaw & Co., New York, from whom it passed to Thomas Agnew and Sons, New York, and thence, in 1966, to Mrs. Ailsa Mellon Bruce.

References

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1905 | Robaut 3:287, no. 2125. |
| 1906 | Lagrange: 9–10, repro. |
| 1930 | Bernheim de Villers: 53, no. 294, repro. |
| 1975 | NGA: 80, repro. |
| 1979 | Leymarie: 145–149, repro. |
| 1984 | Walker: 428, no. 613, repro. |
| 1985 | NGA: 99, repro. |
| 1988 | Selz: 252–254. |

1970.17.117 (2489)

Beach near Etretat

c. 1872

Oil on fabric, 12.3 × 25.5 (4⁷/₈ × 10¹/₁₆)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: COROT

Technical Notes: The painting's primary support is an extremely fine, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric mounted on a strainer that may be original. The tacking margins have been cut off. The fabric was prepared by the artist with a white ground that does not extend to the extreme edges of the painting. The composition was sketched in red conté crayon or chalk. Thin washes of color were used to block in the dark forms of the trees, the promontory, and the meadow in the foreground. Thicker paint, applied in broad flourishes of impasto, define the cloudy sky, the sea, and the beach. A clear varnish covers the painting, which is well preserved.

Provenance: F. Stumpf; (Stumpf sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 27 November 1894, no. 19, as *Marine*); purchased by (F. and J. Tempelaere, Paris). Aimé Diot [d. 1896], Paris; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 8 March 1897, no. 35, as *Falaises*). Nicolas Auguste Hazard [1834–1913], Paris; (Hazard sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 3 December 1919, no. 91, as *La Plage*); purchased by Rosenthal, Paris; (Rosenthal sale, Paris, 9 May 1934, no. 67); purchased by Dr. Georges Viau [d. c. 1943], Paris. Baron Pellenc, Paris, in 1944. André Schoeller, Paris, 1945. Captain Edward H. Molyneux [1894–1974], Paris, by 1952, by whom sold in 1955 to Ailsa Mellon Bruce [1901–1969], New York.

Exhibited: NGA, 1952, *French Paintings from the Molyneux Collection*, unnumbered checklist. Towson, Maryland, Hampton National Historic Site, 1956, no catalogue. Palm Beach, Society of the Four Arts, 1958, *Paintings from the Collection of Mrs. Mellon Bruce*, no. 26, as *Seascape—Arromanches*. San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1961, *French Paintings from the Collection of Mrs. Mellon Bruce*, no. 14, repro., as *Seascape—Arromanches*. NGA, 1978, *Small French Paintings from the Bequest of Ailsa Mellon Bruce*, 4, repro. 5. NGA, 1982–1983, *Manet and Modern Paris*, no. 58, repro. Venice, Ala Napoleonica e Museo Correr, and Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1989, *Impressionisti della National Gallery of Art di Washington*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. as *Spiaggia presso Etretat*.

THE VIEW ranges across a wide horizon, dotted with sails. At the left, a rocky headland, covered with verdure and clusters of trees, rises steeply over a beach washed by the sea at low tide. The tiny canvas, of very spontaneous execution, may have been painted at the site, but it lacks the vivid precision of Corot's studies taken directly from nature¹ and rather gives the impression of a rapid memory sketch. The image is produced by a few broad strokes of the heavily charged brush that leave much impasto in the areas of sky and sea. The cliffs and beach that it summarily suggests bear no more than a general resemblance to the actual topography of the coast around Etretat. The famous *falaises*, rocky escarpments towering over its beach, are dwarfed in Corot's view by the clusters of trees that he shows growing on them.



Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Une Plage, Normandie*, oil on canvas, 1872, location unknown (illustrated in Robaut 1905, 4: no. 1328)



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Beach near Etretat*, 1970.17.117

The picture's title has undergone several changes since its first appearance in the sale of the Stumpf collection in 1894, when it was simply designated as *Marine*.² Robaut, in his authoritative catalogue of Corot's work, described it as *Une Plage avec des barques au loin sur la mer. (Normandie)*.³ In several exhibitions between 1952 and 1970 it was labeled *Seascape—Arromanches*,⁴ although Arromanches, in the Calvados region of Normandy, is not known to have been visited by Corot. The title *Beach near Etretat*, used since 1970,⁵ is strongly supported by biographical evidence. Corot painted the picture for its original owner, the industrialist and collector F. Stumpf, who owned a villa at Etretat, where Corot stayed with the Stumpf family for two weeks in September 1872.⁶ It was with the works associated with this stay, during which Corot also painted the larger *Beach, Etretat* seen from below and at close range (The Saint Louis Art Museum),⁷ that Robaut convincingly grouped the National Gallery's small study. A rapid sketch, not likely to have been intended for sale, it was probably a casual gift by the artist to M. Stumpf who had accepted other gifts of paintings from Corot in 1872.⁸

Seascapes are rare in Corot's work. Of that small number, most date from the 1830s, when he painted in Le Havre,⁹ Honfleur,¹⁰ and Trouville.¹¹ Several of these early coastal scenes anticipate the picture at the National Gallery in taking their view from a height overlooking a wide expanse of sea. During his stay at Etretat in 1872, nearly forty years later, Corot returned to that panoramic view of the sea only twice, in the Gallery's small *Beach near Etretat* and in a coastal scene of similar range but larger size, *Une Plage, Normandie*, recorded by Robaut but now unlocated (fig. 1).¹²

Notes

1. Its manner of execution, not entirely typical of Corot's work of the period, initially disconcerted Jean Dieterle, the Corot specialist and continuator of Robaut's catalogue of Corot's work. In a letter of 29 July 1970 to David Rust (NGA curatorial files), he noted concerning this picture: "Nous l'avons vu il y a bien longtemps et n'avons pas cru devoir la reproduire dans les suppléments à 'l'Oeuvre de Corot.' Elle nous a paru douteuse." After further research, and having discovered that Robaut (no. 2076) had given the picture his stamp of approval, M. Dieterle reconsidered his earlier doubts, conceding that "l'ouvrage de Robaut fait loi" (letters of 11 September and 1 October 1970, in NGA curatorial files).

2. *Catalogue de beaux tableaux modernes . . . provenant de la succession de Madame M[onod] et de la collection de Monsieur S[umpf]*, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 27 November 1894, no. 19. When it next passed through the Diot sale (*Catalogue de tableaux . . . dont la vente aura lieu par suite du décès de M. Diot*, Hôtel Drouot [Paris, 7 March 1897], no. 35), it was listed as *Falaises*.

3. Robaut 1905, 3:270, no. 2076.

4. See under Exhibited, above.

5. Following a suggestion by David Rust of the NGA on 20 October 1970 (NGA curatorial files), the picture was given its present title.

6. The visit, 8–21 September 1872, is recorded by Etienne Moreau-Nélaton in Robaut 1905, 1:270. Concerning Corot's relations with the Stumpf family, see also p. 90 of this catalogue.

7. Robaut 1905, 3: no. 2054.

8. See pp. 88–91 of this catalogue.

9. Robaut 1905, 2: no. 237.

10. Robaut 1905, 2: no. 223.

11. Robaut 1905, 2: no. 233.

12. Robaut 1905, 3:264, no. 2061, gives its dimensions as 45 × 60 cm and mentions that it was sold with the Ernest May collection in 1890. Another beach picture painted in Normandy in the summer of 1872 is *Yport, la plage au pied des falaises*, Rijksmuseum Hendrik Willem Mesdag, The Hague, 43 × 59 cm (Robaut 3:264, no. 2053).

References

1905 Robaut: 3:270, no. 2076, as *Une Plage avec des barques au loin sur la mer (Normandie)*, repro.

1975 NGA: 80, repro.

1978 NGA, *Small French Paintings from the Bequest of Ailsa Mellon Bruce*. Washington: 4, 5, repro.

1985 NGA: 99, repro.

1942.9.12 (608)

The Forest of Coubron

1872

Oil on fabric, 96 × 77.8 (37⁷/₈ × 30⁵/₈)

Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At center bottom: COROT 1872¹

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a piece of medium-weight, plain-weave fabric that is unlined and still mounted on what may be its original stretcher (keyed and butt-joined with a horizontal crossbar). The painting retains its original dimensions, as is shown by the fact that the tacking margins are preserved. Cusping visible along all edges relates to a different set of tacking holes than those presently used to stretch the painting, suggesting it has been stretched at least twice. On its back the fabric bears the stamp of the French



Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *The Forest of Coubron*, charcoal on laid paper, c. 1872, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museum, Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop, 1943.786

canvas manufacturer Alexis Ottoz. A creamy white commercially prepared ground that extends onto the tacking margins covers the fabric. Over it a tan imprimatura has been applied, presumably by the artist rather than the manufacturer, since it does not extend onto the tacking margins. The paint layer forming the image is very thin and of fluid consistency. Texture in areas of grass and brush has been suggested by scraping into the wet paint with the handle of the brush. Infrared examination reveals no underdrawing but indicates a slight change in the head of the horse. The painting is covered with a discolored varnish that distorts the painting's cool tonal harmonies. The paint layer is well preserved, with no paint loss or abrasion.

Provenance: F. Stumpf; (his sale, Paris, 28 February 1873, no. 8, as *Entrée du bois Coubron, par une matinée de printemps*); sold to Maurice Kann; in his collection until at least 1878. (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); by whom sold 1892 to Peter A. B. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; inheritance from the estate of Peter A. B. Widener by gift through power of appointment of Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park.

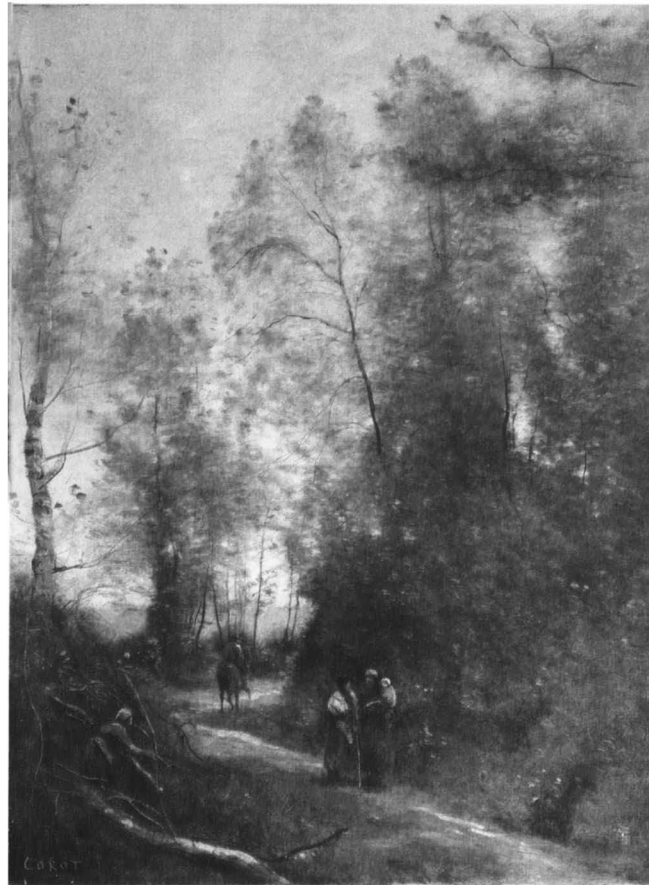


Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Turn in the Road*, oil on canvas, c. 1868–1870, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Robert Jordan from the Collection of Eben D. Jordan, 24.214

A SOLITARY HORSEMAN, silhouetted in back view against a patch of luminous sky, rides along a path between tall trees at the edge of a forest. The composition of the painting corresponds in all details to a charcoal drawing at the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts (fig. 1),² that may have served as a preparatory study, but more likely was based on the finished painting. The motif of the rider following a road into the distance was one of Corot's favorite devices, first found in sketches made in Italy in 1827 and often repeated thereafter.³ It is an image in which the incessant, restless traveler may have recognized himself. The landscape setting that he chose for this composition, with its steeply vertical format, its path curving between intersecting wedges of terrain and its leaning, diaphanously foliated trees, is a studio invention of a type that, with little change, he adapted for a great variety of subjects during his final decade.

Together with *Turn in the Road*, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (fig. 2),⁴ which follows the same formula on a somewhat smaller scale, it exemplifies the tendency to repetitiousness and uniformity that contemporaneous critics began to observe in Corot's late "lyrical" landscapes.⁵ It is by the fine suggestiveness of its tonal harmonies, produced by transparent washes of color over a light ground—faintly blue in the sky, grayish green in the foliage, and brown in the terrain—that the National Gallery's *Forest of Coubron* compensates for the vagueness of its structure.

The picture's title, which can be assumed to have been chosen by Corot himself, since it was current in his lifetime,⁶ does not so much identify a particular locality as to recall the environment in which it was conceived and which may have inspired its mood. Coubron, near Montfermeil, not far from Paris, was the residence of Mme Caroline Gratiot to whom Corot was introduced in 1867 and who thereafter often offered him hospitality on his constant wanderings about France.⁷ In June and again in November 1872, he made lengthy stays in Coubron between voyages, and in April 1873 had a studio built adjacent to Mme Gratiot's house, which from that time on became his country refuge from the demands of importunate Parisian dealers.⁸ The date rather indistinctly inscribed at the center of the bottom edge of the canvas has been variously read as 1872 and 1873. Since the picture's first owner, M. Stumpf, sold it at a Paris auction as early as 28 February 1873, it seems likely that it was painted during one of Corot's stays in Coubron during 1872. In Alfred Robaut's notes at the Bibliothèque Nationale there is mention of a projected stay at Coubron in the summer of 1872 during which Corot, much overworked at the time, proposed to paint, among others, a picture for M. Stumpf.⁹ That financially embarrassed industrialist had taken advantage of the artist's good nature to extract the promise of no fewer than five pictures by the prompt sale of which Stumpf evidently hoped to repair his fortune. The National Gallery's *Forest of Coubron* may have been part of that commission.

Notes

1. The date was published by Robaut as 1873 (Robaut 1905, 3:372, no. 2386), but it looks rather more like 1872. In either case, it is apparent that M. Stumpf acted on this occasion as a dealer rather than collector.

2. 431 × 298 mm.

3. For Corot's early use of this motif, see p. 40. In his later work, it often occurs in his paintings of 1855–1865 (Robaut 1463, 1464, 1465, 1472, etc.) and with particular frequency in his paintings of the 1870s (Robaut 2071, 2092, 2156, 2169, 2237).

4. See Robaut 1905, 3:106, no. 1542, dated by him to 1865–1870.

5. Bazin 1942, 58, gives a selection of contemporary criticisms to this effect, citing, among others, Théophile Thoré in 1865: "Corot n'a jamais fait qu'un seul paysage, mais il est bon," and Nestor Paturot in 1874: "En résumé ce que je trouve d'admirable chez M. Corot c'est le talent qu'il a d'avoir élevé son art à la hauteur d'une grande industrie et d'une très habile exploitation."

6. It is given as *Entrée du bois Coubron, par une matinée de printemps* in the catalogue of M. Stumpf's sale in 1873; *Catalogue de tableaux modernes faisant partie de la collection de M. S[tumpf]* [auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] (Paris, 28 February 1873), 9, no. 8.

7. Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 2:31; see also Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:239.

8. Moreau-Nélaton, in Robaut 1905, 1:278: "C'est pourquoi, mettant à contribution l'affectation de la famille Gratiot, il se prépare une retraite à Coubron et y fait bâtir, contigu à la demeure de ses amis, un atelier où il pourra travailler à l'abri des importuns."

9. Bibliothèque Nationale, YB 3 849, II, 55, cited in Bazin 1962, 186, no. 81. Concerning the relations of the Stumpf family with Corot, see p. 90.

References

- 1900 *Catalogue of Paintings Forming the Private Collection of P. A. B. Widener, Ashbourne, near Philadelphia*. 2 vols. Paris: 1:13, repro.
- 1905 Robaut 3:372, no. 2386.
- 1906 Gensel, Walther. *Corot und Troyon*. Bielefeld and Leipzig: 46, repro.
- 1915 Roberts: no. 31, repro.
- 1915 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
- 1923 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
- 1923 Berenson et al.: n.p., repro. (reprinted without change in 1931).
- 1931 Widener: 204, repro.
- 1948 NGA: 103, repro.
- 1965 NGA: 30.
- 1968 NGA: 23, repro.
- 1975 NGA: 74, repro.
- 1976 Walker: 437, fig. 630.
- 1984 Walker: 432, no. 618, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 94, repro.



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *The Forest of Coubron*, 1942.9.12

1960.6.4 (1556)

*Saint Sebastian Succored
by the Holy Women*

1874

Oil on fabric, 130.1 × 86 (51 1/4 × 33 3/8)

Timken Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: COROT

Technical Notes: The support of the painting consists of a very fine, plain-weave fabric to which a lining has been adhered with an X-ray-dense adhesive. This makes the X-radiographic image too faint for interpretation. The tacking margins have been cropped. The absence of cusping suggests the painting retains its original dimensions. The painting was executed over a thin white ground. Infrared reflectography reveals pencil underdrawing in a few areas—the outline of Saint Sebastian's ankle and parts of the contours and hatchings in the putti carrying the wreath and palm branch. Squaring-up lines are also visible during infrared examination. The paint application varies from liquid transparencies to areas of impasto. Dabs of color are freely applied over thin layers of paint that only roughly define the composition. The handling in these accents is characteristic of Corot's brushwork. The painting is covered with a somewhat discolored varnish. X-radiographs show an old, repaired horizontal tear, 22 cm long, in the center of the painting just above the area of the sky. Apart from this damage, the painting is well preserved.

Provenance: Gellinard, by 1878;¹ (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 19 March 1888, no. 42, 15,000 francs); purchased by Victor Desfosses; (his sale, Paris, 26 April 1899, no. 17, 48,000 francs);² (Arnold & Tripp). Edward Fullerton Milliken [d. 1906], New York; (his sale, American Art Galleries, New York, 14 February 1902, no. 24);³ purchased by (Cottier and Co., New York). (Arthur Tooth and Sons, London); (their sale, American Art Galleries, New York, 19 February 1925, no. 68). William R. Timken [1866–1949], New York; by inheritance to his widow, Lilian Buyer Timken [1881–1959], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, 1878, Universal Exposition, no. 202. Paris, Palais Galliera, 1895, *Exposition centenaire de Corot*, no. 62. Loan for display with permanent collection, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, 1967–1971. Loan for display with permanent collection, Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, 1974–1980. Atlanta, The High Museum of Art; Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences; Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art; and Sarasota, John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 1983, *French Salon Paintings from Southern Collections*, no. 20, repro. Mem-

phis, The Dixon Gallery and Gardens, 1987–1988, *From Arcadia to Barbizon: A Journey in French Landscape*.⁴ Tokyo, National Museum of Western Art, 1994, *Paris in 1874: The Year of Impressionism*, no. 58, repro. Munich, Haus der Kunst, 1996, *Corot, Courbet, und die Maler von Barbizon: Les Amis de la nature*, no. B25, repro.

ACCORDING TO LEGEND, Sebastian, a captain in the Roman army under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian, became a convert to Christianity and began to proselytize among his fellow soldiers. He was summoned before Diocletian who remonstrated with him, but as Sebastian remained steadfast the emperor ordered him to be bound to a tree and shot to death with arrows. The archers left him for dead, but a Christian woman, Irene, who had come to take his body away for burial, found that he was still alive and with the help of another dressed his wounds. Having fully recovered, Sebastian confronted the emperor again who, understandably irritated at his persistence, ordered him to be clubbed to death. In medieval France, Sebastian—believed to have been a native of Narbonne—came to be the object of particular veneration. His relics, brought to Soissons in the ninth century, made that town a center of his cult.⁵

Eugène Delacroix exhibited a *Sebastian Tended by the Holy Women* at the Salon of 1836,⁶ where Corot, a fellow exhibitor, undoubtedly saw it (fig. 1). Well received by the public and the critics, the subject became a favorite with Delacroix who painted no fewer than five variants of it between 1840 and 1858.⁷ When, in 1851, Corot in his turn took up the subject for a painting of large proportions (fig. 2), he remembered Delacroix' composition. His own *Saint Sebastian*, completed after long and apparently difficult preliminaries,⁸ was exhibited at the Salon of 1853, where it failed to attract attention. Corot himself was dissatisfied and extensively retouched the large canvas before giving it a second exhibition some years later at the Universal Exposition of 1867.⁹ But the picture again remained unsold. In 1871 Corot donated it to a charity auction held for the benefit of orphans left by the Franco-Prussian War. At this sale it was bought by his disciple and friend, Alfred Robaut, acting in concert with the dealer Durand-Ruel. In an effort to induce the government to acquire this monumental work for a public building, Corot made further changes to it during 1873 and, in a letter written on 15 Feb-



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Saint Sebastian Succored by the Holy Women*, 1960.6.4



Fig. 1. Eugène Delacroix, *Saint Sebastian Tended by the Holy Women*, oil on canvas, 1836, Nantua (Ain), Church of Saint Michel, photograph courtesy of the Witt Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, London

ruary 1874 on behalf of the painting's new owners, formally offered it to the administration of the Beaux-Arts for the sum of 15,000 francs.¹⁰ The government showed no interest, and the picture was ultimately sold by Durand-Ruel to an English collector from whom it later passed into the collection of William T. Walters of Baltimore.¹¹

While the large canvas was being reworked in 1873 in Corot's spacious auxiliary studio in the rue Fontaine, two of his pupils, Alfred Robaut and Louis Desmarest, sketched out a reduced copy of its composition. Corot took this replica to his country studio at Coubron and there, in the late fall of 1874, gave it a last finish.¹² The result of this collaboration is the painting now in the National Gallery. It follows its model (fig. 2) with only minor changes. In the foreground, the wounded saint lies on a white cloth. Irene, seated behind him, draws an arrow from his shoulder, while another woman kneeling beside her rinses a sponge in a bowl. Tall trees rise on both sides of this group, forming an arch of dark foliage through which the evening sky sheds a silvery light, brightening toward the horizon, where the diminutive silhouettes of the departing archers appear in the far distance. High above, among the crowns of the trees, two bright cherubs descend on the figures below, one of them holding the wreath, the other the palm branch that signify the saint's martyrdom.

In Corot's arrangement of the group of the saint and the women who attend him, his debt to Delacroix' painting of 1836 is clearly evident, both



Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Saint Sébastien secouru par les saintes femmes*, oil on canvas, 1851/1873, Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery, 37.192

in the general staging of the subject and in the poses of the individual figures. But while Delacroix had crowded his canvas with life-size bodies shown in dramatically close view, Corot withdrew his figures into the hushed distance of a vast, crepuscular forest setting, reducing the group to a narrative accessory in what is essentially a landscape composition.

Why he should have undertaken a replica in 1873, after he had finally worked out the large composition, is not clear. It is possible that he wanted to keep the copy as his record of a painting that had caused him much effort. There may also be some significance in the fact that Alfred Robaut, one of the assistants who helped him with the copy, had briefly been the owner of the large canvas.¹³ The copy is in many ways inferior to the original, particularly in the uncertain execution of the figures of the saint and the two women. How much of what is visible in the copy is autograph, and how much the work of Robaut and Desmarest, is difficult to determine. Under X-radiographic examination, the underlying paint structure has been found to differ from that of other paintings by Corot. It is possible that the copy was broadly laid in by the assistants and merely touched up by Corot.

Notes

1. The picture was lent by Gellinard to the Universal Exposition of 1878.
2. Annotated copy of the Defosses catalogue in the Knoedler library.
3. Annotated copy of Milliken sale catalogue in the Knoedler library; sale also widely reported in the press.
4. Although the painting is not listed in the catalogue of this exhibition, its loan is confirmed by the NGA registrar's office.
5. A. Bell, *Lives and Legends of the Evangelists, Apostles, and Other Early Saints* (London, 1901), 238–240.
6. Exhibited as no. 499 at the Salon of 1836, Delacroix' *Saint Sebastian Tended by the Holy Women* was the following year placed in the church of Saint-Michel, Nantua (Ain); see Lee Johnson, *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix* (Oxford, 1986), 3:213–214, no. 422.

7. 1) Peter Nathan collection, Zurich, 1840, Johnson 1986, 424; 2) a reduction of the painting of 1836, present location unknown, Johnson 430; 3) a variant composition, on panel, in a British private collection, c. 1847–1853, Johnson 450; 4) a replica of 3), location unknown, c. 1854–1855, Johnson 465; 5) another variant of 4), Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1858, Johnson 467.

8. Corot's initial version of *Saint Sebastian Succored by the Holy Women*, now at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, was shown as no. 287 at the Salon of 1853 (Robaut 1905, 2:330, no. 1063). The slow progress of this large canvas (256 × 170 cm), begun in late 1851, is recorded in a series of letters from Corot to Dutilleux (Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 1:79, 84, 89).

9. Catalogued as *Saint Sébastien, paysage*, the reworked canvas was exhibited at the Universal Exposition of 1867 under no. 161 (Moreau-Nélaton 1924, 2:28, 30).

10. Robaut 1905, 1:311 and no. 1063.

11. Its history is described in some detail in a letter by Alfred Robaut (15 October 1882), of which a translation was published in *The Walters Collection: Catalogue of Paintings* (Baltimore, n.d.), 63–66.

12. "Préparée d'après l'original par MM. Alfred Robaut et Louis Desmarest dans l'atelier où Corot venait de retoucher celui-ci, elle fut reprise et terminée par lui-même à Coubron, en octobre 1874" (Robaut 1905, 2:360, no. 2316). Writing from Coubron, Corot announced the completion of the copy in a letter to Alfred Robaut (23 October 1874): "le Saint-Sébastien va son train. Il est signé" (Robaut 1905, 4:347).

13. Robaut 1905, 1:311.

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- 1924 Moreau-Nélaton: 2:89, fig. 256.
- 1951 Bazin: 25–26, 75.
- 1965 NGA: 30.
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- 1975 NGA: 76, repro.
- 1984 Norton, Thomas E. *100 Years of Collecting in America*. New York: 100, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 96, repro.

Gustave Courbet

1819–1877

GUSTAVE COURBET was born in Ornans, a farming town in eastern France, into a close-knit family of the rural middle class. His happy childhood, spent in the woods and fields around Ornans, gave him a taste for the hunt and sport, a dislike for school, and a lifelong love of his native region. While at a boarding school in nearby Besançon, he was briefly taught by a local painter, Charles-Antoine Flajoulot (1774–1840), who called himself a disciple of Jacques-Louis David.

Having gone to Paris in 1839, ostensibly to study law but already determined to become an artist, he entered the studio of Charles Steuben (1788–1856), an academic teacher, from whom, as he later claimed, he learned nothing. Determined to be his own teacher, he launched himself on a course of independent study painting the nude at the teacherless Académie Suisse and copying the Spanish, Venetian, and Dutch masters at the Louvre. The course of his self-education in six years of strenuous work is difficult to chart; much of his early work has been lost. An early attempt at a narrative composition, *Lot and His Daughters* (private collection, Paris), painted in 1840 and submitted unsuccessfully to the Salon of 1844, seems, in its hearty crudity, like a caricature of Salon painting. But there is energy in its awkwardness, and its nudes give a foretaste of the carnality that was to infuriate his future critics. Famously handsome, Courbet was attractive to women. One of his mistresses bore him a son in 1847. But self-absorption made him unsuited for matrimony, which he regarded, horrified, as slavery.

His imagination needed the stimulus of physical presence and was most deeply stirred by the tangible reality of things and beings. Portraits posed by members of his family gave early proof of his talent, but his favorite subject was himself, and it was in self-portraits that he gave the strongest evidence of a personal style. Theatrical performances as much as likenesses, they show him in dramatic roles—as a man on the verge of madness (*The Desperate Man*, 1841), as infatuated lover (*Lovers in the Countryside*, 1844), inspired artist (*The Sculptor*, 1844), or wounded duelist (*The Wounded Man*, 1844, Musée d'Orsay, Paris). Romantic in sentiment,

these youthful works have painterly qualities that reflect his study of the masters, particularly the baroque painters of dramatic light-and-shadow modeling, Caravaggio, Ribera, and Rembrandt. The 1840s were a time of struggle during which Salon juries often refused his submissions. *Self-Portrait with Black Spaniel* (1844, PetitPal), a work of very confident execution and the first of his paintings to be accepted for the Salon, continued the long series of his self-portraits, followed by *Self-Portrait with Leather Belt* (c. 1846, Louvre), *Self-Portrait as Cellist* (c. 1847, National Museum, Stockholm), and the masterly *Self-Portrait with Pipe* (c. 1849, Musée Fabre, Montpellier). *The Guitar Player* (c. 1844, private collection, Bedford, N.Y.), a romantic costume piece, was admitted to the Salon of 1845 that rejected *The Hammock* (1844–1845, Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur), an early instance of what was to be a recurrent motif in Courbet's work: a sexually attractive woman observed while asleep. As an outsider by choice, he cheerfully defied the official establishment, certain of winning his public by the sheer strength of native genius: a "student of nature" who owed no debt to any teacher. But the "nature" that nourished his art was an irresistible appetite for painting which initially led him to the museum, where, aided by prodigious technical facility, he plundered the masters of whatever appealed to his instinct—his nature.

The Revolution of 1848 brought his work to a wider audience. Compulsively gregarious, he shone nightly in high-spirited gatherings at Andler's beer hall, where his companions included the painter François Bonvin (1817–1887), the musician Alphonse Promayet, the poet Charles Baudelaire, and the critic Jules Champfleury. To the Salon of 1849, which, unlike the revolutionary Salon of 1848, was no longer non-juried, he submitted eleven paintings. Among those accepted was *After Dinner at Ornans* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille), an intimately domestic scene boldly treated in dimensions normally reserved for historical subjects. Its grave realism, reminiscent of Louis Le Nain's (1593–1648) *Peasant Repast* (1642, Louvre), was admired by artists (Eugène Delacroix) and critics (Champfleu-

ry) and earned him a gold medal, which rendered him *hors concours* for life at the Salons.

In the autumn of 1849 he returned to Ornans, where his father had prepared a studio for him. With the coming Salon in view, he rapidly completed a group of nine paintings, including several of monumental dimensions. The funeral of his maternal grandfather, Antoine Oudot, gave him the idea for the enormous *Funeral at Ornans* (Louvre), posed by members of his family and citizens of Ornans gathered around the priest officiating at the open grave. A second entry, the life-size *Stonebreakers* (formerly Dresden Museum, destroyed in 1945), recalled an encounter with road menders in the vicinity of Ornans. Exhibited at the time when a reaction against the recent revolution was gathering force, these unadorned scenes from common life were vehemently denounced for their supposedly socialist tendency and for what critics regarded as their offensive ugliness.

The coup d'état of December 1851, which made Louis-Napoleon the dictator of France and led to his "election" as emperor in 1852, drastically changed the climate in the world of art. The government of Napoleon III, though liberal to a degree, did not tolerate genuine dissent. Appeased by lavish patronage, many artists submitted. Courbet gave himself truculent oppositional airs, but thereafter avoided subjects that could be seen as hostile to the regime. Shortly before Napoleon's seizure of power, Courbet undertook a composition meant to disarm his critics, *Young Ladies of the Village Giving Alms to a Cow Girl* (1851, MMA), which was bought, even before its exhibition at the Salon of 1852, by one of the most powerful men of the new regime, Napoleon's half brother, comte de Morny. For the Salon of 1853, Courbet once again made an effort at a spectacular presentation. The political situation urged caution in the choice of subjects, for which he sought to compensate by a show of artistic daring. *The Bathers* (1853, Musée Fabre, Montpellier), his first exhibited nude of large dimensions, caused a lively scandal by the exuberant fleshiness of the main bather's back and posterior. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Courbet's socialist friend, read an indictment of bourgeois society into these *fesses colossales*, while Delacroix, who admired the nude's vigorous execution, deplored the ponderous insignificance of its gesture. Courbet's best-liked picture at the Salon, *The Sleeping Spinner* (1853,

Musée Fabre, Montpellier), the portrait of a buxom girl in a drowse beside her spinning wheel, was bought by Alfred Bruyas, an art patron of Montpellier, who also acquired the controversial *Bathers*, beginning a long association with the artist who was soon to be in need of a financial backer. His *Portrait of Bruyas* (1853, Musée Fabre, Montpellier), which shows the sitter holding a volume entitled *La Solution*, hints at the role Courbet had in mind for his patron. Insisting on total artistic freedom, and aware that, as a result, he could not rely on state subsidies, he envisioned support freely given by private patrons as a desirable alternative. The mutual accommodation of independent artist and private patron was the "solution" that he proposed and that Bruyas cautiously accepted as the basis of a free art-economy of the future. The need for such an arrangement was impressed on Courbet by his dealings with the government's director of the Beaux-Arts, comte Nieuwerkerke, who had invited him to paint a large picture "in his most vigorous style" for the Universal Exposition of 1855. There were only two conditions: the submission of a preliminary sketch and approval of the finished painting by a jury of his own choice. This moved Courbet to declare that he would not have his work judged by any jury: rather than making the slightest sacrifice of his freedom, he would withdraw from the official exhibition and show his works in a rival exhibition of his own.

On a visit to Bruyas, in May 1854, he sought to persuade his patron to underwrite the cost of a one-man show. The main result of the voyage was a large picture, *The Meeting* (1854, Musée Fabre, Montpellier), which shows the artist, proudly erect, encountering his respectful patron—"Fortune bowing to Genius," according to a contemporary reviewer. Bruyas proved to be unable to finance a private venue, and Courbet resigned himself to submitting his paintings to the official exhibition. Their centerpiece was to be an immense personal statement, *The Studio: A Realist Allegory Summing up Seven Years of My Artist's Life* (Louvre), showing him at work, surrounded by "all the people who serve my cause, sustain me in my idea, and support my action." Besides its personal self-celebration, the painting had the more general purpose of presenting the Artist as the exemplar of human creativity. When Courbet learned in the spring of 1855 that the jurors had rejected two of his fourteen en-

tries, *The Studio* and *Funeral at Ornans*, he renewed his plan for an exhibition of his own and within a short time managed to have a temporary gallery built near the official exhibition, placing over its entrance the sign *Le Réalisme*. He did not, however, boycott the official exhibition but contributed eleven of his most important works to it. His own show, opened a month later, included thirty-nine paintings and four drawings. To Courbet's surprise, attendance was sparse.

Disappointed and in poor health, he emerged from this phase of his career with a lessened zest for controversy. From 1855 onward he largely abandoned social subjects and avoided, except in a few instances, complex compositions, instead devoting himself mainly to landscapes, scenes of the hunt, nudes, and portraits. At the Salon of 1857, he showed *Ladies on the Banks of the Seine* (PetitPal), an opulent human still life posed by two fashionably dressed women, drowsing in the summer heat at the river's edge. This Salon also contained two of the hunting pictures that were becoming one of his specialties, *Exhausted Doe in the Snow* (private collection, New York) and *The Quarry* (MFA), in the latter of which he appears standing beside the carcass of a slain buck. Successful exhibitions in 1858 and 1859 took him to Brussels and to Frankfurt, where he made a lengthy stay and received commissions for portraits and hunting subjects. Back in Paris, his dramatic forest scenes (*Battle of Stags*, 1861, Louvre) won him a popular success. From the mid-1850s onward landscapes played an increasing part in his work. He found his motifs in his native Franche-Comté whose hillsides, forests, and streams had deeply impressed him in his youth. In his dark-toned landscapes he concentrated on the tangible matter of stone, turf, and foliage rather than on fugitive effects of light and atmosphere. Setting up his easel wherever the view pleased him, he painted directly in oils, making use of rich paints that he spread on the canvas with the palette knife. About 1863–1865 he painted the series *Source of the Loue* (see pp. 122–123). Close views of a rock face opening into a cavern from whose depths the river flows, they invert norms of landscape painting by replacing sky and space with solid matter.

Nudes dominate his late figure painting. *The Awakening* (*Venus Pursuing Psyche with Her Jealousy*), destroyed in World War II, was refused by the Salon of 1864 because of its hint at lesbianism.

Courbet profited from this rejection by converting the naked Psyche into *Woman with Parrot* (MMA), a suave nude that was admired at the Salon of 1866. *The Awakening's* true sequel was his frankly lesbian *Sleep* (*Les Dormeuses*) (1866, PetitPal), painted for a collector of erotica. A still life of passive bodies, it expresses Courbet's materialist aesthetic and his pleasure at the sight of women reduced by sleep to purely physical existence. At the Universal Exposition of 1867, he again had a pavilion, built at his own expense at the pont d'Alma, in which he presented more than a hundred paintings in a retrospective that won favorable reviews. Lionized by society in the empire's final years, he loudly refused the Legion of Honor offered him in 1870. After a summer at the seaside village of Etretat, he prepared a selection of seascapes for the Salon of 1870, among them *The Wave* (Louvre). Having heretofore shown nature mainly in a state of rest, he now produced, in paintings of the agitated sea, images of the elements in powerful motion.

The collapse of the empire after its defeat by Prussia in 1870 rekindled Courbet's political activism. As member of the Arts Commission of the Paris Commune, then defending the city against the forces of the national government quartered in Versailles, he recommended the destruction of the Vendôme Column, a symbol of Bonapartism. When the Commune fell, he suffered arrest, a trial, and six months in prison. Only fifty-one years old, he was in poor health, his body bloated from overindulgence in food and drink. Freed in early 1872, he returned to Ornans, where he found his studio looted. His submissions to the Salon were refused, but his work continued to have steady and profitable sales. In the spring of 1873 he was condemned to bear the cost of the reerection of the Vendôme Column. Fearing renewed imprisonment, he fled to Switzerland, where he settled in the town of La Tour de Peilz on the Lake of Geneva. In Paris, meanwhile, his property was confiscated and a fine of 323,000 francs imposed on him.

In his last years, he worked feverishly to produce paintings for sale to meet the State's exorbitant demand. Helped by assistants, he began a mass production, chiefly of landscapes, hasty parodies of his style, and in their repetitiousness a mockery of realism. But his talent was not extinguished yet. Flashes of it still appeared in personal work, in portraits, animal studies, and still lifes. *The Trout*

(1872, Kunsthaus, Zurich), the picture of a superb, glistening fish suspended by its gills and expiring, is a poignant image of captivity and death, and perhaps a final self-portrait.

Cared for by friends, still hoping to return to France, he gradually succumbed to heart and liver disease. After undergoing painful medical treatment, he died on 31 December 1877.

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1943.15.2 (762)

The Stream (Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir; vallée de la Loue)

1855

Oil on fabric, 104 × 137 (41 × 54)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. P. H. B. Frelinghuysen in memory of her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer

Inscriptions

At lower left: *G. Courbet '55*

Technical Notes: The painting's primary support is an open plain-weave fabric that has been lined to fabric in relatively recent times (the label of the Havemeyer collection, stenciled in red on what appears to be a piece of an earlier lining fabric, has been mounted on the back of the stretcher). The tacking margins have been removed, and fabric cusping is evident only along the bottom edge. A dark brown ground covers the support and becomes visible between paint strokes in parts of the picture, contributing to its fairly dark tonality. Infrared reflectography did not reveal any underdrawing (as would be expected owing to the presence of the brown ground). The subsequent paint layers are for the most part opaque, though some glazing appears in the shadows. The paint is applied in multiple layers, consisting of small color patches in the water and the weedy foreground and of long brushstrokes in parts of the foliage. The textures of the craggy cliffs to the left and the right of the stream are suggested by applications of heavy paint, troweled on with the palette knife. It appears that Courbet in his reworkings of parts of the landscape allowed each layer to dry before adding further paint, thus avoiding a wet-in-wet mixing of the colors. The painting was not carried forward uniformly from the darker to the lighter areas. Instead, Courbet seems to have gone back and forth between darks and lights; his highlights were not always painted last. The X-radiograph indicates that shadows and highlights were subsequently enhanced in many parts of the picture. A comparison of the picture's present state with an early photograph, published in the catalogue of the Haro sale of 1892, suggests that many of these alterations postdate this publication and are restorer's retouches or repairs necessitated by a flaking of the paint that has recurred periodically. These fairly extensive interventions have affected the textures, colors, and shapes in parts of the canvas, particularly in its left and center sections. They consist mainly of additions of accents of green to the mossy rocks on the path at the left and in the stream and to an enlargement of the glimpse of sky above the stream.¹ The painting was most recently treated in 1944 just prior to its acquisition by the NGA.² The varnish applied at that time has since yellowed appreciably.

Provenance: Vauthrin, by 1855 until at least 1867.³ Laurent-Richard; (Laurent-Richard sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 23 May 1878, no. 6, as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir [vallée de la Loue, Doubs]*, repro. engraving by H. Lefort (13,100 francs). E. Secrétan [d. 1899], Paris.⁴ Etienne-François Haro [1827–1897] and his son, Henri Haro [1855–1911], Paris; (their sale, Galerie Sedelmeyer, Paris, 30–31 May 1892, no. 69, repro., as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir*, probably bought in); sold 15 October 1897 by Haro to (Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris);⁵ sold 19 October 1897 to Henry Osborn Havemeyer [1847–1907] and his wife, née Louisine Waldron Elder [1855–1929], New York;⁶ their daughter Mrs. P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, née Adaline Havemeyer [1844–1963], Morristown, New Jersey.

Exhibited: Paris, 1855, Universal Exposition, no. 2810, as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir; vallée de la Loue*. Bordeaux, Le Havre, Dijon, Besançon, 1858. Lille, July–August 1866, no. 385, as *Le Ruisseau du puits noir (Franche-Comté)*. Paris, 1867, *Oeuvres de M. G. Courbet au Rond-Point du Pont de l'Alma*, no. 20, as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir, vallée de la Loue (Doubs)*. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1882, *Oeuvres de G. Courbet*, no. 56, as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir*, repro. Louvre, 1885, *Exposition au profit des orphelins d'Alsace-Lorraine*, no. 81, as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir*. The Brooklyn Museum and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1988–1989, *Courbet Reconsidered*, no. 23, as *The Stream of the Black Well, Valley of the Loue (Doubs)*, repro. Lausanne, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, and Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 1998–1999, *Courbet: Artiste et promoteur de son oeuvre*, no. 102, repro.

THE VIEW OPENS ON a gorge bordered on both sides by sheer cliff faces. On the left a small path leads farther into the shady depths of the dell; on the right a shallow stream ripples toward the foreground over a bed of rocks. A stand of slender trees, between path and stream in the picture's center, divides the view into two nearly equal halves.⁷ Daylight filters through the fresh green leafage that forms a continuous canopy over the scene, leaving only a small opening near the middle for the blue sky. Along the humid banks weeds flourish, mosses cover the boulders in the stream, the air seems saturated with moisture. Bright patches of sunlight on the bordering rocks are reflected in the silvery flow of the water, where they mingle with blue reflections from the sky. Lacking any dominant topographical feature, the picture presents a teeming, irregular profusion of organic life filling a constricted space that recedes into the twilight depths of the forest.

The site chosen by Courbet is the Puits Noir, a wooded gorge some four kilometers northeast of Ornans, through which a small stream, the Breme, flows between steep rocks shaded by young trees.⁸ Courbet, who was to return often to this spot, spoke of one of his later pictures of this site as “un superbe paysage de solitude profonde, fait au fond des vallons de mon pays.”⁹ Solitude, in fact, seems to be the theme that Courbet wanted to express in this picture, which is one of his earliest pure landscapes—a forest interior utterly without a human or animal presence. Considering its relatively large dimensions, it constitutes a radical instance, still uncommon in its time, of a landscape represented

for its own sake only, without narrative or human interest. It is also without a focal motif or dramatic pictorial effect, such as the incandescent sunsets that shed their light into the oak forests of the Barbizon painters. The attitude it suggests is one of deep immersion into an entirely natural setting, undisturbed by human associations and unthinkable as a background for poetic fables such as those that Corot introduced into his woodlands at the time.

As a spacious forest interior, or *sous-bois*, of unusually large dimensions, Courbet's *Stream* nevertheless invites comparison with Corot's *Forest of Fontainebleau* of 1834 in the National Gallery (see pp. 29–36) to which it bears a superficial resemblance. In both paintings a stream flows through rocky terrain under a canopy of foliage. But Corot's *Forest* is a composed picture, its trees are picturesquely grouped, and the view is taken from without, at a distance that allows its main features to be seen as the distinct parts of an arrangement. Courbet's unstructured wilderness, by contrast, is situated within an atmospheric space that is vaguely defined, unevenly illuminated, and filled with complex, only partially seen, plausibly natural vegetation. Courbet's programmatic realism on this occasion did not cause him to concentrate on the tangibility of physical nature. Instead, he chose to emphasize the scintillations on the flowing water, the green haze in the forest air, the scattered reflections of sunlight on the rocks that border the stream.¹⁰

In creating these effects, Courbet used a complicated mixture of techniques, alternating brushstrokes of various widths with liberal applications of the palette knife. It is noteworthy that he used the palette knife not only to place accents of highlight or to suggest the material textures of naked rock and mossy boulders but also to create areas of atmospheric haze and of colored half-shadows.

The picture's history is involved with Courbet's complex agenda during 1854–1855, and particularly with his rushed preparations for the two exhibitions held in 1855 in which he showed much of his lifework up to that date, the Universal Exposition, where he was represented by eleven paintings, including *The Stream*,¹¹ and the independent one-man exhibition, organized by himself in a separate pavilion, which included thirty-nine paintings and



Gustave Courbet, *The Stream* (*Le Ruisseau de Puits-Noir; vallée de la Loue*), 1843.15.2

four drawings. The start of his work on *The Stream* has been inferred from a letter dating from 22 December 1853, in which Courbet announces to his friend Francis Wey that he has “painted some landscapes,”¹² and from another, written sometime in January 1854 to Alfred Bruyas, which contains the news that he has “three landscapes in the works.”¹³ These remarks are generally taken to refer to the three landscapes, including *The Stream*, that Courbet showed at the Universal Exposition of 1855.¹⁴ But this raises some questions. The verdant forest scene of *The Stream*, generally assumed to have been based on direct observation, cannot have been painted in the dead of winter. If Courbet’s mentions of landscapes in letters written in the winter of 1853–1854 do include this painting, they can only mean that he was at work on it indoors, presumably following earlier outdoor studies. And those studies would have had to be of considerably earlier date, since in the preceding years, 1851 and 1852, Courbet had only spent the late autumns and winters at Ornans.¹⁵ It is, of course, also possible, and probably more likely, that the mention of three landscapes in these letters refers to other paintings and has as yet nothing to do with *The Stream*, and that this painting, and the work on the spot that led to it, was only begun somewhat later, in the course of Courbet’s long stay in Ornans in the spring of 1854.

Even so, it is not necessary to assume that

Courbet ever carried the large canvas into the gorge of the Puits Noir, however fair the season. What argues against the claim that the picture was painted *in situ*¹⁶ is not mainly its unwieldy size or the difficulty of transporting it repeatedly some four kilometers to a spot accessible only by a footpath, but the existence of a smaller version, only about a third as large, now in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (fig. 1).¹⁷ This is likely to have been the original study, painted out-of-doors, and the model on which Courbet, working in the studio, later based the larger picture.

Whether painted on the site or derived from a study, *The Stream* was probably begun in Ornans no earlier than the spring of 1854, sometime before Courbet’s departure in May for Montpellier from where he returned only the following November. Back in Ornans during the winter of 1854–1855, he may have added final touches, but the picture must have been finished by 14 March 1855, on which date Courbet, writing to Bruyas about the forthcoming Universal Exposition, mentioned that “there will be three landscapes, two of which were recently sold to an ironmaster in my part of the world for the sum of two thousand francs.”¹⁸ This “ironmaster” was the industrialist Vauthrin who lent *The Stream* to the exposition, together with another landscape by Courbet, *The Château d’Ornans*, now at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.¹⁹

The art exhibition at the Universal Exposition



Fig. 1. Gustave Courbet, *Le Ruisseau de Puits Noir* (*The Brook of the Black Well*), oil on canvas, c. 1855, Collection of the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, Purchase, John W. Tempest Fund, 1925.245, Photo MMFA

Fig. 2. Gustave Courbet, *The Stream of the Puits Noir at Ornans*, oil on canvas, c. 1856, Pasadena, Norton Simon Art Foundation, Gift of Mr. Norton Simon, M.1976.13.P



Fig. 3. Gustave Courbet, *Le Ruisseau couvert*, oil on canvas, 1865, Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF 275, Photo RMN



at which *The Stream* made its public debut was not a regular Salon, but one section of a huge general world's fair. Among the thousands of works by artists of all nations that crowded its galleries, Courbet's pictures were "horribly placed," as he bitterly complained to Alfred Bruyas.²⁰ *The Stream* figured under no. 2810 as *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir, vallée de la Loue*.²¹ It was ignored by the critics, most of whom paid scant attention to Courbet's eleven submissions.

The Stream marked the first occurrence in Courbet's work of the Puits Noir, a landscape motif that he subsequently repeated often and in many

variations. Nearly the same view appears in the smaller picture in the Montreal Museum, already mentioned as a probable study for this canvas (fig. 1). A third picture, in the Norton Simon collection (fig. 2), shows the stream of the Puits Noir from roughly the same spot but—as the leafless trees indicate—in late fall or winter.²² It is possible that this is one of the paintings that Courbet mentioned, in his letters of the winter of 1853–1854, as being "in the works." Some ten years elapsed before Courbet next visited this site. In the years around 1865, he returned to it to paint its cliffs and stream in a variety of different aspects, the version he preferred

being that of *Le Ruisseau couvert* (1865, Louvre; fig. 3) which he often repeated thereafter.²³ In 1866 he adapted a view of the Puits Noir to serve as background for *The Covert of the Roe Deer at the Stream of Plaisir-Fontaine* (Louvre),²⁴ a picture painted in his studio at Ornans during the winter,²⁵ with which he won a triumphal success at the Salon of 1866. In none of these later views of the site did he exactly repeat his original vision of a vacant forest interior opening on a deep, twilight space.

The frequency with which Courbet painted this hidden wilderness, not far from his native Ornans and no doubt familiar to him from early rambles in the forest, proves that it had a special importance for him. Judging from his own description of it as a “landscape of profound solitude” and from the titles of *Solitude* and *Covert* that he gave to later versions of this motif, it was the unspoiled, sheltered privacy of the place that attracted him. The enclosed refuge of this dell, filled with silent life and the sound of water, appealed to the quietly receptive observer in him, the stealthy hunter who was as much a part of his artistic personality as the more familiar boisterous extrovert. The lack of impressive topographical features or of distinctive regionalisms that would have made the scene identifiable and interesting to the larger public confirms the picture’s essentially private nature.

Courbet’s gradual abandonment after 1855 of the large figural compositions on social themes that had made his early work famous and controversial, and his turning to landscapes, hunting scenes, portraits, and nudes were seen by some disappointed liberal critics of the time as a retreat in the face of official hostility.²⁶ Other commentators, more sympathetic or less ideologically committed, regarded it as an entirely personal artistic reorientation. His friend and defender, Jules-Antoine Castagnary, wrote in 1882:

Without exactly avoiding humanity, he now devoted himself by preference to the sky and the sea, to vegetation and snow, animals and flowers... Eager to see, to penetrate a world open to his observation, his searches brought him some happy surprises like those of the ancient navigators: he discovered virgin lands where no one had yet set foot, aspects and forms of landscape that can be said to have been unknown before him... [He] studied the stream rushing along on its bed of sand, amidst boulders and patches of moss. No one had ever painted this gushing, living liquid-

ity with such boldness and truth. One cannot contemplate his *Stream of the Puits-Noir*, his *Source of the Loue*, his *Covered Stream*, these fresh and dazzling landscapes in which grey stones, green foliage, and flowing water are so happily combined, without feeling struck as by a gust of clean air.²⁷

More recently, attempts to read the “texts” suspected of lying hidden in Courbet’s landscapes have led some interpreters to the discovery of political meanings in his color use and painting technique, while it has caused others, frustrated at finding no very distinct body of ideas, to attempt an explanation of his landscapes in commercial terms, as concessions to the demands of the art market for which they suppose Courbet to have been working. Klaus Herding observed in Courbet’s “egalitarian pictorial organization” and “liberated color” the symptoms of an anti-authoritarian, anarchistic attitude.²⁸ Ann Wagner, by contrast, challenged the traditional view of Courbet’s artistic and political independence, so vigorously proclaimed by the artist himself, and detected in his landscape practice a willingness to conform to bourgeois tastes with an eye to the profitable sale of his work.²⁹

For Courbet himself, *The Stream* clearly had a particular importance, judging by the frequency of his subsequent variations on its theme. An early reference to it, in the catalogue of the Haro sale in 1892, makes the claim, not otherwise substantiated, that Courbet “considered this picture, entirely painted from nature, as the best of his landscapes.”³⁰

Notes

1. Paris, Galerie Sedelmeyer, 30–31 May 1892, *Vente par suite de décès des collections MM. Haro, père et fils, Tableaux Anciens et Modernes, etc.*, no. 69. A detailed comparison between the photographic plate of *The Stream* in this catalogue and the picture’s present state was made by Pamela Campbell, on 29 April 1992, and is on file, together with the pertinent photographs, in the NGA’s department of curatorial records.

2. Letter from John Walker to Peter Frelinghuysen, 11 April 1944, in the NGA’s department of curatorial records.

3. Lent to Paris, Universal Exposition, 1855, no. 2810, and to Paris, 1867, *Oeuvres de M. G. Courbet au Rond-Point du Pont de l’Alma*, no. 20. Vauthrin’s name is spelled—exceptionally—“Vauthrain” in the catalogue of 1855.

4. The painting was not included in the Secrétan sale at Christie's, London, on 13 July 1889.

5. Concerning Durand-Ruel's acquisition of the painting, see Frelinghuysen et al. 1993, 312.

6. Weitzenhoffer 1986, 117, mentions the sale to the Havemeyers.

7. Fried 1990, 342 note 47, has drawn attention to the picture's two-part division, with "the right half of the composition largely given over to the stream itself . . . as it approaches the picture surface . . . while the left half includes . . . a lushly overgrown path leading back into the picture space." This double movement, both into and out of the picture, according to Fried, provided Courbet not only with "a perfect vehicle for his art but also a literal anticipation of the quasi-corporeal merging of painting and painter-beholder [that] he continually sought to achieve." It may be noted, however, that this kind of spatial composition is by no means rare in nineteenth-century landscape painting and not peculiar to Courbet's work. A typical, and rather similar, instance of it is provided by Corot's *Eel Gatherers*; see pp. 55–57.

8. An account of the site, detailing its complicated confluence of streams and sources, is provided by Charles Léger (1929, 57–58) who describes the valley of Bonnevaux, which comprises the Puits Noir and the grottoes and stream of Plaisir-Fontaine, as Courbet's favorite outdoor studio. "S'il peignait un effet de crépuscule, la toile commencée était bonnement mise sous un rocher caverneux, et reprise le lendemain ou les jours suivants" (57). Courbet reached the place by going along a road that branched from the Ornans road and descended to the Puits Noir as a narrow footpath.

9. "A superb landscape of profound solitude, painted in the depth of my native valleys." Chu 1992, 275, no. 66-5.

10. It has often been claimed, on the strength of boasts made by the artist himself, that Courbet made no effort to choose his motifs, but planted his easel haphazardly, painting whatever happened to come before him. His friend, the painter Jean Gigoux, quoted him as saying: "Ou que je me mette . . . ça m'est égal; c'est toujours bon, pourvu qu'on ait la nature sous les yeux" (*Causeries sur les artistes de mon temps* [Paris, 1885], 286). But in fact landscapes such as *The Stream*, while not "composed" in the traditional way, demonstrate not only his consistent preference for certain kinds of sites but also a profound science in expressing his intended meanings by the selection of a particular point of view.

11. *Exposition Universelle de 1855. Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture des artistes vivants étrangers et français* (Paris, 1855), no. 2810, *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir, vallée de la Loue*. The other two landscapes that Courbet exhibited on this occasion were no. 2809, *La Roche de Dix-Heures* (Louvre; Fernier 1977, no. 156), and no. 2811, *Le Château d'Ornans* (The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Fernier 1977, no. 173).

12. This letter, known only through a copy which

gives its date as "1854," is now universally dated, on the basis of internal evidence, to 1853 (Chu 1992, 118, no. 53-7).

13. Chu 1992, 121, no. 54-1.

14. See Mack 1951, 112; Chu 1992, 119 note 5.

15. Courbet was in Ornans from the late fall of 1851 to January or February 1852 and from the latter part of October 1852 to January 1853. He was back in Ornans by December 1853 and stayed until late May 1854—his longest sojourn there since 1850 and the only one that gave him the opportunity of painting out-of-doors in spring weather.

16. According to the catalogue of the Haro sale (see Provenance), the picture was "painted entirely from nature."

17. Fernier 1977, no. 177. The picture, measuring 64.8 × 81.3 cm, was described by Fernier, who dated it about 1855, as a "replique à quelques variantes près du grand tableau," but it actually has the character of a study, rather than that of a copy. That Courbet was capable, with help, of transporting large canvases to the site of the Puits Noir is, however, indicated by his letter to Urbain Cuenot of 6 April 1866 (Chu 1992, 277, no. 66-7). In this he mentions that he had carried to the Puits Noir, assisted by his father, the canvas of the *Hippocrene Fountain* on which he subsequently painted his *Covert of the Roe Deer* (174 × 200.9 cm, Louvre).

18. Chu 1992, 137, no. 55-3.

19. Fernier 1977, no. 173.

20. Letter to Bruyas, Paris, 11 May 1855; Chu 1992, 140, no. 55-5.

21. Wagner (1981, 422) makes the point that Courbet provided his early landscapes, such as *The Stream*, with elaborate titles to identify the precise site from which they were taken, while his later landscapes were named more broadly after the general effect intended, rather than the specific locality shown. Ann Dumas (in Faunce and Noehlin 1988) claims, in addition, that *The Stream* "fulfilled a widely held idea of nature in the mid-nineteenth century: an idea that remote natural places could offer peace and a restorative respite to the city dweller. . . . Not surprisingly, this kind of landscape was immensely popular with collectors in Second Empire Paris" (121, no. 23) and that "Courbet's frequent portrayal of such places certainly contributed to the reputation of the Franche-Comté as a scenic part of France, and . . . can be seen in the context of the interest in regional topography that flourished in the nineteenth century" (157, no. 49). But Théodore Duret (1918, 35) has contradicted, with the authority of a contemporary witness, the suggestion that Courbet courted popularity by offering collectors soothingly natural landscapes or that he capitalized on a contemporary taste for regional topography. His landscapes, according to Duret, were no better received than his vehemently criticized figure paintings. "The reasons were the same in both instances: he had painted them as he had seen them, in their reality, a method which at this time was not admitted as leading to an artistic result. People still wanted landscapes conceived in the spirit of Poussin . . . they

had not yet realized that painting could represent nature in all its simplicity."

22. 97 × 147 cm. Fernier 1977, no. 196, who gives it the title of *Torrent*, describes it as "one of the earliest landscapes painted on the banks of the stream of La Breme, at the place called Puits-Noir. Painted before the spring season, its trees are entirely leafless, its rocks rise like walls." Without giving his reasons, he dates the picture to 1856.

23. Fernier 1977, no. 462. A sampling of the many later variants of the Puits Noir (known also under the names of Ruisseau de Plaisir-Fontaine and Ruisseau Couvert) dependent on this particular version are the paintings catalogued by Fernier 1977, under nos. 463-474, 583, 633, 847, 891, 970.

24. Fernier 1977, no. 552.

25. In his letter to Urbain Cuenot of 6 April 1866 (Chu 1992, 277, no. 66-7), Courbet mentions that he had painted the picture during the preceding winter in his studio at Ornans, having rented some roe deer for the purpose.

26. "Jugeant que l'époque était difficile, et que décidément les militaires et les princes sont ce qu'il y a de plus beau en peinture, il s'est abstenu de risquer sa ménagerie de personnages hors la loi. C'est vrai qu'on n'a jamais tant cassé de pierres à Paris, mais il a compris que l'intérêt se portait sur ceux qui les font casser, et non point sur ceux qui les cassent. Il s'est donc rejeté sur les cerfs et les renards, contre lesquels on ne saurait professer d'antipathie." Théophile Thoré (Bürger), *Salons de W. Bürger. 1861-1868, avec une préface par T. Thoré* (Paris 1870), vol. 1, 36.

27. Jules-Antoine Castagnary, *Exposition des oeuvres de Gustave Courbet à l'École des Beaux-Arts* (Paris, May 1882), 17.

28. Klaus Herding, "Farbe und Weltbild," *Courbet und Deutschland* (Hamburg, 1978), 486, 191.

29. Wagner 1981, 410-416, 426-429.

30. "Courbet, dans son oeuvre, considérait ce tableau entièrement peint d'après nature, comme le meilleur de ses paysages," catalogue of the Haro sale, 1892, no. 69; see Provenance.

References

- 1858 *L'Artiste* (18 July): lithographic reproduction.
- 1878 Le Hir. In *Journal des Amateurs*: 76.
- 1897 Estignard: 46, 157.
- 1906 Riat: 114-115, 131, 253.
- 1918 Duret: pl. 14, opp. 46.
- 1924 Meier-Graefe, Julius. *Courbet*. Munich: 35.
- 1929 Alexandre, Arsène. "La Collection Havemeyer: Courbet et Corot." *La Renaissance* (June): 279, repro. 275.
- 1929 Jamot, Paul. *La Peinture au Musée du Louvre, école française XIX^e siècle*. Paris: 3:14.
- 1929 Léger: 60.
- 1931 *Havemeyer*: 347, repro. 346, as in the collection of Adaline Havemeyer Frelinghuysen.
- 1948 Léger, Charles. *Courbet et son temps*. Paris: 56.

- 1951 Mack: 112.
- 1965 NGA: 32.
- 1968 NGA: 26, repro.
- 1975 NGA: 82, repro.
- 1975 Walker: 340, no. 460, repro. 341.
- 1977 Fernier: 108, no. 147.
- 1981 Wagner: 422, 423, 430 note 41.
- 1984 Walker: 445, no. 638, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 102, repro.
- 1986 Weitzenhoffer: 117.
- 1989 Fernier, Jean-Jacques, et al. *Courbet et Ornans*. Paris: 94, color repro.
- 1990 Fried: 342 note 47.

1972.9.8 (2593)

La Bretonnerie in the Department of Indre

1856

Oil on fabric, 60.8 × 73.3 (24 × 28^{7/8})

Gift of the W. Averell Harriman Foundation in memory of Marie N. Harriman

Inscriptions

At lower left: G. Courbet / 56

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a very fine plain-weave fabric, lined onto fabric. The tacking margins are preserved along all four edges. The support was prepared with a white ground that is evident beneath the thinner paint surfaces above it. It is covered, in the areas below the horizon, with a dark brown underpaint that remains visible in the shadowed parts of the landscape. No underdrawing was evident during infrared examination. To express the richness and variety of color in the foliage of the trees, various hues of opaque and translucent green have been scumbled over one another. Where the zones of sky and treetops meet and overlap, the paint has been applied wet-in-wet. The large white cloud appears to have been wiped into the sky with a rag. Long, horizontal strokes of the palette knife define the level, sun-struck meadow. X-radiographs reveal that at the right, beyond the large cluster of trees, a much lower horizon originally terminated the view. The paint layer is well preserved, apart from a 5 × 1 cm retouched loss in the sky at the top right. A large area around this loss is heavily retouched. The picture is covered with a clear varnish.

Provenance: Gift from the artist to Clément Laurier [1831-1878]. Private collection, Poitiers, France, by 1935. (Paul Rosenberg & Co., New York) by 1937; sold June 1947 to Marie N. Harriman [Mrs. W. Averell Harriman, 1903-1970], New York; The W. Averell Harriman Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Zurich, Kunsthaus, 1935-1936, *Gustave Courbet*, no. 44, repro., as *Baumlandschaft*, "La Bretonner-

ie au confins de l'Indre et de la Vienne," bei *Le Blanc*. Paris, Paul Rosenberg, 1937, *Exposition Gustave Courbet*, no. 6, repro., as *La Bretonnerie aux confins de l'Indre et de la Vienne*. London, Rosenberg & Helft, 1938, *Ten French Painters of the 19th Century*, no. 6 (same title as in 1937). London, Rosenberg & Helft, 1938, *Gustave Courbet (1819–1877)*, no. 6 (same title as in 1937). Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, 1938, *Honderd Jaar Fransche Kunst*, no. 66, repro. Albany Institute of History and Art, 1955, no catalogue. New York, Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1956, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Gustave Courbet*, no. 6, repro., as *Landscape near the Banks of the Indre*. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, 1956, *Pictures Collected by Yale Alumni*, no. 63, repro., as *Paysage aux confins de l'Indre*. PMA; MFA, 1959–1960, *Gustave Courbet*, no. 25, repro., as *La Bretonnerie aux confins de l'Indre et de la Vienne*. NGA, 1961, *The Marie and Averell Harriman Collection*, II, repro. Corpus Christi, Art Museum of South Texas, 1974–1976, long-term loan. Corpus Christi, Art Museum of South Texas, 1979–1980, long-term loan. Munich, Neue Pinakothek, 1990, *Französische Impressionisten und ihre Wegbereiter aus der National Gallery of Art, Washington, und dem Cincinnati Art Museum*, no. 13, repro. Athens, Pinacothèque Nationale Musée Alexandre Soutzos, 1992, *From El Greco to Cézanne: Masterpieces of European Painting from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*, no. 40, repro. Mexico City, Museo Nacional de Antropología, 1996–1997, *Obras maestras de la National Gallery of Art de Washington*, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

THE PICTURE, tuned to a pervasive harmony of cool blue-green colors, presents an extensive view of a meadow through which a small brook winds between grassy banks on which stands of densely foliated trees, perhaps willows, cast long shadows. On the right, a rise in the terrain ends abruptly in a treeless slope that contrasts in its light yellowish green with the deeper green of the meadow below. The distant horizon at the left is screened by rows of poplars from among which a single tall tree rises into a bright sky filled with luminous clouds.

The site has been variously identified as *La Bretonnerie aux confins de l'Indre et de la Vienne*, *Paysage aux confins de l'Indre*, and *Landscape near the Banks of the Indre*.¹ The picture in fact represents part of the estate of La Bretonnerie, located near the Creuse river—to which the brook in the picture may be a tributary—and not far from the border that separates the *départements* of Indre and Vienne—but at least forty kilometers distant from the nearest banks of the Indre.²

Courbet painted it in September 1856 for its original owner, Clément Laurier. Only twenty-four

years old at the time, Laurier was then preparing for a career in the law and in politics, with a special interest in financial questions.³ He was wealthy, fond of art, a republican of socialist leanings, and his acquaintance with Courbet, formed in Paris, had probably been brought about by their shared hostility to the newly founded empire of Napoleon III. In 1855 Courbet had paid an earlier visit to Laurier, at the latter's home in the town of Le Blanc on the river Creuse in the department of Indre.⁴ On that occasion, he had painted Laurier's portrait, dedicating it "à mon ami Laurier" (Milwaukee Art Center).⁵ On 1 June of the following year, Laurier married Léonie Maquet, the daughter of Maître Charles Maquet, attorney and *procureur impérial* at Le Blanc, among whose extensive landed properties was the hamlet of La Bretonnerie, adjacent to the village of Ingrandes, some nine kilometers distant from Le Blanc.⁶ Not long after this marriage to the Maquet heiress, Courbet paid his second visit to his friend at Le Blanc, this time to paint the portrait of Laurier's mother-in-law, Mme Zélie Maquet (Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart).⁷

The dates of this second visit can be inferred from correspondence between Laurier and Eugène Crepet, who occasionally served as Laurier's agent in Paris. In a letter dated 25 September 1856,⁸ Laurier announced that Courbet was at that moment at La Bretonnerie,⁹ where he had just painted a landscape—almost certainly the picture at the National Gallery—and was busy painting two genre pictures, one of them evidently the small *Gardeuse d'oies* (location unknown).¹⁰ On 12 October Laurier informed Crepet that Courbet had left on 4 October, apparently to go on to Lyon.¹¹ Courbet himself, writing from Lyon to his family on 15 October, reports that he had just spent "five weeks at Le Blanc," which is to say the whole month of September, to paint "a portrait and four landscapes."¹²

La Bretonnerie is an exceptional work, both in its pastoral topography and, more strikingly, in its atmospheric freshness. It was the product of a particular occasion that confronted Courbet with a setting new to him and challenged his ability to enter into the individual character of an unfamiliar landscape, its climate, light, and vegetation. Certainly begun and mainly painted at the site, its completion may have been interrupted, leaving the area to the right of the main group of trees to be finished later in a noticeably different color key.



Gustave Courbet, *La Bretonnerie in the Department of Indre*, 1972.9.8

Notes

1. See under Exhibited and Fernier 1977, no. 191.
2. Ziegler 1978, 172. Its erroneous localization as "on the banks of the Indre" seems to have resulted from an abbreviation of the title given the picture on the occasions of its exhibitions in the 1930s, when it was shown as *La Bretonnerie aux confins de l'Indre et de la Vienne*, presumably referring to the borders of the Indre and Vienne départements, not to the rivers after which they are named. At La Bretonnerie, located about midway between them, the Indre and Vienne rivers are roughly ninety kilometers distant from one another.
3. Toussaint 1977, 137–138.
4. Ziegler 1978, 172; Fernier 1977, no. 171, erroneously gave the date of that first visit as 1851.
5. Fernier 1977, no. 171.
6. Ziegler 1978, 172; the property had been purchased by Charles Maquet in 1853.
7. Fernier 1977, no. 200.
8. Ziegler 1978, 172.
9. Following Léger 1948, 61, most authors (e.g., Fernier 1977, no. 191) had assumed that Courbet in 1855 and 1856 painted for Laurier while staying at the latter's château de l'Épineau near the village of Ruffec. They assumed therefore that La Bretonnerie was located in the area of l'Épineau, but that property was bought by Laurier only in 1857, as Ziegler (1978, 172) pointed out in an article that clarified the circumstances of Courbet's two stays with Laurier and at the same time established the correct location of La Bretonnerie.
10. Fernier 1977, no. 179. This, like the landscape at the NGA, was a gift by Courbet to Laurier, as apparently was another picture painted by Courbet during his visit in 1856, the canvas shown in the exhibition *Gustave Courbet*, at the Zurich Kunsthaus, in 1935–1936, no. 45, as *Französische Landschaft, "Mouton" bei Le Blanc*, 73 × 60.5 cm. This picture, not listed by Fernier, belonged in 1935 to the same private collection in Poitiers as *La Bretonnerie*.
11. Ziegler 1978, 172.
12. Chu 1992, 153, no. 56-6.

References

- 1940 Fosca, François. *Courbet*. Paris: unnumbered repro.
- 1975 NGA: 84, repro.
- 1978 Ziegler.
- 1984 Walker: 445, no. 644, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 104, repro.

1963.10.112 (1776)

Portrait of a Young Girl

1857

Oil on fabric, 60.4 × 52.5 (23³/₄ × 20⁵/₈)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: .57 G. Courbet

Technical Notes: The painting is executed on a plain-weave fabric of moderate weight that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cropped. The fabric was commercially prepared with an off-white ground, which Courbet covered with a thin warm red imprimatura that partially reveals the white ground beneath it. Infrared vidicon and X-radiographic examination indicate neither underdrawing nor design changes. The paint is opaque, except for areas in the dark coat where a brown-black glaze allows the red imprimatura to appear through the upper layers.¹ In the background, a thin black layer underlies the pale gray of the final surface. The brushwork, smoothly blended in the face, is looser in the background, where paint was applied with a palette knife. Parts of the background and a section of the coat at the bottom center are abraded. The painting is covered with a varnish that has been differentially thinned, although it remains clear.

Provenance: Gustave Cahen [b. 1825], Paris; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 24 May 1929, no. 59, as *Portrait de jeune femme*); purchased by Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Possibly PetitPal, 1929, *Exposition Gustave Courbet*. MusFrA, 1931, *Portraits of Women Loan Exhibition: Romanticism to Surrealism*, no. 5. MusFrA, 1931, *Renoir and His Tradition*, no. 9. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist.

THE somewhat heavy-featured sitter appears to be a girl aged perhaps ten to twelve years, but possibly somewhat older. Dressed for the outdoors, she wears a broad-brimmed hat of black straw decorated with a black ribbon. The collar of her white shirt is turned out over the collar of a heavy black overcoat closed across her chest with a strap fastened by two large buttons. In conception and style the portrait is exceptional in Courbet's work: contrary to his usual habit of posing his sitters in dark, atmospheric settings from which they seem to emerge into the light, he has placed the figure of this young girl, dressed and hatted in black, against a brightly lit wall. The prominent hat, of a kind fashionably



Gustave Courbet, *Portrait of a Young Girl*, 1963.10.112

worn in the late 1850s by adolescent girls as well as mature women,² casts shadows on her face that model its saliences. The distance at which Courbet has posed his young sitter is greater than is usual in his portraits of modest size and intimate character, which brings her upper body fully into view and gives the portrait a certain formality.

The sitter's uncertain age and ambiguous physiognomy, underlined by the severe costume and somber hat, have led some critics to question the young person's sex. Hélène Toussaint has suggested that the portrait may, in fact, represent a boy—none other than Courbet's own natural son, Emile-Desiré Binet (1847–1872)³—but hat and costume seem to confirm the traditional identification as “jeune femme.”

Courbet's movements in 1857, when this picture is dated, are not fully documented. In January and February he was in Paris, from where he corresponded with his father concerning arrangements with a Paris relative, M. Jovinet, who had offered his help in marrying off Courbet's sister Zoë.⁴ At the Salon, which he did not attend personally, Courbet exhibited six paintings, among them his *Portrait of Gueymard* (MMA),⁵ the hunting scene *The Quarry* (MFA),⁶ and *Ladies on the Banks of the Seine* (PetitPal),⁷ which created a considerable scandal. From early May through June, he visited Montpellier and its environs, painting seaside pictures. The remainder of the summer was spent in Paris. From here, in late August, he wrote to Pierre-Auguste Fajon, a Montpellier acquaintance, about the latter's sister, Mlle Iphigénie Fajon, who was staying at Courbet's boardinghouse at the time. This letter includes the puzzling remark: “She has been mistaken for a man, but never for a singer.”⁸ In early September Courbet traveled to Belgium, where he may have remained for nearly a year; nothing definite, at any rate, is known of his whereabouts between the time of his departure for Brussels, in September 1857, and the summer of 1858, when he was still (or again) in Brussels.⁹

The heavy clothing worn by the young girl in the portrait would suggest that it was probably painted either in the early months of 1857, when Courbet was still in Paris, or during the following fall and winter, which he probably spent in Belgium. There are some reasons for supposing that the portrait may have been painted in Brussels, where he seems to have been unusually busy with portraits, complain-

ing in a letter probably written in mid-1858: “the life I lead here [Brussels] bores me. It is all portraits and lawsuits.”¹⁰ Several of the portraits that are associated with Courbet's stay or stays in Brussels during 1857–1858 bear a certain resemblance to the National Gallery's *Young Girl*. In style and technique of execution, its closest relative is *Portrait de Mlle Jacquet* (fig. 1), formerly in the Paul Mellon collection, that also bears the date of 1857 and is known to have been executed in Brussels.¹¹ The resemblance is partly a matter of execution—unusually smooth, in both portraits, in the modeling of the faces—partly of a particular sobriety in their presentation of the somberly dressed sitters. Other portraits from this period, all of them associated with Courbet's activity in Brussels in 1857–1858, are *Portrait of Mme de Brayer* (“*The Polish Exile*”) (MMA),¹² *Portrait de Mme Léon Fontaines* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Brussels),¹³ and the portrait known as *La Femme au gant* (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa).¹⁴ They have in common a certain rigidity of pose and homespun

Fig. 1. Gustave Courbet, *Portrait de Mlle Jacquet*, oil on canvas, 1857, private collection, photograph courtesy of Christie's Images, New York



plainness of costume, qualities perhaps indicative of a provincial milieu that are also evident in the National Gallery's *Portrait of a Young Girl* and that suggest that it, too, may be a product of Courbet's Belgian stay.

Notes

1. The dark brown imprimatura shows through the upper paint layers in the hat and the coat, particularly in the lower parts of the picture, and gives a marked brownish cast to areas that Courbet evidently intended to be black.

2. A girl of approximately the same age as the sitter of Courbet's portrait appears, wearing a similar straw hat, in a photograph of about 1860 by Adolphe Braun reproduced in "Le Second Empire vous regarde," *Le Point* (Souillac-Mulhouse), 10, nos. 53-54 (January 1958): n.p.

3. This suggestion is found in a letter by Hélène Toussaint, dated 24 October 1977, in the NGA's department of curatorial records. She recognizes these same features in the small boy who, prone on the floor of *The Studio* (1855, Louvre; Fernier 1977, no. 165), draws on a sheet of paper in emulation of his "father," as well as in the child seated beside the grain box in Courbet's *Grain Sifters* (1855, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes; Fernier 1977, no. 166). Concerning Courbet's short-lived son, see Riat 1906, 94, and Mack 1951, 84-87.

4. Chu 1992, 153, no. 57-1.

5. Fernier 1977, no. 213.

6. Fernier 1977, no. 188.

7. Fernier 1977, no. 203.

8. Letter to Fajon, Paris, August 1857; Chu 1992, 157, no. 57-4.

9. The date of Courbet's departure for Brussels can be deduced from a passage in his letter to Pierre-Auguste Fajon, written in late August 1857, in which he mentions that he will leave for Brussels in ten days (Chu 1992, 158, no. 57-4). No further letters or documents establish his whereabouts before June-July 1858, when he is again—or still—in Brussels (letter to his father from Brussels, June-July 1858; Chu 1992, 158-159, no. 58-1). It is possible that in the interval he visited Besançon and Dijon, where his works were being exhibited in the early part of 1858.

10. Letter from Brussels to Armand Gautier, July (?) 1858; Chu 1992, 160, no. 58-2.

11. Fernier 1977, no. 224. Formerly in the Paul Mellon Collection (*French Paintings from the Collections of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon and Mrs. Mellon Bruce* [exh. cat. NGA.] [Washington, 1966], no. 5, repro.), the portrait was sold at Christie's, New York, 15 November 1983, lot 6.

12. Fernier 1977, no. 232. The portrait, dated 1858, was commissioned by Dr. de Brayer of Brussels and exhibited in that city in 1878 and 1889.

13. Fernier 1977, no. 249. Painted in Brussels in 1857 or 1858, the portrait has remained there ever since. Fernier erroneously dates it in 1859, though Courbet was not in Brussels that year.

14. Fernier 1977, no. 230. The portrait, painted in Brussels, was paid on 8 April 1858, and exhibited in Antwerp later that year.

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 1929 *Kuk* 27: repro. 371.
 1930 Read, H. A. "The Chester Dale Collection." *Vogue* 25 (15 February): repro. 80.
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 1931 *Art Digest* 6 (December): repro. 32.
 1932 *Junior League Magazine* 18 (January): repro. 34.
 1941 Dale: 3, repro.
 1942 Dale: 28, repro.
 1944 Dale: 28, repro.
 1953 Dale: 34, repro.
 1965a Dale: 49, repro.
 1965 NGA: 33.
 1968 NGA: 26, repro.
 1975 NGA: 84, repro.
 1977 Fernier: 138, no. 227, as *Portrait de jeune fille*.
 1984 Walker: 445, no. 639, repro.

1957.6.1 (1481)

La Grotte de la Loue

1864

Oil on fabric, 98.4 × 130.4 (38³/₄ × 51³/₈)

Gift of Charles L. Lindemann

Inscriptions

At lower left: *Gustave Courbet*

Technical Notes: The painting's original support, a very coarse, plain-weave fabric, in 1964 was lined onto fabric. The original tacking margins were cut prior to lining, but cusping along all edges suggests the picture is at or near its original size. The fabric was primed by the artist with a thick dark reddish brown ground layer. No underdrawing was evident during infrared examination. In creating the image, Courbet used a palette knife and broad brushes. To define the rock formation of the cavern's ceiling, he laid down rough textures of whites and warm tans on the dark ground with broad strokes of the knife blade. The still, glassy wa-

ter at the lower left was created by smooth brushstrokes of semifluid paint, while the effect of the turbulent water at the right was suggested by scumbled applications of a pastelike medium. X-radiographs reveal that the artist blocked out the entire lower right corner with white paint before painting the rocks and foaming water in that area. After completing these landscape elements, he added the figure of the fisherman with subtle strokes of a small brush.

Evidently during the lining treatment it received in 1964, the coarse-weave pattern of the painting's support was impressed into the image, causing ridges and bumps across its surface. At the same time it suffered abrasions, particularly in the dark areas of the still water and over the recesses of the grotto. These abrasions in the dark upper layers of the paint exposed a lighter, reddish brown underpaint in vertical streaks that disrupt the image's tonal contrasts and effects of depth. Following its 1964 treatment, the painting was covered with a thick varnish that has become yellow and opaque.

Provenance: Courbet sold February 1872 to Paul Durand-Ruel (see Riat 1906, 330, repro. 331). (Durand-Ruel et Cie., Paris).¹ Emile de Girardin [1806–1881], Paris; (his estate sale, Paris, 24 May 1883, no. 8, as *La Grotte*). (Jacques Seligman & Company, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, and New York). Brig. Gen. Charles Lionel Lindemann.

Exhibited: Leningrad, Imperial Hermitage Gallery, and Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, 1986, *Masterpieces of French Painting of the Second Half of the Nineteenth to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century from the National Gallery of Art in Washington*, checklist no. 11. The Brooklyn Museum and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1988–1989, *Courbet Reconsidered*, no. 48, repro. Tokyo, The Bridgestone Museum of Art, 1989, *Gustave Courbet Retrospective Exhibition*, no. 25, repro. New York, Salander O'Reilly Gallery, and Rosslyn Harbor, Nassau County Museum of Art, 1998, *Gustave Courbet (1819–1877): Later Paintings*, no catalogue (Rosslyn Harbor only).

THE PICTURE represents the grotto near the village of Mouthier, some fourteen kilometers southeast of Ornans, from which the Loue, an underground river to this point, emerges as an abundant stream. The sheer cliff face here opens on a vaulted cave, formed by layers of enormous stones, that leads deep into the darkness from within which the black, mirror-smooth waters quietly issue into the daylight. Their flow is briefly contained by a wooden barrier and sluice, in the foreground at the left, but farther to the right they are released in a turbulent, foamy rush over boulders. Near the end

of the barrier, silhouetted in the half-light of the cave's mouth against the darkness of its depth, stands a fisherman, raising a pole or fishing spear in his right hand.

Rock and water are the sole elements that compose the scene. The water, a dark mirror over which reflections of deep black and somber green seem to flow toward the lighter foreground, is built up of long, smooth, horizontal strokes of the palette knife. It is no less material than the rocks that arch over it, but the contrast of its glassy surface enhances the craggy roughness of those stones. To give them the most vivid tangibility, Courbet shaped them with choppy applications of the paint-charged palette knife, troweling the colors—gray, yellowish gray, reddish gray, green-gray—over the darkness of a nearly black, dark red ground.

The powerful illusion of rutted, light-struck stone produced by this technique of light-over-dark palette-knife work is fundamental to the effect of this rockscape, in which solid matter, emerging into the light, frames a dark void. Courbet himself explained his strategy to a fellow artist who observed him at work, in 1864, painting another grotto, that of the source of the Lison: “You are surprised that my canvas is so black! But nature without the sun is black and dark; I do as the light does: I illuminate the salient parts, and the picture is finished.”²

Courbet's interest in the source of the Loue river was part of his lifelong preoccupation with the landscapes of his native region, its cliffs, caves, waterfalls, and streams. The spectacular grottoes through which the Doubs and its tributaries issue from the rock face of the bordering cliffs had long been recognized as natural marvels, fascinating to romantics and, in time, to geologists and tourists. Courbet had made drawings of several of these grottoes at the beginning of his career,³ and he continued to paint pictures of them—by no means only of the source of the Loue—throughout his life.

Sometime in July or August 1864 he wrote from Ornans to his dealer, Jules Luquet, in Paris: “I have gone to the source of the Loue these past days and done four landscapes, 1 m 40 wide, more or less like the ones you have.”⁴ Nine views of the grotto of the Loue that are dated or datable to 1863–1864 are known today. One of these, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, stands

apart from the others by its presentation of the source from a distance, making room for the inclusion, in the left foreground, of a mill near the entrance to the cave.⁵ The other versions all show the source at much closer range, from a point within its vaulted entrance at which the water emerges into the daylight. They divide into three groups: 1) a painting at the Zurich Kunsthau (fig. 1),⁶ dated 1863, that from slightly to the left of its opening offers a profound view into the depth of the cave and shows its waters, contained by a wooden barrier at the left, streaming unimpeded across an oblique ledge farther to the right; 2) two paintings—the one at the Hamburg Kunsthalle, dated 1864 (fig. 2),⁷ the other at the National Gallery of Art—which present identical views into the cave, similar to, but slightly more frontal than that of the Zurich version, of which they retain the barrier at the left, while giving the waterfall the form of a turbulent flow over rocks; 3) a group of four paintings—at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo (fig. 3),⁸ the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts of Brussels (fig. 4),⁹ and the collection of the late Henry Moore,¹⁰ as well as a fourth picture, now lost, included in Courbet's posthumous exhibition of 1882¹¹—that show the vault of the cave in exactly the same form as the paintings at the National Gallery and the Hamburg Kunsthalle but omit the wooden barrier and extend the waterfall across the entire foreground.

These last four pictures agree so closely in every detail, in the shapes of cyclopean slabs that form the vault, the pattern of the joints between the stone courses, and the grouping of the boulders in the waterfall, that one may presume that they were all based on a single study from nature. It is, at any rate, not likely that these minutely exact correspondences from picture to picture resulted from successive fresh studies of the motif: Courbet did not have to go to the grotto on four different occasions to produce, one after the other, these four closely similar paintings. Rather, one study from nature can be supposed to have been the original from which the others were derived in the studio.

The seven paintings of *La Grotte de la Loue* thus seem to represent no more than three original versions of the subject and four studio repetitions, rather than seven independent studies from nature. The date of 1863 inscribed in the unique Zurich version (fig. 1) may mark this as the earliest of the

series; it differs somewhat more from the others than they differ among themselves. The version in Hamburg (fig. 2), dated 1864, has much in common with the picture in Zurich, notably the wooden pier in the left foreground, but introduces some corrections, such as the slight shift in the angle of view that brings a wider segment of the cave wall at the left into visibility and changes in the flow of the waterfall in the right foreground, an awkward feature in the picture in Zurich. The National Gallery's version corresponds precisely to that in Hamburg, except for the important addition of the "fisherman." The two pictures otherwise belong to the same stage in the development of the image. The remaining four pictures (figs. 3 and 4) retain the structure of the cave vault without change but simplify the foreground, by eliminating the wooden barrier and replacing it with a row of boulders over which the water cascades across the entire foreground. This appears to have been the solution on which Courbet eventually settled as his final statement.

But while retaining the same view of the cave in several of the paintings, Courbet constantly varied his colors, producing different effects of warm or cool light in the reflections on the stones or in the water. Working in the studio after studies taken from nature, he allowed his imagination free play with color and illumination, the changeable appearances of visual reality, while remaining true to the objective, tangible forms of his subject. The process, once recognized, is revealing about the nature of his realism and its supposed dependence on the direct observation of nature: repetition and self-copying were, in fact, as much a part of his working method as they were of that of more conventional painters.

The National Gallery's *Grotte de la Loue* is unique among these different versions by its inclusion of the figure of a man, sometimes identified as a trout fisher,¹² who stands at the end of the wooden barrier in the picture's middle, facing the dark interior of the cave and raising his right arm in which he seems to hold a pole or fishing spear. Courbet has diminished the size of this figure relative to the setting, no doubt to magnify the grotto by contrast. The sense of mystery that the vaguely evocative figure brings to this otherwise factual depiction, a romantic suggestiveness reminiscent of paintings by Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840) in



Gustave Courbet, *La Grotte de la Loue*, 1857.6.1

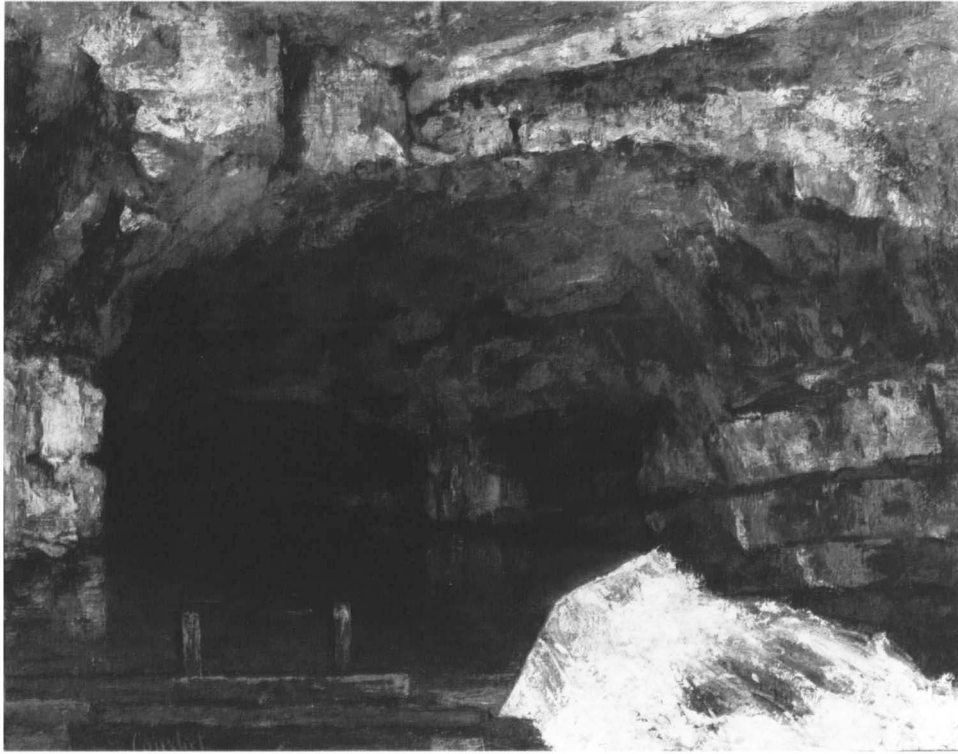


Fig. 1. Gustave Courbet, *Die Quelle der Loue*, oil on canvas, 1863, Kunsthhaus Zürich, Switzerland, inv. 1946/11



Fig. 2. Gustave Courbet, *Die Quelle der Loue*, oil on canvas, 1864, Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle, photograph Elke Walford

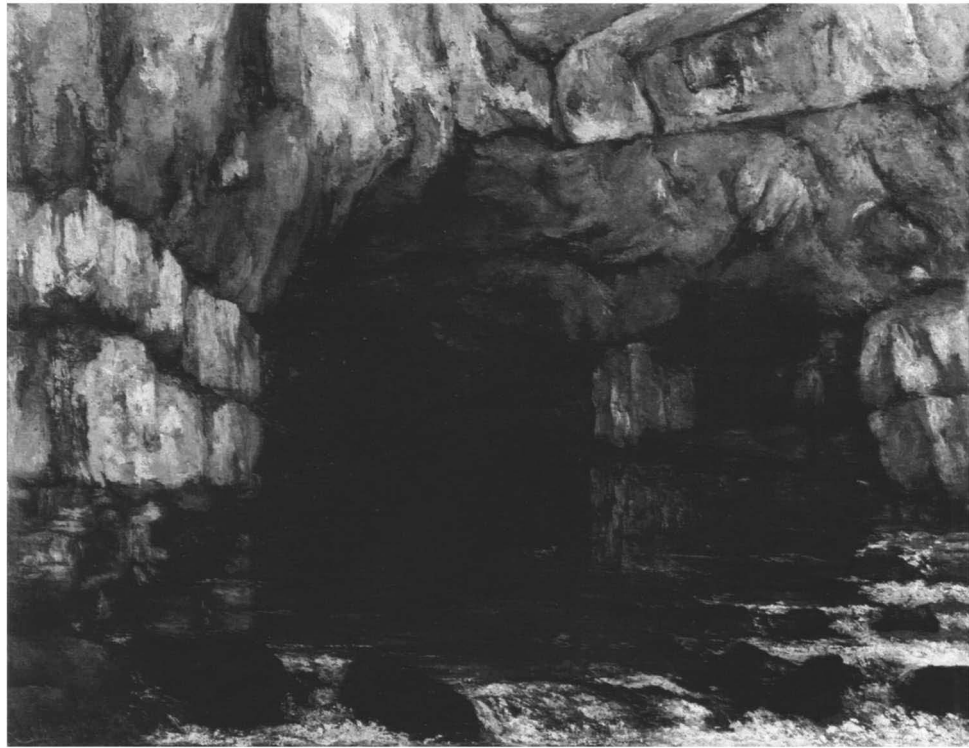


Fig. 3. Gustave Courbet, *La Grotte de la Loue*, oil on canvas, c. 1864, Buffalo, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, George B. and Jenny R. Matthews Fund, 1959



Fig. 4. Gustave Courbet, *La Grotte de la Loue*, oil on canvas, 1864, Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, inv. 5030

which solitary watchers confront the immensity of nature, has been cited as a symptom of latent romantic tendencies in Courbet's realism.¹³

The extremely close relationship between the two pictures in Hamburg and in Washington raises the question of which of them served as the model for the other, for there can be no doubt that they are related as an original to its—modified—copy. A close comparison indicates that details that are more sharply defined in the picture in Hamburg, such as the minute incidents of light and shadow in the surfaces of the stones or the flecks of foam in the waterfall, are invariably softened and generalized in the picture in Washington. Thus while the two correspond in a way that leaves no doubt as to their interdependence and constitute together but a single version, what differences there are between them all point to the priority of the more complete and precise picture in Hamburg over the more vaguely atmospheric picture in Washington: the latter depends on the former, while the picture in Hamburg cannot have been derived from that in Washington. The addition of the unique motif of the fisherman to Washington's *Grotte de la Loue* amounts to an elaboration, an afterthought that confirms its relative lateness. It is the most highly worked-up of the series—Hélène Toussaint rightly refers to it as being “the most important and most fully realized of the series of the *Source of the Loue*.”¹⁴ But it is not necessarily the end product of the series.

The series of paintings to which the National Gallery's *Grotte de la Loue* belongs was long regarded as the perfect illustration of Courbet's ma-

terialist vision that, in these landscapes without skies or atmospheric distances, was able to concentrate entirely on the objective concreteness of nature. Linda Nochlin wrote of them as “probably the most striking affirmation of the primacy of matter ever achieved by an artist.”¹⁵ Efforts to analyze the content of Courbet's work were initially concerned only with his earlier, figural compositions of evident political or social significance. His later landscapes were not supposed to have any thematic content. More recently, however, they have also come under close interpretive scrutiny. Political tendencies have been discovered even in Courbet's ways of handling paint in his landscapes of the 1860s and 1870s,¹⁶ but the effort of unriddling their intentional or subconscious meanings has mainly taken a psychological approach. It was perhaps inevitable that his many paintings of caverns and streams should have come to the attention of psychoanalytic interpreters. Jack Lindsay in 1973 ventured a direct analogy between Courbet's erotic nudes and certain of his landscapes, “the vagina forming the cave entry, the water grotto.”¹⁷ Werner Hofmann in 1978 saw them as reflecting “a panerotic mode of experience that perceives in nature a female creature and consequently projects the experience of cave and grotto into the female body.”¹⁸ In partial dissent from these interpretations, Michael Fried (1990), while conceding that “there is obviously something to Lindsay's and Hofmann's observations,” found their conclusions reductive. Pointing to the fact that the caves and grottoes in Courbet's paintings “are not simply enclosing spaces toward which the artist regressively



Fig. 5. Caspar Wolf, *Grotto of St. Beatus*, oil on canvas, 1776, Aarau, Switzerland, Aargauer Kunsthau, inv. 1951.811

was drawn” but also “sources of water coursing outward toward the painter-beholder . . . reciprocating the latter’s quasi-corporeal movement into the painting and thus . . . indirectly representing that movement,” he sought to explain the significance of these paintings in terms of his notion of a pervasive effort on Courbet’s part to accomplish a “quasi-physical merger between painter-beholder and painting.”¹⁹

In the history of Western art, the interest in grottoes as subjects for paintings goes back to a period—the latter half of the eighteenth century—that was not as yet involved with the political or psychological issues that have been proposed as Courbet’s motivations. Grottoes played a prominent role in the iconography of early romanticism, along with the imagery of prisons and tombs, treasure hunting and mining, mainly as places of mystery and terror, but also as sites of scientific exploration.²⁰ They abounded in the work of certain artists, among them Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–1797) and James Ward (1769–1859) and a number of their German, Swiss, and Scandinavian contemporaries. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu has pertinently called attention to the parallel between Courbet’s *Grotte de la Loue* and the *Grotto of St. Beatus*, a geological study with romantic overtones by the Swiss painter Caspar Wolf (1735–1798), a typical example of this genre (fig. 5).²¹ Courbet is not likely to have been familiar with the work of these precursors, but he shared with them certain interests, notably a long-lasting fascination with the geology of the Jura region,²² which, combined with the powerful personal associations that these landscapes held for him, may be sufficient to explain the persistence of his interest in the cavernous source of the river that flows through his native town.

Notes

1. Engraving by Charles Courty, as *Un Pêcheur de truites* in Galerie Durand-Ruel, *Recueil d'estampes gravées à l'eau forte* (Paris, 1878), pl. CLXXV.

2. Reported by Max Claudet who observed Courbet painting *Source of the Lison* (1864; Fernier 1977, no. 402) in a scant two hours (Claudet, *Gustave Courbet, Souvenirs* [Paris, 1878], quoted in Riat 1906, 218–219).

3. Several of these are contained in a sketchbook at the Louvre dating from about 1843 (Département des Arts Graphiques, RF 29234); see Toussaint 1977, 222, no. 134, and Faunce and Nochlin 1988, 59.

4. Riat 1906, 217.

5. MMA; 100 × 142 cm (Fernier 1977, no. 387).

6. Kunsthhaus, Zurich; 84 × 108 cm, dated '63 (Fernier 1977, no. 347).

7. Kunsthalle, Hamburg; 98 × 130 cm, dated '64 (Fernier 1977, no. 394).

8. Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; 107 × 137 cm (Fernier 1977, no. 109. Fernier inexplicably misdates the picture 1850).

9. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; 80 × 100 cm (Fernier 1977, no. 390). This picture presents the strange feature of an opening in the far depths of the cave through which a bit of sky and some greenery are visible.

10. Formerly in the collection of Henry Moore, present location unknown; 81 × 100 cm (according to Fernier 1977, no. 189). The picture is a copy after or, possibly, the model for the painting in Buffalo. Fernier dates it, without giving his reasons, to 1856.

11. Fernier 1977, no. 391, repro.; the picture, described in the catalogue as measuring 680 × 780 mm, was exhibited in May 1882, at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, in the retrospective *Exposition des oeuvres de Gustave Courbet*, as no. 62 and described as being in the collection of “A . . . N . . .”

12. Fernier 1977, no. 393: “un pêcheur de truites lance son trident.”

13. H. Comstock, “Courbet’s ‘La Grotte de la Loue,’” *Connoisseur* 140 (January 1958): 281: “the fisherman whose form, boldly defined in light, is more than a mechanical device to give depth to the darkness of the cave. The lone figure seems a universal symbol of man, presented in a manner which places Courbet, to our view, among the romantic realists, although he considered himself an objective one.” See also Ann Dumas, in Faunce and Nochlin 1988, 157, no. 48: “this figure resonates with a romantic, even a symbolist, suggestiveness that brings to mind later images such as Böcklin’s *Island of the Dead* . . . , reminding us that Courbet’s realism . . . can often coexist with a romantic sensibility.”

14. Toussaint 1977, 164, no. 72.

15. Linda Nochlin, *Gustave Courbet: A Study in Style and Society* (New York, 1976), 162–163.

16. Klaus Herding, *Courbet: To Venture Independence* (New Haven, 1991), 126–127.

17. Jack Lindsay, *Gustave Courbet: His Life and Art* (Bath, 1973), 217.

18. Werner Hofmann, “Courbets Wirklichkeiten,” in *Courbet und Deutschland* (Hamburg, 1978), 610.

19. Fried 1990, 212–214.

20. For examples of late-eighteenth-century grotto imagery, see Werner Hofmann, *Caspar David Friedrich* (Munich, 1974), 51, figs. 134–141.

21. 54 × 76 cm, dated 1776, Inv. 1951.811. Concerning the landscape painter Caspar Wolf, whose special fondness for caves and grottoes earned him the nickname “Höhlenwolf,” see Willi Raeber, *Caspar Wolf (1735–1798), sein Leben und sein Werk* (Aarau and Zurich, 1979).

22. See the extended discussion in Faunce and Nochlin 1988, 55–59.

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1963 Walker: 323, repro.
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1985 NGA: 102, repro.
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1992 NGA Guide: 183, repro.

1963.10.114 (1778)

A Young Woman Reading

c. 1866–1868
Oil on fabric, 60 × 72.9 (23⁵/₈ × 29³/₄)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: *G. Courbet*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a tightly woven plain-weave fabric lined onto fabric. The original tacking margins have been removed, but cusping along all edges indicates that the overall dimensions have not been reduced appreciably. Over a white ground, a thin, translucent reddish brown imprimatura was applied and then scraped down so that the white lower layer is faintly visible over the canvas nubs through the upper brown layer. The final effect is of an overall dark tonality that remains visible in the brown passages of the foliage in the picture's background. No underdrawing was detected during infrared examination. The image was created by multiple overlapping layers of paint, applied both wet-over-dry and wet-into-wet, with some

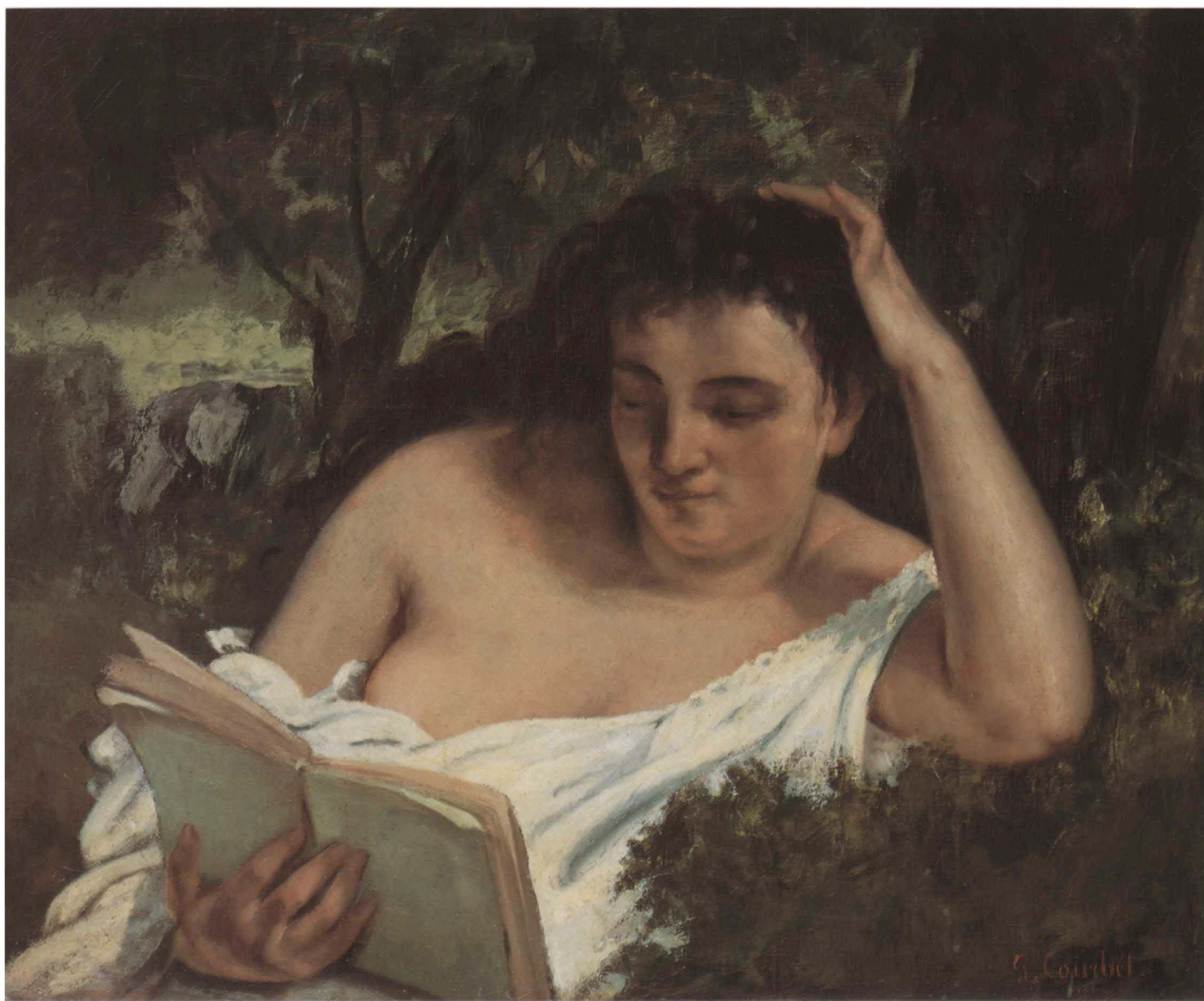
glazing in the shadows. Courbet used both a wide brush and the palette knife to apply his paint. Brush marks are visible in the highlights. The picture surface is covered with a thick, yellowed varnish applied when the painting was last treated in 1943 and augmented in 1971. A small hole near the elbow of the sitter's left arm has been filled and retouched, and minor retouching is apparent along the painting's edges. Otherwise the painting is well preserved.

Provenance: The artist to (Durand-Ruel, Paris) in 1872. (Sale, comte de R..., Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 27 January 1875, no. 14, as *Femme lisant*, 650 francs). Ad. Reitlinger, Paris, by 1882. Alexandre Bernheim-Jeune [d. 1915], Paris. Alexandre Berthier, 4th prince de Wagram [1883–1918], Paris. Joseph Hessel, in 1923. (E. J. van Wisselingh, Amsterdam) in 1924. (Etienne Bignou, Paris) in 1924. (Paul Rosenberg, Paris); by whom sold to Max Silberberg, Breslau [Wrocław], then Germany; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 9 June 1932, no. 18); purchased by Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1882, *Exposition des oeuvres de Gustave Courbet*, no. 30. Saint Petersburg, 1912, *Exposition centennale de l'art français*, no. 350, lent by "Barbazanges." Copenhagen, Royal Museum [Statens Museum for Kunst], 1914, *Exposition d'art français du XIX^e siècle*, no. 39, repro. The Hague, Gemeentemuseum, 1922, *Tentoonstelling van Hollandsche en Fransche Kunst*. Paris, Galerie Rosenberg, 1925, *Les Grandes Influences au dix-neuvième siècle—d'Ingres à Cézanne*, no. 3, as *La Liseuse*. Berlin, Galerie Wertheim, 1930, *Ausstellung Gustave Courbet*, no. 36, repro. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

A DARK-HAIRED YOUNG WOMAN, her upper body lightly dressed in a shirt that leaves one of her breasts partly uncovered, is shown reclining in a state of languorous repose in the shade of trees that Courbet has roughly indicated with broad paint strokes. She supports her head with her left hand and holds in her right a yellow paperbound book in which she appears to be reading with deep interest. Her loosened hair flows along the contour of her bare shoulder. The physical vigor of her presence lends a quiet gravity to the scene.

In painting the model whose pose he arranged for this picture, Courbet allowed himself some liberties. He placed her head and neck—delicately shaped by half-shadows and reflected lights—low on her chest, and radically shortened her left, while extending her right shoulder. The shirt that falls across her half-exposed bosom is painted in a heavy impasto, causing its folds to appear unresponsive to the underlying forms of the breasts.



Gustave Courbet, *A Young Woman Reading*, 1963.10.114

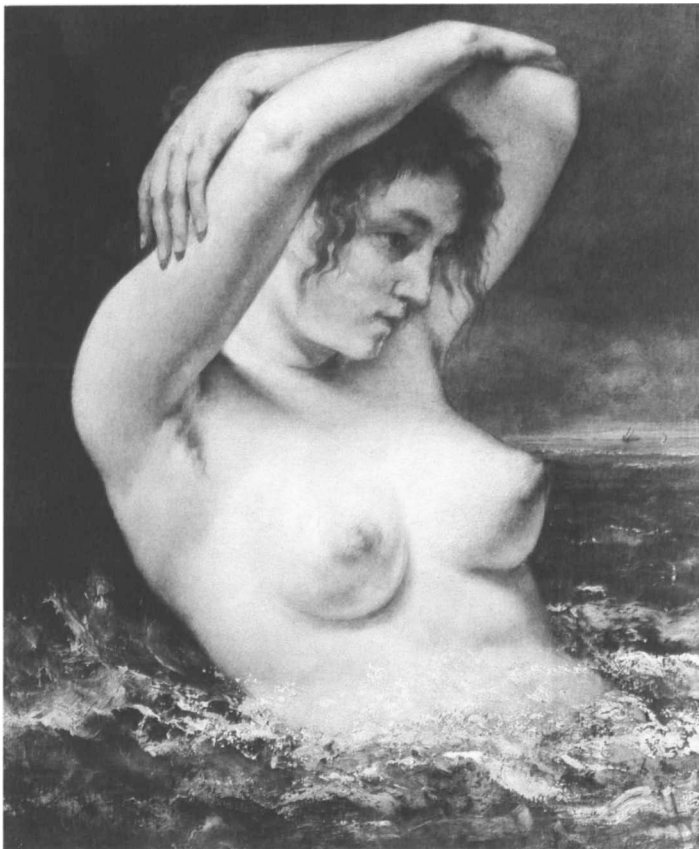


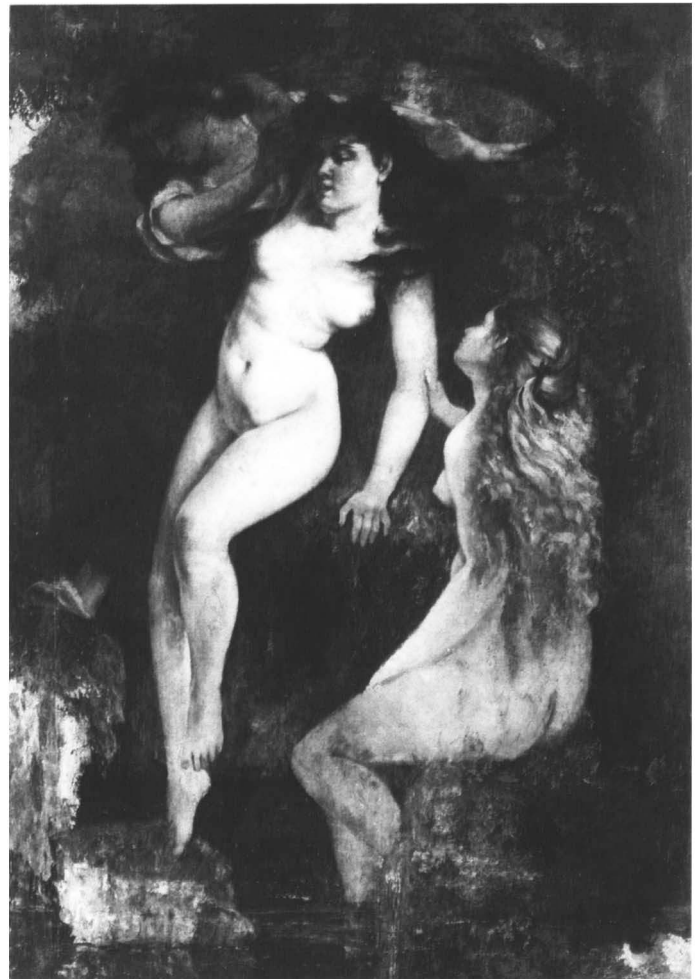
Fig. 1. Gustave Courbet, *The Woman in the Waves*, oil on canvas, 1868, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.62

The finely articulated hand that holds the book is thrust forward into the immediate foreground but seems curiously small in the picture's perspective.

The image of a young woman reading in a landscape, so often found among Corot's figural compositions (pp. 29–36), plays no significant role in Courbet's work. Some female readers can be found among his early drawings, where they are usually shown asleep over their books, but the subject seems not to have held much interest for him.¹ His few extant studies of women reading seem based on casual observations in the studio, where, between poses, the bored model might sometimes reach for a book and while reading fall asleep, providing an attractive motif for Courbet who liked to show women in states of passivity or unconsciousness. The National Gallery's *Young Woman Reading*, however, is not only awake but absorbed in a mental task, virtually the sole representation among Courbet's paintings of a woman intellectually occupied.

The picture belongs to a group of mildly erotic compositions that Courbet painted in the course of the 1860s, as the decorous accompaniment to his more frankly sexual nudes of those years. Conceived as informal, bust-length portraits, they present young women in situations of relaxed privacy, attired in loose undergarments that expose their shoulders and partially bare their breasts, absorbed in quietly intimate tasks or feigning sleep. Closely linked by similarities of format and presentation, these *sujets agréables*, evidently calculated for sale, form a distinct speciality within Courbet's work of that decade.² Possibly the earliest painting in this group, *Woman with a Mirror*,³ was exhibited in 1860; another, *Woman with Parrot*,⁴ is dated 1861; still others, such as *Woman with Cat*⁵ and "*Reflection*,"⁶ can plausibly be dated about 1864, while such later works in the series as *Woman*

Fig. 2. Gustave Courbet, *The Three Bathers* (*Les Trois Baigneuses*), oil on canvas, 1868, Paris, Musée du Petit Palais, inv. P.P.P. 0732, Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris, photograph by Perrain



with *Jewel Casket*⁷ and *Portrait of a Young Woman*⁸ are inscribed with the date of 1867. The “*Réverie tzigane*” (*Gipsy Reverie*),⁹ perhaps the last of the series, bears the date of 1869.

The National Gallery’s *Young Woman Reading*, though undated, clearly belongs among these pictures and was posed by a model who sat for several of the pictures in the group. Her features—the fleshy oval of her face, framed by abundant dark brown hair, her wide, not very tall forehead, her strongly marked eyebrows, straight nose, short upper lip, and small, full mouth—recur in several of the other décolleté bust-lengths, most evidently in “*Reflection*” at the museum of Douai and in *Woman with Cat* at the Worcester Art Museum.

In February 1872 the picture was included in the lot of canvases that Courbet—at that time still in prison for his role in the Commune and urgently in need of money—consigned to his dealer, Durand-Ruel.¹⁰ This date has sometimes been mistaken, by Charles Léger among others,¹¹ for that of the picture’s execution, but it is now generally recognized that, like the other bust-lengths of its kind, *A Young Woman Reading* was painted in the 1860s. Robert Fernier, noting its resemblance to the Basel Kunstmuseum’s *Woman Holding a Mirror* of 1860, placed it in the period 1860–1865,¹² while Paul Rosenberg preferred the somewhat later date of about 1868.¹³

The picture’s place within the larger context of Courbet’s work can be inferred from the fact that the model who posed for it also served for several of his major paintings of the nude from the mid-to-late 1860s. Her facial type, combining an almost classical regularity with a sensuous, slightly plebeian earthiness, may have particularly suited her for the erotic subjects that then mainly occupied Courbet. She appears unmistakably in the Metropolitan Museum’s *Woman in the Waves* (fig. 1), dated 1868,¹⁴ and in the main figure of *The Three Bathers* (fig. 2) at the Musée du Petit Palais, Paris,¹⁵ which also dates from 1868. Hélène Toussaint has argued persuasively that the dark-haired young woman who figures in these pictures had earlier posed as Venus in the different versions of *Venus and Psyche* (1864) or *The Awakening* (1866)¹⁶ and was evidently a favorite model employed by Courbet during the years of his preoccupation with nudes and erotic subjects.

Notes

1. See the drawings *Juliette Courbet Asleep over a Book*, 1841, Louvre (Fernier 1978, no. 15); *Seated Model Reading*, c. 1845–1847, AIC (Fernier 1978, no. 32); and *Sleeping Young Woman Holding a Book*, 1849, Louvre (Fernier 1978, no. 33). The sole painting of such a subject, aside from the NGA’s *Young Woman Reading*, appears to be *Head of a Woman and Flowers*, 1871, PMA (Fernier 1978, no. 783), which shows the head of a young woman reading a letter before a bouquet of flowers.

2. Among the examples of such bust-lengths, in addition to those further mentioned below, are the *Sleeping Woman* in a private collection, Paris (Fernier 1977, no. 139), which for reasons not explained Fernier dates as early as 1853, but which Toussaint (1977, no. 93) more convincingly dates to c. 1865, and the closely related *Woman Exposing Her Breast*, location unknown (Fernier 1977, no. 272), which Fernier dates to 1860.

3. Kunstmuseum, Basel, 64.5 × 54 cm (Fernier 1977, 162, no. 269).

4. Private collection, France, 61.5 × 44 cm on panel (Fernier 1977, 172, no. 286).

5. Worcester Art Museum, 73 × 57 cm (Fernier 1977, 236, no. 431).

6. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Douai, 54 × 45 cm (Fernier 1977, 236, no. 430).

7. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen, 81 × 64 cm (Fernier 1978, 52, no. 626).

8. Museum of Occidental Art, Tokyo, 80 × 64 cm (Fernier 1978, 52, no. 625).

9. Museum of Occidental Art, Tokyo, 50 × 61 cm (Fernier 1978, 72, no. 663).

10. Undated letter by Zoë Courbet to Alfred Bruyas, written in the spring of 1872, in Pierre Borel, *Le Roman de Gustave Courbet* (Paris, 1922), 131.

11. Léger 1929, 178–179.

12. Robert Fernier in a letter of 31 July 1972, in the curatorial files of the NGA, expressed the belief that the picture was painted in 1860–1865, like the *Femme au miroir* (Fernier 1977, no. 269). He restated this opinion in his catalogue raisonné (Fernier 1977, 172, no. 287).

13. Paul Rosenberg in a letter to Chester Dale, 5 August 1932, in NGA curatorial files.

14. Fernier 1978, no. 628. Though her head is turned into profile, *Woman in the Waves* resembles the NGA’s *Young Woman Reading* in her characteristic features, her heavy eyebrows, straight nose, small mouth set close to nose, and strands of dark hair, and the robust forms of her arms, shoulders, and high bosom, but especially in her expression, her placid, thoughtful, self-absorbed air. Hélène Toussaint (1977, 200, no. 109) recognized in the *Woman in the Waves* the model who had also posed for the picture known as “*Reflection*” (in Douai) and for *Woman with Cat* (in Worcester, Mass.), as well as for the brunette in *The Awakening* of 1866 (Kunstmuseum, Bern; Fernier 1978, no. 533) and hence for the figure of Venus in Courbet’s lost *Venus and Psyche* of 1864 (Fernier 1977, nos. 370–371) on which *The Awakening* is based. On his part, Fernier, in discussing *Woman in the Waves*, asserts, somewhat less persuasively, that the same model

also posed for the *Woman with Parrot* of 1866 (MMA; Fernier 1978, no. 526).

15. Fernier 1978, no. 630. The central figure in *The Three Bathers* bears a striking resemblance in type and individual features to both the MMA's *Woman in the Waves* and the NGA's *Young Woman Reading*, making it seem highly probable that it was painted from the same model.

16. See note 14 above.

References

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1929 Léger: 179, pl. 64.
1930 *KuK* 29 (November): 85, repro.
1931 Scheffler, Karl. "Die Sammlung Max Silberberg." *KuK* 30 (October): 6–7, repro.
1932 *ArtN*, no. 30 (28 May): 9, repro.
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1932 *Cahiers d'art* 7, nos. 1–2: 41, repro.
1941 Frankfurter: 18, repro.
1941 Dale: 4, pl. VI.
1942 Dale: 29, repro.
1953 Dale: 35, repro.
1965 NGA: 33.
1965a Dale: 51, repro.
1968 NGA: 26, repro.
1975 NGA: 84, repro.
1977 Fernier: 172, no. 287, as *La Liseuse d'Ornans*.
1984 Walker: 445, no. 640, repro.
1985 NGA: 103, repro.

1963.10.113 (1777)

The Promenade

1866

Oil on fabric, 85.5 × 72.5 (33⁵/₈ × 28¹/₂)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: '66 / G. Courbet.

Technical Notes: The picture was painted on a moderate-weight plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fab-

ric. Although the tacking edges of the original fabric were cropped, cusping along its left, top, and right edges indicates that on those sides the original dimensions of the painting have been maintained. The lower edge may have suffered some loss. The paint is applied over a white ground over which a brown layer of variable darkness has been brushed, possibly to serve as an imprimatura layer or as a first, tonal underpainting. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. X-radiography shows various unreadable areas of increased paint density that do not correspond to the image on the surface, suggesting that the picture underwent major design changes in the course of execution that cannot be deciphered from the X-radiograph. Beneath the discolored varnish covering it, the paint layer has suffered some damage. There are three large repaired vertical breaks to the right of the figure's face, in her sash, and in her skirt, and a large paint loss at the bottom right. The background and dark areas of the figure are heavily retouched and some of the retouch has discolored to a visually disturbing degree.

Provenance: San Marcelli; (sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 22 April 1895, no. 18, as *Dans les champs*); Carmantrand; (Durand-Ruel et Cie., Paris) in 1907; by whom sold to Sarah Choate [Mrs. J. Montgomery] Sears, Boston; by whom sold to (C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries, New York); by whom sold 1 April 1926 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MusFrA, 1931, *Portraits of Women Loan Exhibition: Romanticism to Surrealism*, no. 6. New York, Marie Harriman Gallery, 1940, *Courbet: Tenth Anniversary Exhibition*, no. 12. The Arts Club of Chicago, 1941, *Courbet*, no. 2. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

A YOUNG WOMAN modishly dressed in a long, lace-trimmed jacket worn over a black skirt is shown knee-length, holding the handle of a folded pink sun umbrella in her right hand and carrying a Scottish plaid on her left arm. She is walking among what appear to be seaside dunes that are covered with tall grasses among which poppies grow. In the far distance at the left, a top-hatted coachman in a carriage drawn by two gray horses awaits on the beach beyond which appears the blue sea with its line of white surf.

The elegant stroller, posed asymmetrically, just off-center and moving to the right, is seen in close view, the hem of her wide skirt cut by the lower picture edge. It is possible that the canvas has been cropped along that edge, increasing the apparent proximity of the figure and causing it to loom high within the picture space, as if seen from below.¹ The contrast between the tall figure and the mi-



Gustave Courbet, *The Promenade*, 1845.10.113

nuscule carriage set against the far horizon at the left further accentuates the effect of an abrupt recession from foreground into distance. Painted with a pointed brush, while the rest of the picture is largely palette-knife work, that carriage—which introduces a faintly narrative note²—may have been added as an afterthought, to fill an otherwise vacant part of the canvas. To the figure's right, the rising terrain, covered by tall grasses interspersed with poppies, is summarily indicated by vertical strokes of the palette knife. Wide, irregular scumblings of white paint describe the lightly clouded sky above. The rather random, structureless paint application in this area suggests that it may be a passage that Courbet left unfinished at first and later roughly filled with patches of thick pigment.

The picture was not included in his one-man exhibition at the pont d'Alma in 1867,³ perhaps because it remained in an only partly completed state. Its energetic breadth of handling and harmonious fusion of light-toned colors nevertheless earned it the praise of later critics as “a superb sketch in golds and blues against sky and tall grass which is almost like a Manet in its bold two-dimensional pattern.”⁴ Charles Léger, in 1929, mentioned it among the portraits of women that Courbet painted during his visit to Deauville in the summer of 1866, and particularly insisted on its portrait character: “*La Promenade* est encore un portrait et des plus distingués.”⁵ But that is not, in fact, the impression the woman in the picture actually gives. Her face expressionless and indistinct, she appears as the wearer of a costume, rather than as an individual. Her facial type, pose, and presentation have no close parallel in Courbet's work. Nor does the insistence on details of dress and modish accessories in this picture, otherwise of rather broadly sketchlike execution, conform to his normal practice. *The Promenade*, rather, recalls the popular fashion plates of the period and suggests the possibility that Courbet may have followed a magazine illustration, as Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) did a few years later when he adapted a fashion print of 1871 for a painting that happens also to have acquired the title of *The Promenade*.⁶

During September 1866, the year inscribed on his canvas, Courbet stayed as the guest of his patron, the comte de Choiseul, in the latter's luxurious chalet at Deauville on the Norman coast. Writing to his sister Juliette on 27 September 1866,

Courbet reported glowingly on the elegance of his accommodations, on his daily swims in the sea, and his excursions by carriage.⁷ Sometime in September or October he wrote to Eugène Boudin (1824–1898) in nearby Trouville to invite him, at the comte's request, to dine at the chalet.⁸

His close proximity to Boudin at this time has a bearing on this painting, which, although exceptional in Courbet's work, has distinct affinities with Boudin's scenes of fashionable vacationers on the beaches of Deauville and Trouville. The combination of land- or seascape painting with genre subjects taken from contemporary life, and specifically from the world of high fashion, was a form of modern middle-class realism that had its nineteenth-century vogue in the seaside resorts of Trouville and Deauville and its early apostle in Boudin, who prided himself on “daring to depict in a painting the people and things of our times, on finding a way of making acceptable men in ulsters and women in waterproofs.” Noting that the peasantry had for some time found its chroniclers in Jean-François Millet, Charles-Emile Jacque (1813–1894), and Jules Breton (1827–1906), Boudin believed that “the bourgeois, walking along the jetty toward the sunset, has just as much right to be caught on canvas.”⁹

The English Channel resorts had reached the height of their popularity by the mid-1860s. The beaches with their bathing machines and flocks of strollers in windblown crinolines, their summer fauna of displaced Parisians crowding the boardwalks, casinos, and racecourses opened a world to Courbet that, for all his socialist truculence, he found entirely congenial. His summers at Trouville and Deauville in 1865 and 1866 were the glory days of his life among the rich and fashionable. He relished his leisure and luxury at the Trouville Casino and de Choiseul's villa at Deauville and was flattered to be courted by the society that summered at these resorts. His letters suggest that his rooms could barely contain the comtesses and marquises who clamored to be painted by him. But though he wrote that “more than four hundred ladies” had come to see his portrait of the comtesse Karoly and that “some ten of the most beautiful of them” would like to sit to him as well,¹⁰ it appears that during his summer stays in Trouville and Deauville he in fact painted only two of these society beauties, the comtesse Karoly¹¹ and a Mlle

Aubé de la Holde,¹² appropriately showing them at bust- or half-length against views of the beach and sea under cloudy skies.

Entirely different both in format and conception from these likenesses of closely viewed, individual sitters, *The Promenade* at the National Gallery of Art belongs to the category of genre and general social observation, rather than that of actual portraiture. But it is not impossible that Courbet, under the fresh impression of Boudin's beach scenes, painted it to test the possibility of using a motif taken from fashionable vacation life for the kind of society portraiture that occupied him at the time. If so, the experiment remained without consequence: *The Promenade* is an isolated work of which Courbet made no further use.

Notes

1. The proportions of the canvas on which *The Promenade* is painted are unusual in their width relative to their height. The standard, commercial canvas size most frequently used by Courbet for vertical subjects measured 92 × 73 cm. The canvas of *The Promenade* (85.5 × 72.5 cm) corresponds to this standard size in width but is too short by 6.5 cm. This suggests that some 6.5 cm were trimmed from the bottom of the canvas.

2. The early records of this picture describe it as a genre composition, rather than a portrait: "Une dame portant une châle est descendue et se promène dans les champs emallés de coquelicots. Sa voiture, attelée de deux chevaux gris de fer, l'attend"; *Catalogue de tableaux modernes dépendant de la collection de M. X. . .* [auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] (Paris, 22 April 1895), no. 18.

3. The catalogue of this exhibition, *Exposition des oeuvres de M. G. Courbet, Rond Point du Pont d'Alma*, Paris, 1867 (republished, with additions, in Léger 1929, 124–130), does not include *The Promenade*. Riat 1906, the earliest detailed monograph on Courbet's work, still contains no mention of it.

4. Brian 1940, 10 and 16.

5. Léger 1929, 120.

6. Oil on canvas, private collection (see *Cézanne: The Early Years, 1859–1872* [exh. cat. NGA.] [Washington, 1988], no. 55, repro.). This painting copies a plate in *La Mode illustrée*, published in May 1871 (see John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* [New York, 1961], 208, repro.).

7. Chu 1992, 298–299, no. 66–24. The comte de Choiseul had commissioned a seascape by Courbet on 16 September 1865 (Chu 1992, 267, no. 65–15), presumably *Les Dunes de Deauville* (Fernier 1978, no. 598), his sister, the marquise de Montalambert, had commissioned another, *Plage à Trouville, marée basse* (Fernier 1977, no. 512) at the same time (see Courbet's letter to his family, 3 January 1866, Chu 1992, 272, no. 66–2).

8. Chu 1992, 300, no. 66–25.

9. Letter to his friend Martin, dated 3 September 1868, in G. Jean-Aubry, *Eugène Boudin* (New York, 1968), 72.

10. Letter to Urbain Cuenot, 16 September 1865 (Chu 1992, 267, no. 65–15). In a later letter to his family, 17 November 1865 (Chu 1992, 268, no. 65–15), he increased the number of the fashionable pleaders to "more than two thousand ladies."

11. Private collection, Japan (Fernier 1977, no. 439). The portrait is signed "Dauville [*sic*], . . . 65, G. Courbet."

12. Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow (Fernier 1977, no. 442). The portrait, also known as *Woman with a Parasol*, is of a woman variously called "Mlle Haubé de la Holde" and "Mlle Aubé" by Courbet himself, and "Baronne Vesque de Puttlingen" by Fernier. Courbet's *Portrait of Jo Heffernan*, "*La Belle Irlandaise*" (Fernier 1978, no. 537), though dated 1866, may also have been begun at Trouville in 1865. Léger (1929, 120), however, associates it with works from 1866 and seems to link it with the NGA's *Promenade*.

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- 1929 Léger: 120.
 1929 Dale: no. 10.
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 1942 Dale: 27, repro.
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 1951 Mac Orlan, Pierre. *Courbet*. Paris: pl. 38.
 1953 Dale: 36, repro.
 1965 NGA: 33, no. 1777.
 1965a Dale: 50, no. 1777, repro.
 1968 NGA: 26, no. 1777, repro.
 1975 NGA: 84, no. 1777, repro.
 1978 Fernier: 14, no. 544, repro.
 1985 NGA: 103, repro.

1985.64.10

Calm Sea

1866

Oil on fabric, 54.1 × 63.9 (21 1/4 × 25 1/8)
 Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

Inscriptions

At lower left: '66 / Gustave Courbet

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a light-weight fabric of fine, plain weave that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been removed, but cusping apparent along all edges indicates the painting retains its original dimensions. The white ground has been toned with a variety of transparent underpaint: warm orange throughout the sky, with additional gray toning in the darker clouds; a gray layer

of paint in the area of the sea; and a reddish brown layer under the beach in the lower foreground. Neither underdrawing nor design changes were noted during infrared and X-radiographic examination. The paint is built up over the toned ground in smooth, flowing layers and partially scraped away in some areas in a manner suggesting the use of a palette knife. A fringe of low impasto that lines the edges of some paint strokes, particularly in the brightest highlights in the sky and on the sea, is further evidence for the use of the palette knife. An uneven, yellowed varnish covers the picture surface. An old, repaired complex tear, about 17 cm long, runs vertically through part of the sky and the sea at about 15 cm from the picture's right edge. There are several small retouched paint losses along the right edge and just right of center above the horizon line.

Provenance: Private collection, France. (Galerie Nathan, Zurich) by 1962; by whom sold May 1985 to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia.

Exhibited: Bern, Kunstmuseum, 1962, *Gustave Courbet*, no. 46, repro. NGA, 1966, *French Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon and Mrs. Mellon Bruce*, no. 6, repro. Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1973–1978, *French Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon*, unnumbered checklist. Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1979–1985, *19th- and 20th-Century French Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon*, checklist no. 20. Venice, Ala Napoleonica e Museo Correr, and Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1989, *Impressionisti della National Gallery of Art di Washington*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. Munich, Neue Pinakothek, 1990, *Französische Impressionisten und ihre Wegbereiter aus der National Gallery of Art, Washington, und dem Cincinnati Art Museum*, no. 14, repro.

CALM SEA opens on a spacious view from a Norman beach westward across the water of the English Channel on a bright and windless day. More than three-fourths of the painting's surface is occupied by an immense sky filled with the radiance of downy clouds that, rising from a vapory layer above the low horizon, expand into light-filled, mountainous shapes toward the picture's top. The sea lies flat, furrowed by long, horizontal wavelets that lap against the wet and shiny sand in the immediate foreground. No flight of birds, no distant sail, nor any figures on the beach disturb the perfect solitude of the scene.

The date of 1866 above Courbet's signature¹ indicates that he probably painted the picture at the resort of Deauville during his stay there in September and October of that year,² as the guest of the comte de Choiseul in the latter's beachfront villa.³

Seascapes had been a recurrent preoccupation with Courbet since 1854,⁴ when the sight of the Mediterranean, encountered at Palavas during a visit to his patron, Alfred Bruyas in Montpellier, struck him with the force of a revelation.⁵ The experience led him to attempt a new kind of painting in which he limited himself, departing from the robust materialism of his usual landscape practice, to purely optical sensations—effects of light, color, and atmosphere over water, in spaces empty of concrete objects.⁶ Two of his early Palavas seascapes contain small figures that, together with diminutive sails on the far horizon, serve mainly to establish the vastness of the view.⁷ But most are entirely without figures and nearly without foregrounds.⁸

Courbet returned to the Mediterranean in 1857 to paint further seascapes.⁹ Two years later, he summered for the first time in Normandy, at Honfleur, where he made the acquaintance of Eugène Boudin (1824–1898). Only two seascapes have been connected with this stay.¹⁰ Returning to Normandy for three summer months in 1865, Courbet produced an extraordinary number of views of the open sea from the beaches of Trouville and the neighboring resort of Deauville:¹¹ no fewer than twenty-five seascapes shown in his one-man exhibition at the pont d'Alma in 1867 were listed as having been painted in Trouville or Deauville during 1865.¹² Returning to the Channel coast in 1866, for a fairly brief stay at the comte de Choiseul's villa in Deauville, Courbet painted a further, less extensive series of pure seascapes,¹³ among them the National Gallery's dated study, *Calm Sea*.

The idea of filling his canvas entirely with a wide expanse of sky and sea, based only on a narrow fringe of foreground, evidently occurred to him spontaneously, under the immediate impression of the sea before him, rather than the recall of some artistic precedent.¹⁴ In his progressive reduction of solid matter and its ultimate dissolution into atmospheric light and color, Courbet rapidly went far beyond similar tendencies in earlier seascapes by Richard Parkes Bonington (1802–1828) and Paul Huet (1803–1869) of which he may not have been aware. His first pictures of this kind, painted in 1854, also antedated the marines of Boudin and James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) that bear a certain resemblance to them.¹⁵ Courbet evidently developed his pure seascapes, or



Gustave Courbet, *Calm Sea*, 1866.64.10

“paysages de mer” as he called them in 1867, quite independently.

Discarding subject matter, topography, and conventional composition, he adopted a simple scheme that allowed him to concentrate on the chromatic and atmospheric essentials of his seascapes. He divided their picture space into horizontal bands, reserving the upper part of his canvas for a clear or lightly clouded sky, beneath which the water formed a zone of dark or silvery blue that, below, broke into lines of surf advancing against the sands or rocks of the immediate foreground. The radical emptiness of his sea views disconcerted or amused some critics. “Like God who created heaven and earth from nothingness, M. Courbet draws his seascapes from nothing or next to nothing,” mocked G. Radon in 1867, “three colors from his palette, three brushstrokes—as he knows how to apply them—and there you have the infinite sea and sky!”¹⁶ Friendlier critics praised these paintings for their avoidance of conventional artifices and their abstention from “picturesque” genre by-work, in short, for their truthfulness.¹⁷ Théophile Thoré, commenting on the seascapes in Courbet’s exhibition of 1867, applauded precisely that concentration on the elemental aspects of the subject, the vast sky and the deep sea, that others had criticized and underlined the accuracy of Courbet’s observation of the constantly changing effects of light and atmosphere over water.¹⁸

Courbet’s Channel seascapes of 1865 and 1866 differ from his Mediterranean views of 1854 and 1857 by the lightness and delicacy of their colors, their feathery paint application in rapid sweeps of the brush or palette knife, and a radical lowering of the horizon that gives absolute dominance to the sky. “The sky is nearly always the subject of the picture,” Jules-Antoine Castagnary observed. “In these mists, rains, sunbursts, in all these atmospheric transformations, [Courbet’s] palette knife sports with astonishing agility: during his summer at Trouville [1865], he dashed off thirty seascapes in thirty days, working hardly more than an hour or two every afternoon.”¹⁹ Courbet himself remarked on the speed with which he was able to carry off these fugitive impressions of marine weather, boasting in a letter of 6 April 1866 to his friend Urbain Cuenot that his Trouville seascapes of the previous year had been “done in two hours.”²⁰ In fact, of nearly all these “paysages de

mer” only a single version is known, which points to the probability that they are original studies extemporaneously painted in the out-of-doors, rather than the products of studio revisions or repetitions, as are many of Courbet’s more deliberately composed seaside subjects of cliffs, beaches, and waves.²¹

Notes

1. This date has sometimes been misread as 1860; see under Exhibited, NGA 1966, no. 6; Richmond 1973–1978, unnumbered checklist, and 1979–1985, no. 20.

2. Fernier 1978, no. 591. Fernier concludes on the basis of the inscribed date of 1866 that the picture was “sans doute peint à Deauville.” This is a very likely assumption, but not a certainty, since Courbet, who frequently advanced the dates of pictures when signing them for sale or exhibition, may have painted this seascape the previous year at Trouville.

3. In a letter to his sister, written on 27 September 1866 (Chu 1992, 299, no. 66–24), Courbet described the luxuries and comforts of his quarters, and at the comte’s request extended an invitation to Boudin and Monet. He was still at Deauville on 10 October, when he wrote to his dealer Luquet to announce his imminent return to Paris (Chu 1992, 300–301, no. 66–26).

4. Courbet’s earlier excursions to the coast in 1841, when he visited Le Havre and first caught sight of the sea, and in 1852, when he was in Dieppe, seem not to have tempted him to paint seascapes. Hélène Toussaint (1977, 79, no. 2) has suggested, however, that the painting *L’Embouchure de la Seine* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille), usually associated with Courbet’s visit to Honfleur in 1859 (Fernier 1977, no. 256), may possibly date from his visit to the Norman coast in 1841.

5. The love for the sea that Courbet developed in midlife was believed by his early biographers to have arisen from deep emotional sources and to have influenced the direction of his later work. Riat (1906, 120) remembered that “Il a dit que la mer lui donnait les mêmes émotions que l’amour.” Jules Troubat, noting Courbet’s nearly physical self-identification with the sea, observed that “on dirait qu’il a fait partie lui-même des éléments qui l’entourent avant d’avoir forme humaine” (*Plume et pinceau* [Paris, 1878], 251). According to Castagnary, “La mer lui fut... l’occasion de nombreux triomphes. Nageur plus encore que chasseur, il l’aimait pour elle-même” (Castagnary 1912 [see Biography], 22).

6. Zacharie Astruc was the first to recognize the importance and originality of Courbet’s Palavas seascapes: “Vous parlerai-je de ses marines, qui sont merveilleuses... [Ils] expriment toutes les heures de la journée, toutes les singulières transformations de la mer... effets de soleil, grises pâleurs du matin, serenités lumineuses du plein midi; mystère tranquille et voilé du soir” (*Les Quatorze Stations du Salon de 1859* [Paris,

1859], 394–395). Paul Mantz (*GBA* [1 July 1878]: 24) drew attention to the importance of Southern light in Courbet's early seascapes: "Pour comprendre la lumière, ce paysan de Franche-Comté avait besoin de voir la Méditerranée et plus tard l'Océan. Echange heureux de forces et de leçons. La mer enseigne quelque chose à la montagne." Georges Riat (1906, 121) found in the seascapes an early portent of impressionism: "bien avant la révolution que provoquèrent les Impressionnistes, il commença à laver sa palette, et de donner de la nature des images moins sombres qu'on n'y était habitué." And Castagnary (1912, 22) stressed the predominant role Courbet assigned to the skies of his "paysages de mer" (the term he used for his seascapes in the catalogue to his 1867 exhibition): "il n'oubliait jamais que l'espace vide occupe plus de place que l'espace plein, et du premier coup il trouva la proportion vraie à établir entre les trois éléments du tableau: la terre, l'eau, le ciel... c'est presque toujours le ciel qui fait le sujet du tableau."

7. Fernier 1977, no. 150, *Les Bords de la mer à Palavas*, dated 1854 (Musée Fabre, Montpellier), and no. 151, *Souvenir des cabanes* (John G. Johnson Collection, PMA).

8. Fernier 1977, nos. 152–155.

9. Fernier 1977, nos. 218, 219, and probably 238 (dated 1858).

10. Fernier 1977, nos. 252–253, and possibly 256 (Toussaint 1977, 79, no. 2, has suggested that this last may date from as early as 1841). For Courbet's meeting with Boudin at Honfleur in 1859, see Riat 1906, 179–180.

11. Writing to Alfred Bruyas, in January 1866, Courbet reported: "Last summer I went to Trouville for three months... I did thirty-eight paintings in that place, including twenty-five seascapes similar to yours and to those I did in Sables d'Olonne; and twenty-five autumn skies, one more extraordinary and free than the next" (Chu 1992, 273, no. 66-3. Nothing is known of a visit by Courbet to Sables d'Olonne, a sea resort on the west coast of France north of La Rochelle). Fernier (1977, nos. 493–525) catalogued thirty-three seascapes that are either dated 1865 or in his opinion datable to Courbet's stay in Trouville in 1865. This total included twenty-one studies describable as "skies," as well as a repetition of one of Courbet's Palavas seascapes of 1854 (*Souvenir de cabanes*, Fernier 1977, nos. 151 and 507).

12. The catalogue of Courbet's one-man exhibition at the pont de l'Alma in 1867 (republished in Léger 1929, 124–130) lists twenty-three "paysages de mer" (nos. 44–66, with two additional seascapes exhibited *hors catalogue* as nos. 116 and 118). Next to the twenty-seven portraits exhibited on this occasion, these twenty-five seascapes made up the largest group of works shown. In his catalogue, Courbet specified that eighteen of them (nos. 49–66) had been painted at Trouville in the summer of 1865.

13. Among the many seaside subjects shown in Courbet's exhibition of 1867, only one, *Les Dunes de Deauville* (Fernier 1978, no. 598), was dated to 1866 in the catalogue. Fernier, in addition, lists five further

"paysages de mer" that Courbet painted during his stay at Deauville in 1866: the NGA's *Calm Sea* (Fernier 1978, no. 591) and Fernier's nos. 594, 596, 597, and 600. It is not known why these were not included in the exhibition of 1867.

14. The possibility of Dutch influence on Courbet's seascapes was raised by Riat (1906, 221 and 229) who was reminded by them of Jan van Goyen (1596–1656) and Van de Velde. But, although Courbet may have seen works by these masters during his visit to Holland in 1847, it is apparent that in style and conception his "paysages de mer" were from the very beginning, that is, from 1854 onward, entirely independent of the Dutch tradition.

15. It has occasionally been suggested that Boudin (in 1859) and Whistler (in 1865) significantly influenced Courbet's sky- and seascapes (Faunce and Noehlin 1988, 158–159, no. 50, and Toussaint 1977, 178, no. 88). But by 1859, when he first met Boudin at Honfleur and presumably saw his pastel drawings of skies, Courbet had already developed the distinctive form of his "paysages de mer." It is likely, however, that the dramatic increase in luminosity and atmospheric delicacy apparent in Courbet's Trouville seascapes of the summer of 1865 owed something to Boudin, in whose proximity he worked at that time. The full development of Courbet's style of seascape painting also antedated Whistler's strands and seas of 1865, which have a somewhat closer affinity to Courbet's seascapes than do Boudin's. Courbet and Whistler likely influenced one another in 1865, when painting together on the beach of Trouville, though it was clearly Courbet's robustly naturalist improvisations that Whistler somewhat decoratively stylized to suit his own, very different sensibility.

16. G. Randon, "Exposition Courbet," *Le Journal amusant* (1867); see Léger 1920, 72.

17. Jules Champfleury, in *Oeuvres illustrées de Champfleury. Grandes Figures d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1861), 262 and 264, interpreted Courbet's paintings of calm seas and vacant beaches as a conscious reaction against the "embellishment of nature" by the painters of conventional seascapes (see Tippetts 1966). Alone among modern commentators, Klaus Herding (1991, 92–93) has attempted a political reading of Courbet's "paysages de mer" of 1865–1866, claiming that their "statement about reality consists in a representation of the equalizing effect of nature and its suppression of individual objects, which is precisely why [these paintings] were opposed as anarchistic." He does not cite examples of such imputations of anarchism to Courbet's seascapes by critics of the time.

18. Théophile Thoré, *Exposition universelle, Salon de 1867*, quoted in Tippetts 1966, 176–177.

19. Castagnary 1912 [see Biography], 22.

20. Chu 1992, 277, no. 66-7.

21. An exception is the copy, painted in 1865, of *Souvenir de cabanes*, one of Courbet's Palavas seascapes dating from 1854 (see note 11 above). After his release from prison in 1872, he occasionally improvised seascapes from memory, see Fernier 1978, nos. 875 (*Petite Marine*,

dated 1872), 878 (c. 1872), 913 (c. 1873), 916 (c. 1873), and 977 (c. 1874).

References

1966 Tippetts, Marie-Antoinette. *Les Marines des peintres vues par les littérateurs de Diderot aux Goncourt*. Paris: 172 note 5.

1978 Fernier: 36, no. 591, repro.

1972.9.7 (2592)

Boats on a Beach, Etretat

c. 1872–1875

Oil on fabric, 64.8 × 91.4 (25½ × 36)

Gift of the W. Averell Harriman Foundation in memory of Marie N. Harriman

Inscriptions

At lower right: G. Courbet

Technical Notes: The picture is painted on a medium-weight, open plain-weave fabric that has been lined on to fabric. The tacking margins are preserved. The fabric was first prepared by the artist, with a thin white ground that was covered in turn with a dark brown imprimatura layer over which the colors were then laid. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. The sky was blocked in first, followed by the sea. The brown imprimatura layer establishes the basic color of the cliff. Touches of tan and ocher, applied with the palette knife, define the rough forms of the rocks. Smoothly blended liquid paint covers the sky. The sea is formed by long, horizontal strokes of semifluid paint, while the cliffs and the sand of the beach were painted with thick, pasty pigments and roughly textured by the palette knife, charged with a mixture of white, gray, and tan. The hulls of the boats with all their details were finished before the surrounding beach was scumbled in. The masts and sails were finished last and, as X-radiographs indicate, have been painted over the sea, rocks, and beach. Beneath its clear varnish, the painting is very well preserved.

Provenance: Private collection, London. (Rosenberg & Helft Galleries, London) by 1938. (Paul Rosenberg and Co., New York) by 1943; by whom sold 10 June 1946 to Marie N. Harriman [Mrs. W. Averell Harriman, 1903–1970], New York; The W. Averell Harriman Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: London, Rosenberg & Helft, 1938, *Ten French Painters of the 19th Century*, no. 7, as *Bateaux devant la falaise*. London, La Flèche d'Or, 1938. London, Rosenberg & Helft Galleries, 1938, *Exposition Courbet*, no. 16, repro., as *Bateaux devant la falaise*. New York, Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1943, *Exhibition of French Paint-*

ing of the Nineteenth Century and French and American Painting of the Twentieth Century, no. 2, as *Etretat*. Westbury, Long Island, Country Art Gallery, 1954, *Benefit for the North Shore Hospital*. New York, Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1956, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Gustave Courbet*, no. 11, repro. NGA, 1959, *Masterpieces of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Painting*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. Richmond, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1961, *Treasures in America*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. NGA, 1961, *Exhibition of the Marie and Averell Harriman Collection*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. New York, Wildenstein & Co., 1966, *Romantics and Realists*, no. 20, repro. Corpus Christi, Art Museum of South Texas, 1976–1977, long-term loan. Venice, Ala Napoleonica e Museo Correr, and Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1989, *Impressionisti della National Gallery of Art di Washington*, unnumbered catalogue, repro. Munich, Alte Pinakothek, 1990, *Französische Impressionisten und ihre Wegbereiter aus der National Gallery of Art, Washington, und dem Cincinnati Art Museum*, no. 15, repro. Athens, Pinacothèque Nationale Musée Alexandre Soutzos, 1992, *From El Greco to Cézanne: Masterpieces of European Painting from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, und The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*, no. 41, repro.

BENEATH A SKY covered with lowering clouds, four sailboats lie on a beach bordered on the right by low, rugged cliffs. The sea, at low ebb, laps against the shore. In the distance, two small sails enliven the wide expanse of the sea.

The picture's history before the 1930s is unknown.¹ It has in the past been variously titled *Bateaux devant la falaise*,² *Boats on a Beach*,³ and, more recently, *Boats on a Beach, Etretat*.⁴ But no very marked features identify its setting, which merely bears a general resemblance to Norman beaches both north and south of Le Havre. The uncertainty concerning the site that it may represent, assuming that it actually represents a particular site, is reflected in the variety of dates that have been assigned to it. Probably under the impression that it may have been painted at Trouville, where Courbet spent the early fall of 1865, it was at one time dated to that year.⁵ But the realization that the cliffs in the picture's right half were rather more reminiscent of Etretat has since caused it to be dated to 1869,⁶ the year in which Courbet spent the months of August and September at that village. In his comprehensive catalogue of Courbet's work, Robert Fernier cautiously labeled the picture *Bateaux et falaises* but accepted the date of 1869 and thereby may have intended to signify his agree-



Gustave Courbet, *Boats on a Beach, Etretat*, 1972.9.7



Fig. 1. Gustave Courbet, *Les Rochers d'Etretat*, oil on canvas, 1869, Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, Gift of H. S. Southam, Ottawa, 1947, inv. 4383

ment with the identification of its subject as a beach at Etretat.⁷

Courbet went to Etretat in early August 1869 to execute "some commissioned paintings," as he informed his parents in a letter written the following September. He also mentioned that "in the month that I have been here I have already done ten seascapes. I sold five of them for a total of forty-five hundred francs."⁸ Some weeks later, on 29 September 1869, he wrote from Paris to Castagnary that during his stay at Etretat he had painted "twenty seascapes, two of which are for the exhibition,"⁹ in other words, the Salon of 1870.¹⁰

Courbet was not given to understating his productivity; his letter seems to boast of the fact that in the seven weeks of his stay at Etretat he had painted as many as twenty seascapes, an impressive total of which he was proud. But the number of Etretat seascapes—beaches, waves, and cliffs—that has since been attributed to Courbet is much larger. Fernier's catalogue credits him with as many as fifty-two seascapes and beach scenes, all supposedly painted at Etretat in 1869.¹¹ This unlikely increase to a number more than twice that claimed by Courbet himself is explicable only when it is assumed to comprise many paintings actually painted after 1869¹² and to include some of the repetitions and variants of the Etretat seascapes that

form part of the mass of commercial work that Courbet produced, with the help of assistants, when hard-pressed financially after 1872.¹³

The motif of beached sailboats at the foot of cliffs that rise on their right is shared by a fairly large number of paintings that are assumed to represent the beach at Etretat and therefore usually dated to 1869.¹⁴ *Les Rochers d'Etretat* in the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, of larger size and more elaborate finish than the picture in Washington, is the most developed and in point of quality the most impressive member of this group (fig. 1).¹⁵ Its setting does resemble the towering *falaises* north of Etretat in scale and shape, and its vividly specific effects of light and atmosphere give it the character of a work carried out under the impression of an actual site. The National Gallery's *Boats on a Beach* is in every way a reduction of this scene, topographically unspecific and fairly cursory in its treatment of the cliffs at the right, which appear oddly stunted and out of scale with the beached boats before them. It does not seem necessary to suppose—in fact it is hardly likely—that this picture was painted from nature at Etretat. Its general character and execution suggest that it, like many of Courbet's late seascapes, was produced from memory, in the studio, and probably at a date later than 1869. Of the other coastal scenes belonging to this group, several of the ones that most resemble it in motif and manner of execution, such as *Bord de la mer, falaises d'Etretat*¹⁶ and *Deux Bateaux sur la plage*,¹⁷ are dated by Fernier to 1872–1873, in other words, to a period when, far from the sea, Courbet continued to paint seascapes from the imagination.

Notes

1. See under Provenance and Exhibited, above.
2. London 1938.
3. New York 1956.
4. Walker 1975, 449, no. 655.
5. New York 1956; NGA 1959, 10; Richmond 1961.
6. In a letter dated 31 July 1972 in the NGA curatorial files, Robert Fernier states, "à mon avis, les *Bateaux et falaises* de la collection Harriman sont de 1869, sans aucun doute possible," adding, "Courbet n'a séjourné à Etretat qu'en 1869, exactement du 10 Août au 28 Septembre."
7. Fernier 1978, 94, no. 716.
8. Chu 1992, 352, no. 69-7. Writing from Etretat to Castagnary, on 6 September 1869, Courbet mentions that he has been in Etretat for twenty-five days in

which time he has "already done nine seascapes that I am pleased with" (Chu 1992, 353-354, no. 69-8).

9. Chu 1992, 354, no. 69-9.

10. Courbet exhibited *Falaises d'Etretat après l'orage* (Louvre; Fernier 1978, no. 745) and *La Vague* (Louvre; Fernier 1978, no. 747).

11. Fernier 1978, 78-98, nos. 676-727. Fernier grouped the Etretat seascapes that he dated to 1869 as follows: 1) *Marines* or *Marée basse*, nos. 695-696, 701-705, 712; 2) *Vagues*, nos. 676-694, 697-703, 706-707, 709-710; 3) *Falaises d'Etretat*, nos. 713-714, 716-727. The dates of many of these paintings are highly conjectural, and it is significant that only eight (nos. 696, 699, 702, 712, 713, 718, 720, 721) of these fifty-two paintings are authentically inscribed with the date of 1869. Two further pictures of the cliffs at Etretat (nos. 590 and 593) are unaccountably dated by Fernier to 1866, although Courbet visited Etretat only in 1869 (no. 590 actually bears the date '66 beside the signature, an evidently forged inscription). Several paintings generally dated to 1870, though certainly begun at Etretat in 1869, such as the two paintings exhibited in the Salon of 1870 (nos. 745 and 747), should probably be added to the list of works undertaken at Etretat, though they are inscribed with the date 1870 (see also nos. 744, 746, 748-750, 752, 755, 757).

12. Given the striking variations in quality and the large number of outright duplications among these pictures, there can be little doubt that many, perhaps most, are studio repetitions ranging over a number of years after 1869. Several of the Etretat seascapes (Fernier 1978, nos. 813, 819-822, 857, 877) are actually inscribed with the date of 1872. Fernier himself, though generally inclined to accept earlier dates, catalogued a number of the Etretat *Vagues* and *Falaises* among the paintings of 1872 (nos. 811-812, 814-818, 873-875, 879) or of 1873 (no. 915).

13. To help him with the rapid production of saleable paintings needed to pay his debts, Courbet in 1872 established a virtual picture factory (*atelier de préparation*) at Ornans. The following year, having been condemned to pay a large fine for his part in the destruction of the Vendôme Column, he made his escape to La Tour de Peilz in Switzerland and there continued this enterprise on a still larger scale. He was supported by a team of assistants—Marcel Ordinaire, Jean and Armand Cornu, Ernest Brigot, Théophil Morel, Alexandre Rapin, André Slomczynski, and Cherubino Pata who proved to be his most prolific collaborator. In a letter of 26 April 1873 to his sisters Juliette and Zélie, Courbet was able to report: "We have no end of commissions, there are about a hundred paintings to be done. . . . We have already delivered a score, and have as many still to deliver. Pata and Cornu are working out well. . . . I pay them a percentage on the paintings they prepare for me. Pata and Cornu have already received eighteen hundred francs." Most of their output consisted of replicas of earlier land- and seascapes for which there was a strong commercial demand. The assistants prepared the canvases, broadly laying in the

compositions that Courbet then completed and signed. But as his health and energy declined he left many canvases in a very undeveloped state to be finished by Pata and others (Gros-Kost 1880, 175-185; Riat 1906, 344). At length, Pata seems to have signed many of his own paintings with Courbet's name, or tolerated the practice of certain dealers to replace his name with that of Courbet. To what extent Courbet's work from 1872 onward was the product of collaboration is a problem that recent scholarship has treated with cautious neglect (see Jean-Jacques Fernier, *Cherubino Pata, 1827-1899, le vrai faux-Courbet* [Ornans, 1988]). Pata, it may be noted, exhibited a painting entitled *Les Falaises d'Etretat* at the Salon of 1878 (Fernier 1988, 75, repro.).

14. See Fernier 1977, no. 509 ("vers 1865"); Fernier 1978, nos. 590 (falsely dated "1866"), 711, 714, 716 (NGA), 727, 879, 915. Fernier no. 593 and its copies, *Supplément* 12 and 13, unmistakably show the same range of cliffs as no. 590 but omit the boats in the foreground.

15. 92 × 114 cm (Fernier 1978, no. 590). The picture is inscribed, at lower right, "66, Gve Courbet," evidently an apocryphal date, since Courbet did not visit Etretat before 1869 (see note 6 above). A related, smaller view of the coast at Etretat, formerly in a German private collection (Fernier 1978, no. 593), is undated; Fernier assigns to it and its two copies (Fernier *Supplément* 12 and 13) the date of 1866, presumably because of their resemblance to the picture in Ottawa. But still another view of the cliffs at Etretat, formerly in a Hungarian collection, is dated by him to 1869 (Fernier 1978, no. 714).

16. Fernier 1978, no. 879, "1872-1873."

17. Fernier 1978, no. 915, "1873." The mottled sky and the very roughly textured beach that are conspicuous features of the NGA's *Boats on a Beach* recur in this and several other seascapes of 1872-1873 (see Fernier 1978, 878 and 916).

References

- 1959 NGA: 10, repro.
1966 "Romantics and Realists." *Arts Magazine* 40, no. 7 (May): 26, repro.
1975 NGA: 84, no. 2592, repro.
1975 Walker: 449, no. 655, repro.
1978 Fernier: 94, no. 716.
1985 NGA: 103, repro.

1963.10.10 (1674)

Beach in Normandy

c. 1872–1875

Oil on fabric, 61.3 × 90.2 (24 1/8 × 35 1/2)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *G. Courbet*

Technical Notes: A moderate-weight, plain-weave fabric is the painting's primary support. It has been lined onto fabric, and the original tacking margins have been removed. The fabric has been prepared with a white ground covered by a brown imprimatura. This brown layer shows through in passages of the foreground, but it has been partially scraped away by the artist in parts of the cliff so that the lower white ground is visible through it. Cusping along the edges suggests the painting is at or near its original size. The paint, thin in the sky, is laid on more heavily, both wet-in-wet and wet-on-dry, in the rock face at the left, using both brushes and palette knife. Neither underdrawing nor design changes were found during infrared and X-radiographic examination. A previous lining has resulted in flattened impasto and overemphasis of the canvas weave on the surface of the painting. A few retouched losses are evident along the edges. The painting is covered with a thick yellowed varnish that makes it difficult to see the lively brushwork beneath.

Provenance: (M. F. . . . sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 27 May 1891, no. 18, as *Marine*). Delafond [or Delafons], Paris. (Jacques Dubourg, Paris); by whom sold 18 July 1952 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE VIEW ranges southward along a sandy beach closely bordered at the left by steep, grass-covered cliffs of moderate height. Beneath a lightly clouded sky, four small fishing boats rest on the beach from which the tide has receded. Coiled ropes and a brown sail have been laid out to dry on the sand beside them. In the distance, the diminutive figures of two men, perhaps clam diggers, appear silhouetted against the fringe of white surf that lines the shore. Farther off, barely discernible, three sailboats dot the sea.

During August and September 1869 Courbet worked on the beaches of Etretat, which he had not visited during his previous stays in Normandy.¹ With the impending Salon in mind, he

painted, according to a letter written at the time,² some twenty seascapes from which he ultimately developed the two great exhibition pictures, *The Wave*³ and *The Cliffs at Etretat after the Storm*,⁴ that he submitted to the Salon of 1870. His intention in pairing these unusually large seascapes was undoubtedly to contrast the opposing elements that clashed at this most scenic point on the Norman coast, where the onrush of the thundering surf broke against the unyielding rock face. Concentrating on this confrontation, but treating its elements separately, he departed from his earlier, more placidly atmospheric views of sea and shore,⁵ and in his studies for *The Wave* painted the water, not as a shimmering surface, but as a physical mass in powerful motion, while presenting the shore, in separate views of the cliffs at Etretat, in its most monumental aspect, not as low-lying beach, but as towering natural architecture.

Working on the beaches of Etretat, Courbet pictured the famous cliffs that line its shore in two distinct series of studies, in the one taking the view southward toward the Porte d'Aval,⁶ the view he ultimately adopted for his large Salon picture of the following year, while in the other turning in the opposite direction, looking northward toward the promontory that ends in the Porte d'Amont.⁷ Though based on studies taken on the spot, not all these views were necessarily painted on the site in 1869; not a few of them are studio replicas of uncertain date.⁸ But in addition to these paintings which, whether as original observations or later repetitions, definitely represent the coast at Etretat, there exist others that are not so clearly identifiable.⁹ The presence of tall cliffs in them has generally caused them to be grouped with the Etretat views, although they are unrelated to Courbet's pictures of that site. They do not, in fact, appear to represent any particular localities painted from direct observation but seem to be pictorial inventions on the general theme of "Norman coast."

The National Gallery's *Beach in Normandy* belongs to this group. Efforts have been made to identify the stretch of beach represented in it,¹⁰ but the profiles of the cliffs that rise beside the beach are not sufficiently distinctive to allow an identification of its site. Robert Fernier noncommittally titled the picture *Retour de pêche, Normandie*, but by dating it to 1869,¹¹ the year of Courbet's sum-



Gustave Courbet, *Beach in Normandy*, 1863.10.10

mer stay in Etretat, seemed to imply that he located the view in that general area. The setting, however, bears very little resemblance to the celebrated *falaises* of Etretat whose impressive height Courbet emphasized in all those of his coastal scenes that definitely reflect his visit to Etretat in 1869. Its topography seems merely to generalize, and reduce, features that are broadly typical of the Norman coast between Fécamp and Bruneval. The modest, grass-covered escarpments that line the beach in the National Gallery's picture are, compared with the cliffs at Etretat and those along the nearby reaches of the coast, strikingly diminished in scale, especially in proportion to the small craft that lie on the beach below them, nor do the smooth sands in the picture's foreground resemble the rough shingle at Etretat.

Composed beach scenes made up of stock elements—cliffs, beached boats, and distant sea—came in large numbers from Courbet's studio between 1869 and 1877.¹² Most of them are undated and their chronology is extremely uncertain. Some may have been based on observed reality and perhaps date back to 1869, but many are clearly studio arrangements painted, from memory or fantasy, years after Courbet's last visit to the coast. The rutted rock face and the sandy plain of the National Gallery's *Beach in Normandy* lack the sharp tangibility of objects seen in daylight, and its sky and atmosphere have little of the vivid freshness found in the coastal scenes that Courbet painted under the immediate impression of a view before him. The light that falls from the greenish blue sky traces no very distinct patterns on the cliffs or the sand; the boats lying on the beach hardly cast a shadow. The general effect of the picture suggests the likelihood that, rather than the record of an actual site on a Norman beach, it is a recollection gathered in the tranquility of the studio at Ornans in 1872–1873 or at La Tour de Peilz in 1873–1877, the years of Courbet's Swiss exile, when, pressed by financial need and helped by several assistants, he often reworked earlier land- and seascape motifs. A somewhat comparable coastal view, *Roche au bord de la mer*, formerly in a French private collection, is dated by Fernier to "about 1875."¹³

Notes

1. Robert Fernier, in a letter of 31 July 1972, in the NGA curatorial files: "Courbet n'a séjourné à Etretat qu'en 1869, exactement du 10 Août au 28 Septembre."

2. Letter to Jules-Antoine Castagnary, 29 September 1869: "Did I ever earn my bread and butter in Etretat! I painted twenty seascapes, two of which are for the exhibition" (Chu 1992, 354, no. 69-9). Concerning the much larger number of paintings ascribed to the stay in Etretat in the literature, and the probability that many of these "Etretat" subjects were not in fact painted from nature in 1869 but are later studio repetitions or improvisations, see *Boats on a Beach, Etretat* (pp. 138–141), particularly notes 11–15.

3. *La Mer orangeuse* or *La Vague*, dated 1870, 117 × 160 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, exhibited at the Salon of 1870 as no. 671 (Fernier 1978, 108, no. 747).

4. *Les Falaises d'Etretat après l'orage*, dated 1870, 133 × 162 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, exhibited at the Salon of 1870 as no. 672 (Fernier 1978, 106, no. 745).

5. For Courbet's earlier seascapes, see the entry for *Calm Sea*, pp. 133–138.

6. See Fernier 1978, nos. 718 (dated 1869), 719, 720 (dated 1869), 721 (dated 1869), 722, 723, 724, 726.

7. See Fernier 1978, nos. 590 (falsely dated 1866), 593, 714, 717, *Supplément* 12 and 13.

8. Such as, for example, the various repetitions of *Falaises d'Etretat, la Porte d'Aval* (Fernier 1978, nos. 718, 720, 723, 724, 726) probably based on a single original study from nature (Fernier 721).

9. See, by way of examples, Fernier 1978, nos. 713 (dated 1869), 715, 717, 739, and such evidently later pictures as nos. 818, 822, 873, 879, 915, 980.

10. In 1967 David E. Rust of the NGA traveled along the Norman coast, both to the north and south of Etretat, to examine the beaches at Saint-Jouin, Bruneval, Le Tilleul, Etretat, Vaucottes, Yport, and Grainval for any resemblance to the NGA's *Beach in Normandy*. He found none. In a memorandum of 29 August 1967, in the curatorial files of the NGA, he confirmed that the "cliffs in this area are altogether too tall and massive to be confused with this painting. Moreover, the... painting is obviously of a sandy beach, whereas all the beaches along this 30 km stretch are definitely pebble beaches, and of large pebbles as we see them in Courbet's canvases actually done in Etretat and showing the well-known cliff formations."

11. Fernier 1978, 98, no. 725.

12. For examples of formulaic, composed beach scenes, see Fernier 1977, no. 509 (dated by Fernier to 1865); Fernier 1978, nos. 711, 727 (both dated by Fernier to 1869), 879 (dated by Fernier to 1872–1873), and 915 (dated by Fernier to 1873). The NGA's *Boats on a Beach, Etretat* (1972.9.7, pp. 138–141; Fernier 1978, no. 716), also belongs to this group.

13. Fernier 1978, 210, no. 980.

References

- 1965a Dale: 52, repro.
1965 NGA: 33.
1966 Cairns and Walker 2:420, repro.
1968 NGA: 26, repro.
1975 NGA: 82, repro.
1975 Walker: 449, no. 654, repro.
- 1977 Werner, A. "The Two Souls of Gustave Courbet." *Art and Artists* 12, no. 3 (June): 4–9, repro. 7, no. 3, as *Beach at Etretat*.
1978 Fernier: 98, no. 725, as *Retour de pêche, Normandie*.
1984 Walker: 445, no. 642, repro.
1985 NGA: 102, repro.

Charles-François Daubigny

1817–1878

CHARLES-FRANÇOIS DAUBIGNY was born in Paris, the son of a landscape painter. Sickly as a child, he was raised by a nurse in the village of Valmondois on the Oise river. Self-educated, since he was too poor to enter one of the teaching studios, he eked out a living in his teens with illustrative work for publishers and gained painting experience as a picture restorer. On his own, he painted landscape sketches in the environs of Paris and in 1836 managed to visit Italy. In the following year he failed in his try at the Rome Prize for Historical Landscape but in 1838 saw his modern *View of Notre Dame and the Ile Saint-Louis* admitted to the Salon. After a submission to the Salon of 1840 was also accepted, Daubigny felt encouraged to make a second attempt at the Rome Prize in 1841, but failed again. A brief period of study with the eclectic history painter Paul Delaroche (1797–1856) left no trace in his work. He meanwhile continued to work as an etcher and illustrator in the publishing trade but by 1843 was also painting in the area of Fontainebleau. A small inheritance in 1848 gave him the freedom to travel. About this time, he became acquainted with the painters of Barbizon, Jules Dupré, Théodore Rousseau, and Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps (1803–1860). A first encounter in 1849 led to his lasting friendship with Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot whom he found to be the most congenial among contemporary landscape painters. Together they went sketching in the region of Geneva in 1852 and 1853, and in 1854 painted at Optevoz, near Lyon, where they were joined by Gustave Courbet. A regular exhibitor at the Paris Salons in the 1840s, and winner of first-class medals in 1848, 1852, 1857, and 1859, Daubigny won

an important public success at the Universal Exposition of 1855. Not long after, he bought the barge *Le Botin*, which, outfitted as a studio, carried him on sketching tours along the Seine and more particularly the Oise, the shores of which became his favorite painting ground and, after the purchase of a property at Auvers in 1860, his home.

As a member of the Salon juries of 1866 and 1867, Daubigny defended the young impressionists whose work his own foreshadowed more directly than that of any other landscape painters of the time. Visits to England in 1865 and 1866, to Spain in 1868, and to Holland in 1870 enlarged his horizon. While sheltering in England during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, he was able to assist Claude Monet (1840–1926), a fellow refugee, by recommending him to his dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, who in the following decades became a tireless promoter of the impressionists. A painful arthritis gradually lessened Daubigny's productivity in his last years. He died in Paris in 1878, at sixty-one.

Rather than the forests of Fontainebleau or Compiègne, his favorite landscapes were the riverine plains of the Oise, with their luminous skies and humid atmospheres. Among the painters commonly grouped with the masters of Barbizon, Daubigny was the one most open to immediate visual experience and the least given to stereotypes and repetitions, in effect the one truly deserving to be called a naturalist.

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Hellebranth 1976.

1963.10.116 (1780)

The Farm

1855

Oil on fabric, 51.4 × 81.3 (20 1/4 × 32)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *Daubigny 1855*

Technical Notes: The painting's support, a moderate-weight plain-weave fabric, has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been removed. Cusping present along all edges suggests the painting has not been cut down. The support has been prepared with a thick, tan-colored ground, applied with a palette knife, over which a tan underpaint is visible in some areas. Infrared reflectography indicates pencil or chalk underdrawing, reinforced with blue-gray paint, defining the main elements of the composition. Infrared examination also indicates underdrawing defining areas of shadow in the foreground, as well as early design changes not visible in the X-radiograph, such as the elimination of a large tree in front of the sunlit building at the left and of a smaller tree at the bottom right. The paint layers are applied freely in a series of glazes and scumbles that in the foreground reveal underlying paint and priming. The sky is more thickly and opaquely painted than the rest of the image. It has been heavily repainted, though there is no evidence of underlying loss or abrasion. The painting is covered with a clear varnish.

Provenance: Gérard, Paris. Possibly Félix Vallotton [1865–1925], Lausanne.¹ Alexandre Bernheim-Jeune [d. 1915], Paris. (Galerie Georges Petit, Paris); sold 9 June 1926 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

EXCEPTIONAL in Daubigny's work in its concentration on man-made structures to the exclusion of landscape,² *The Farm* presents a group of windowless stables or barns, clustered, fortresslike, behind a long wall. The buildings have the dour, practical simplicity of peasant architecture. A wagon loaded with ladders stands abandoned near the open gate. In the otherwise vacant foreground, two ducks sit beside a large puddle. No trees or vegetation soften the austere geometry of the scene. Nature is manifested only in its effects of at-

mosphere and light: a sense of early morning or late afternoon, conveyed by reflections from the low sun on buildings outlined against a pale sky.

The locality in which Daubigny came upon this subject has not been identified; neither the type of the buildings nor the minimal indications of the terrain in which they stand offer any clues. When he signed the painting in 1855 he had behind him several years of travel in widely separate regions of France: Normandy and Brittany in the northwest, the Morvan and Burgundy in the country's middle, and the Dauphiné in the southeast.³ The countryside that particularly attracted him during this period, and that inspired his most notable landscape paintings, was the area round the village of Optevoz in the Dauphiné, some 30 kilometers east of Lyon.⁴ The melancholy plainness of its environs and the rustic simplicity of its habitations seem to have held a special appeal for him. Daubigny visited there in 1849, 1852, 1854, and 1855, lodging at Optevoz with a M. Giroux, and painting numerous views of the village and the surrounding country.⁵ The centerpiece of his submission to the Universal Exposition of 1855 was a large *Ecluse d'Optevoz* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen), much praised by the critics and bought by the government at the exhibition's close.

In his Optevoz landscapes Daubigny gave more than usual prominence to buildings, such as stables, locks, and mills. The unaccustomed dominance of massive architectural forms in *The Farm* seems to relate it to these paintings. Dating from 1855, a year during which he visited Optevoz and was much occupied with its scenery, it is likely to have been based on a sight encountered there.

Notes

1. In a note dated 6 October 1966 (in NGA curatorial files), Paul Vallotton, the nephew of Félix, recalls that his uncle owned the painting before it was acquired by Bernheim-Jeune.

2. Its closest parallel among Daubigny's paintings is a small oil study of much earlier date, *Vieilles Fermes*, 1846, location unknown (see Fidell-Beaufort and Bailly-Herzberg 1975 [see Biography], 104, fig. 15).

3. During the year immediately preceding the painting's completion, he had visited Normandy in June 1854, Burgundy in September 1854, and the Dauphiné (Optevoz) in October 1854. He then traveled in Normandy and Brittany in the summer of 1855, in the Morvan later that summer, and in the Dauphiné, revisiting Optevoz, in October of that year.



Charles-François Daubigny, *The Farm*, 1963.10.116

4. Daubigny's earliest visit to Optevoz was made in 1849, resulting in his *Vue prise à Optevoz*, exhibited at the Salon of 1850–1851. Subsequent visits occurred in 1852 (in the course of a voyage to Geneva via Lyon, which produced *Petite Vallée d'Optevoz*, shown at the Salon of 1853); in 1853 in the course of travel in Burgundy and Switzerland; in 1854 (during October, when Daubigny prepared *Ecluse dans la vallée d'Optevoz* shown the following year at the Universal Exposition, which opened in May 1855); in 1855 (again during October, after summer travel in Normandy, Brittany, and the Morvan). This latter stay is documented by a note to Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume, datable to 1855, in which Daubigny announces his intention of spending most of the month of October at Optevoz; see Fidell-Beaufort and Bailly-Herzberg 1975, 263.

5. In addition to the Salon exhibits mentioned in note 4 above, a further selection of Daubigny's paintings from the area of Optevoz can be found in Hellebranth 1976, 165–174, nos. 508–540.

References

- 1929 Dale: no. 8, repro.
 1941 Dale: 4, pl. VII.
 1942 Dale: 26, repro.
 1944 Dale: 26, repro.
 1953 Dale: 33, repro.
 1962 Cairns and Walker: 150–151, repro.
 1963 Walker: 252–253, repro.
 1965 NGA: 36.
 1965a Dale: 48, repro.
 1968 NGA: 29, repro.
 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
 1976 Hellebranth: 284, no. 867, repro.
 1984 Walker: 445, no. 645, repro.
 1985 NGA: 113, repro.

1949.1.3 (1035)

Washerwomen at the Oise River near Valmondois

1865
 Oil on oak panel, 24 × 46 (9 1/2 × 18 1/8)
 Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

Inscriptions

At lower left: Daubigny 1865

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a horizontally grained oak panel, 0.5 cm thick, which appears to be commercially prepared. Its back, painted gray, bears the stamp "Tableaux et Dessins / Durand Ruel / Paris." A thin gray ground covers the panel. This layer is not uniformly thick. In the trees at the left and in the foreground, it has been applied so thinly that at the edges of forms, for example where the trees meet the sky, the

warm tone of the oak panel beneath is clearly apparent. The X-radiograph, which is hard to read owing to the prominent oak grain, did not reveal any design changes. The image is painted in oil paint, applied in a thick paste, with vigorous brush marks and moderate impasto in the foliage and sky. No underdrawing was evident during infrared examination. The discolored varnish and several small, old, discolored repaints were removed in 1983, and the painting was covered with a varnish that has remained clear. The painting is very well preserved.

Provenance: Descamps-Scrive de Lille collection. (Galerie Georges Petit, Paris); sold to Meyer Goodfriend, New York; (his sale, American Art Association, New York, 4 January 1923, no. 71); purchased by A. A. Aron for (M. Knoedler & Co., New York); by whom sold to R. Horace Gallatin [1871–1948], New York.

Exhibited: High Museum of Art, Atlanta, opening exhibition and loan for display with permanent collection, 1968–1969. Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, 1969–1970, long-term loan.

BENEATH A WIDE, luminous, lightly clouded sky, the reflecting surface of the river is bordered at the near left by densely massed trees. In the sunlit distance beyond, a scattering of houses nestles in the undulating, nearly treeless terrain. On the deeply shaded near shore, at the left, two washerwomen are seen at work.

Daubigny painted this view across the calm flow of the Oise from a point on the river's right bank, near an industrial sandpit known as Les Sablières, looking downstream toward the village of Valmondois in the distance. This was the position he chose for many of the Oise riverscapes that he painted from 1862 onward,¹ the year he settled with his family in nearby Auvers.² Not only did the prospect have the sentimental appeal for him of including the village in which he had spent his country boyhood, but it also offered a painterly advantage, since it enabled him to develop the picturesque contrast between the dark, densely wooded left bank of the river and a wide vista of sunlit agricultural land on the opposite shore.

The majority of Daubigny's views of the Oise near Valmondois were painted from dry land, on the river's right bank.³ Others, like the picture at the National Gallery, seem to have been painted from within the river's course and may have been executed in Daubigny's studio boat, *Le Botin*, moored some distance offshore.⁴ The similarity of



Charles-François Daubigny, *Wasberwomen at the Oise River near Valmondois*, 1949.1.3

prospect that links these river scenes, executed at intervals between 1863 and 1877, was not solely the result of studio repetition. They also testify to Daubigny's frequent returns to this favorite site, recorded in paintings that otherwise vary in dimensions, handling, and effects of light, and are always provided with dates, as if to recall the occasions, the particular excursions along the river that gave rise to them. As a series centered on a single site, Daubigny's views of the Oise near Valmondois seem to foreshadow the impressionists' experiments in serial landscape painting of the 1880s and 1890s.

Laundresses, inconspicuously placed at the water's edge, were a touch of genre interest that Daubigny often added to his riverscapes. This may have been a concession to public taste, despite his own preference for uninhabited landscapes.

Notes

1. His views of the Oise total more than 215 (see Hellebranth 1976, 82–137, nos. 221–435). Twelve of

these (Hellenbranth nos. 170–181) are centered on the bend in the river leading to Valmondois that is the subject of the NGA's painting. Among them, *Les Sablières près de Valmondois* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Reims, dated 1865 (Hellebranth no. 171), and the very similar *Bords de l'Oise près de Valmondois*, also dated 1865, in a Swiss private collection (Hellebranth no. 172), are its closest relatives.

2. Having purchased the property in 1860, he built a house and studio on this lot and established his family there in 1862, thus placing himself in the close vicinity of Jules Dupré at L'Isle-Adam, and soon in that of Honoré Daumier as well, who in 1865 settled in Valmondois.

3. Hellebranth 1976, nos. 170 (1863), 172 (1865), 174 (1868), 175 (1870), 176 (1873), 178 (1872), 181 (undated).

4. Hellebranth 1976, nos. 171 (1865), 173 (NGA, 1865), 177 (1873), 179 (1875), 180 (1877).

References

- 1965 NGA: 36.
- 1968 NGA: 29, repro.
- 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
- 1976 Hellebranth: 64, no. 173, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 112, repro.

Honoré Daumier

1808–1879

HONORÉ DAUMIER'S CAREER was one of the most unusual in the history of nineteenth-century art. Famous in his time as France's best-known caricaturist, he remained unrecognized in his actual stature—as one of the period's most profoundly original and wide-ranging realists. Even today, his essential quality may not be fully understood; the marvels of his pictorial inventions are half-hidden in the profusion of his enormous lithographic work, the sharp truths of his observation overshadowed by his comic genius and penchant for monumental stylization. Honoré Balzac's remark, "There is a lot of Michelangelo in that fellow," was perceptive, though probably made in a spirit of friendly condescension.

Daumier was born in Marseille in 1808, the son of an eccentric glazier and frame maker with high-flown poetic ambitions. In 1816 the elder Daumier

took his family to Paris in pursuit of his doomed literary projects. Young Honoré, obliged to earn a living from the age of twelve, started as a book dealer's helper and later ran errands for a firm of attorneys. Though he showed signs of a talent for drawing, his parents, perhaps fortunately, were unable to pay his way through the course of regular art training. A family friend, the antiquarian Alexandre Lenoir, who had assembled fragments from churches vandalized during the Revolution in a Musée des Monuments Français, gave him early, informal drawing lessons. On his own, he took his sketching pad to the sculpture galleries of the Louvre and attended the Académie Suisse, a teacherless establishment that offered inexpensive model sessions. He is said to have made his first experiments in lithography in 1822, aged fourteen; by 1825, at any rate, he had found employment with a commercial printer in whose shop

he gained the technical skills he needed. From 1829 onward he was able to produce lithographic caricatures of his own, imitating the styles of such popular artists as Nicholas-Toussaint Charlet (1792–1845), Charles-Joseph Traviès (1804–1859), and Henry Monnier (1799–1877).

The relaxation of censorship after the Revolution of 1830 opened the door to a flood of illustrated pamphlets. After working briefly for several short-lived journals, Daumier in 1831 was engaged by a great publicist, Charles Philipon, as cartoonist for a newly founded journal of political satire, *La Caricature*. This launched him on a career of forty years as comic artist to the weekly press, during which he drew 3,958 lithographs before the onset of blindness in the 1870s put a stop to his work. The initial target of his attacks was the government of King Louis-Philippe, which he ridiculed with a corrosive wit that brought him to the notice of the press police and earned him a jail term of six months in 1832. He nevertheless continued to draw for *La Caricature* and for another of Philipon's journals, *Le Charivari*, developing, in the heat of weekly combat, a graphic style of unsurpassed brilliance in an art that in France had little prestige, and only a brief history compared to the English tradition that boasted such ancestors as William Hogarth (1697–1764) and Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827).

Living at the time amid a circle of bohemian friends that included the sculptor Auguste Préault (1810–1879), he relied on his own talent for sculpture in modeling small clay portrait busts of politicians, based on sketches drawn during parliamentary sessions. Several of these cruelly truthful likenesses served him for a series of lithographic caricatures culminating in *Le Ventre législatif*, a burlesque collective portrait of the National Assembly. Published in 1834 as a supplement of *La Caricature*, it was shortly followed by a sinister sequel, *Rue Transnonain*, recording the aftermath of a murderous police raid. These large prints crown Daumier's youthful work: visual reportage, conceived in the anger of party strife, their graphic power carries them beyond their period and its politics.

When a tightening of censorship in 1835 put an end to *La Caricature*, Daumier shifted to politically unobjectionable social satire for Philipon's other journal, *Le Charivari*. In hundreds of lithographs, published serially, two or three a week, he

turned a sharp eye on the characteristic look and demeanor of every segment of Parisian society, ranging from the crotchets and timidities of the urban middle class with which he fondly empathized (*Les Bons Bourgeois*), to the frauds of speculators (*Robert Macaire*), the pomposities of lawyers (*Gens de justice*), the self-delusions of artists, the rapacity of landlords, and the vanity of bluestockings. For its breadth and insight, his work has been compared with that of the novelist Balzac and for its expressive energy with that of the art of Jean-François Millet. Though himself without intellectual pretensions, Daumier was closely in touch with a sophisticated, modern-minded society of literary men and artists, including Charles Baudelaire, Eugène Delacroix, and Charles-François Daubigny, who gathered at the Hôtel Pimodan, near Daumier's house on the Ile Saint-Louis, where after 1840 he was modestly quartered with his wife, Marie-Alexandrine Dassy, a dressmaker.

The revolution that overthrew the monarchy of Louis-Philippe in February 1848 briefly opened the art establishment to marginal, nonacademic practitioners. Daumier did not exhibit at the "free" Salon of 1848 but later that year entered an official competition for an allegorical painting of the Republic. His design, representing a powerfully statuesque female "giving nourishment and instruction to her children" was judged eleventh in a group of twenty entries. He did not carry this project further but was evidently encouraged to devote himself seriously to painting in oil, producing in short order several exhibition pictures on literary and even classical subjects. His *Miller and His Son* (Glasgow Museums, The Burrell Collection), based on La Fontaine's fable, was shown at the Salon in 1849, his *Nymphs Pursued by a Satyr* (Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal), *Drunkenness of Silenus* (Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, Calais), and *Don Quixote* at the one held in 1850–1851. Self-taught as a painter in oil, Daumier struggled with the technical difficulties of the medium. His exhibited work was ignored by the critics. Among his unfinished projects of this time was *The Uprising* (The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.), a daring attempt to give monumental form to a modern political subject of dramatic urgency.

The Bonapartist coup d'état of 2 December 1851 abolished the parliamentary constitution and installed Louis-Napoleon as autocratic president,

shortly to be confirmed by plebiscite as emperor of the French (December 1852). During the struggles that preceded the fall of the Republic, Daumier drew fiercely polemical caricatures and created his most memorable sculpture, *Ratapail* (1851), the image of a Bonapartist bully of the type that terrorized the Parisian electorate on the eve of the coup. The strict censorship enforced by the imperial government once again limited Daumier to politically harmless social caricature for *Le Charivari*. During 1853–1857 he spent his holidays in Valmondois on the Oise in the company of his friend Daubigny and frequently visited Théodore Rousseau and Millet in Barbizon.

His lithographic imagery now assumed a larger, more painterly character, perhaps reflecting the influence of his friends. After 1853 he ceased to exhibit at the Salon but continued to paint privately. In 1860 he was dismissed from the staff of *Le Charivari*; his caricatures no longer amused the public. For his living, he turned to painting large, finished watercolors on modern subjects for which there was a demand on the art market. More privately, he continued to work in oil, a medium that he found difficult and practiced experimentally and cautiously, as an “amateur” wholly independent of the fashions of the Salon and the recipes of the Academy. In a broadly sketchlike technique he recorded observations from his everyday life: street entertainers, histrionics of the stage or the courts of law, railway travelers, artists at work, collectors rummaging in their portfolios. Caricature and comic effect, central to his works on paper, hardly appear in his paintings in oil. It seems as if, in his modesty, he considered humor appropriate for the popular media of communication but unsuited to the dignity of painting.

Granted a new contract by *Le Charivari* in 1864, he resumed his weekly lithographic chores. His eyesight was gradually failing. Needing the restorative quiet of the country, he extended his stays at Valmondois, where, in 1865, he rented a small house that, except for business stays in Paris, was to be his home for the remainder of his life. The government discreetly approached him in early 1870 with the offer of the cross of the Legion of Honor. Daumier quietly declined. Poorly paid and in constant financial straits, he continued to draw lithographs for the press and to paint in private. The great series of episodes from *Don Quixote*, be-

gun in 1850 and continued through the 1860s, may have been influenced, in part, by Gustave Doré’s (1832–1883) popular illustrations published in 1863.

The Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871) swiftly disposed of the empire of Napoleon III. During the siege of Paris, Daumier, who had been elected a member of the commission charged with the protection of the collections of the Louvre, was one of the artists who opposed Courbet’s proposal to destroy the column in the place Vendôme. Some of Daumier’s most powerful lithographs date from this time of war and civil strife; stark, tragic, grandiose in their appeal to humanity and common sense, they are his last works in this medium.

The final years of his life were darkened by poverty, illness, and growing blindness. In 1874 a gift from his friend Corot enabled him to buy the small house in Valmondois which he had been renting for the previous nine years. In 1877 he was granted a small government pension, and the following year an exhibition of his paintings, drawings, and sculptures was arranged under the patronage of Victor Hugo at the Paris gallery of Durand-Ruel. On 10 February 1879 Daumier died after a paralytic stroke. He left behind a large number of paintings in various states of incompleteness. When, about 1900, the demand for his work began to rise, many of these remainders, some badly deteriorated, were restored, finished, and supplied with “signatures,” making it difficult in some instances to determine Daumier’s half-effaced authentic part in them.

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1963.10.12 (1676)

The Beggars

c. 1843
Oil on fabric, 59.5 × 73.5 (23 1/2 × 29)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *b. Daumier*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a medium-weight fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins are missing. The paint has a complex structure. The bottom layer, revealed in the X-radiograph, contains images of two heads, oriented at a right angle to the overlying composition and of considerably larger scale than the heads in the final picture (fig. 1). Both heads face to the right. The topmost head is strongly modeled and seems to be in a state close to completion. The other, below and to the right of the first, appears to be more thinly and sketchily painted. Over this lowest layer, which is unrelated to the composition now visible, a smooth, rather thick white ground or isolating layer has been brushed. That composition is formed of three further paint layers. The first of these is applied thinly with very granular paints; it includes the signature that crosses over traction crackle in this layer. The paint in this lower layer shows considerable abrasions, especially in the area of the figure of the girl at the left. A second layer, consisting of smooth, creamy paint without granularity, has been applied selectively over this first. Finally, extensive smears and scumbles of retouch are found over areas of this second layer, particularly in the faces of the figures in the picture's right half. A thick, discolored varnish, probably a natural resin, covers the painting's surface.

Provenance: The artist; by inheritance to his wife, Marie-Alexandrine Daumier, Paris; (Durand-Ruel, New York); by whom sold 1892 to Peter A. B. Widener [1834–1915], Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; by exchange¹ April 1908 to (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold November 1908 to de Lagotellière, Paris. [Eugène?] Hirsch, Paris; (sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 7 December 1912, no. 17); purchased by Gaston Bernheim de Villiers [1870–1953], Paris, for his private collection. Julien Bessonneau, Angers, in 1914. Marcel Kapferer, Paris, by 1924; (Galerie Matthiesen, Berlin); sold by 1930 to Fritz Hess, Lucerne; (Hess sale, Cassirer-Fischer, Lucerne, 1 September 1931, no. 17, bought in or

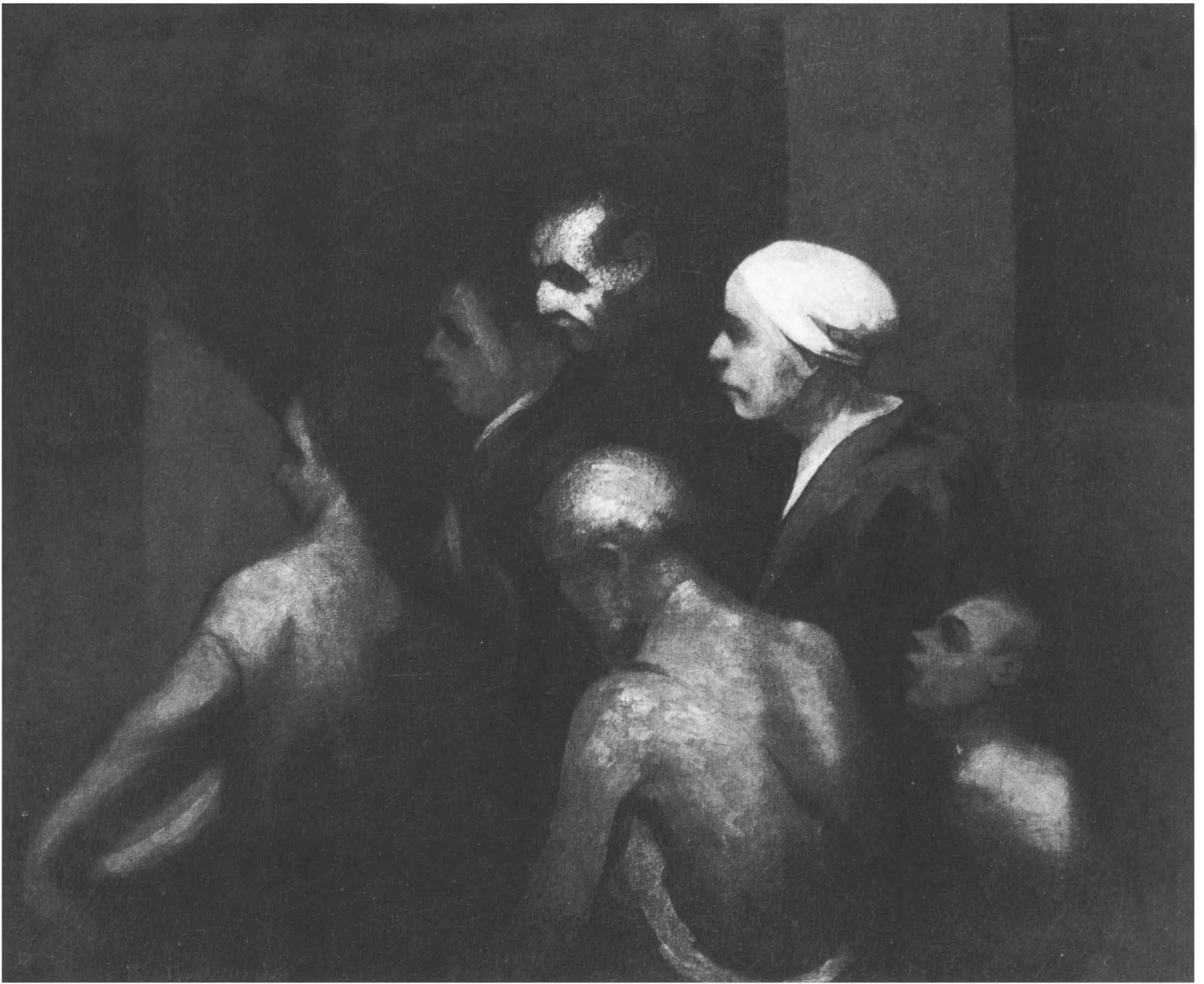
bought by Arthur Fischer of Galerie Fischer); (sale, Galerie Fischer, Lucerne, 7 September 1935, *St. Galler und Basler Privatbesitz, Sammlung B.*, no. 2343, bought in); sold October 1949 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: London, Grosvenor House, 1914, *Modern French Art*. Luxembourg, L'Hôtel de la Curiosité et des Beaux-Arts, 1924, *1^{re} Exposition de Collectionneurs*, no. 111. Paris, Paul Rosenberg, 1925, *Les Grandes Influences au dix-neuvième siècle*, no. 4. Berlin, Galerie Matthiesen, 1926, *Ausstellung Honoré Daumier*, no. 61, repro. MOMA, 1930, *Corot–Daumier*, no. 62, repro. Munich, Ludwigs Galerie, 1931, *Romantische Malerei in Deutschland und Frankreich*, no. 22. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1979, *Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting*, no. 35, repro.

SIX FIGURES, shown at half-length, all facing to the left, are seen standing clustered in a dark courtyard or alley, looking toward a faintly illuminated opening at the left, as if in expectation of a distribution of alms or food. A sturdily built young girl, carrying a round platter under her arm, stands nearest that opening. Next to her, in the immedi-

Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1963.10.12, turned vertically to show images of two heads





Honoré Daumier, *The Beggars*, 1963.10.12

ate foreground, stands an old man, his head bowed and his lean back bare, followed by a boy looking up into the light. Behind these figures, three others emerge from the darkness of the background, a young and an older man, followed at the right by a woman wearing a white cloth cap. Her sharply illuminated head dominates the scene.

Daumier's picture, painted on a reused canvas (fig. 1), has suffered extensive later restorations and retouchings, and in its present condition gives only an approximate impression of its appearance at the time when Daumier put his signature to it. The earliest available photograph of *The Beggars* (fig. 2), taken sometime before 1908,² already indicates passages that in style and quality can hardly be attributed to Daumier, particularly in the head of the boy at the lower right and in the faces of the two male figures of the background. Reproductions of the picture published in the course of the 1920s show no further alterations.³ In them, the head of the elderly woman wearing a white kerchief is still modeled in tonal gradations and lacks the chalky complexion, sharp features, and morose set of the mouth that are conspicuous in its present state. But photographs taken about 1931 indicate that these new changes had occurred by then, mainly affecting, besides the head and shoulders of the woman, the upturned face of the boy at the lower right.⁴ These final alterations, probably made in anticipation of the picture's sale in Lucerne in 1931, brought it to its present condition.

When the Daumier specialist, Karl Eric Maison, examined it in 1964, not long after its acquisition by the National Gallery, he noted the extensiveness of the alterations that the picture had undergone. He concluded that, though a genuine work, it had "suffered a great deal from bitumen and other damage and [was] in part extensively overpainted. Examination under a quartz lamp showed the figure of the girl on the left to be the best preserved detail in the painting."⁵ The picture, though signed, had evidently been abandoned by Daumier in a state of only partial completion. Repaintings and finishing touches, made after it left the possession of his widow, deeply damaged the picture. They disrupted its spatial composition⁶ by a harsh and incoherent highlighting of several of the heads and falsified its expression by introducing a note of bathos which, however uncharacteristic of

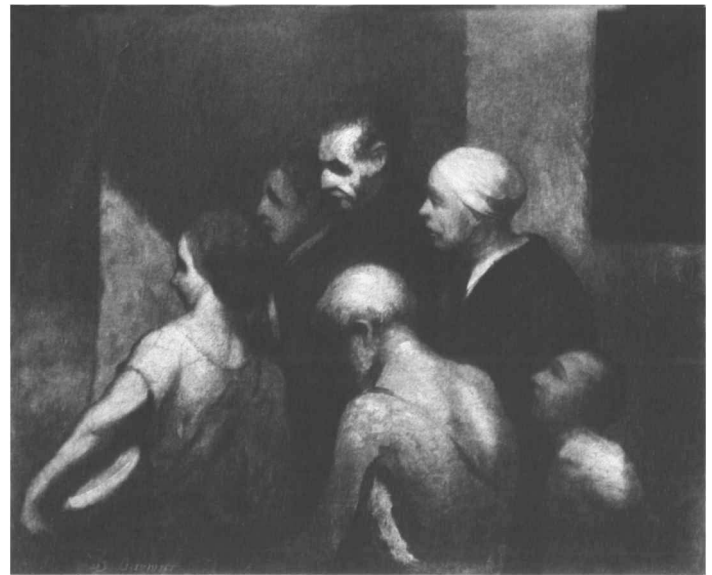


Fig. 2. photograph of *The Beggars*, taken before 1908, published in *Catalogue of Paintings Forming the Private Collection of P.A.B. Widener* (Paris, 1 February 1908), NGA archives

Daumier, may have contributed to the esteem that the picture enjoyed early in this century.⁷

The place of this mutilated canvas within Daumier's authentic work is indicated by its evident relationship to an illustrative design, *Les Mendians* (fig. 3), that he contributed to *La Grande Ville*, a book on the social condition of the various classes of the Parisian population, published in 1842-1843.⁸ Though somewhat differently composed, this design includes several elements, notably the beggar woman wearing a kerchief and the boy at her side, that figure prominently in the painting. It is likely

Fig. 3. Honoré Daumier, *Les Mendians*, published in *La Grande Ville; Nouveau Tableau de Paris, comique, critique et philosophique* (Paris, 1842-1843), Washington, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division



that this illustration and the painting in its original state, both dealing with a subject otherwise rare in Daumier's work,⁹ are of roughly the same date.

Notes

1. The picture was traded, in May 1908, to Knoedler & Co., New York, for "3 Van Dycks," according to a handwritten note on the plate reproducing the painting in the copy of the Widener catalogue in the NGA library's Archives section (Reference Librarian's Office).

2. *Catalogue of Paintings Forming the Private Collection of P. A. B. Widener*, Paris, Goupil & Co., 1 February 1908, Part 1, no. 17. A detail taken from this plate is reproduced in Maison 1968, 1: no. II-16, fig. 3.

3. See the plates in Fontainas (1923, pl. 13) and Fuchs (1927 and 1930, opp. 16), and in the catalogues of the exhibition of 1926 at the Galerie Matthiesen, Berlin (no. 61) and of 1930 at MOMA (no. 62).

4. An illustration in *ArtN* (11 July 1931): 13, referring to the forthcoming sale of the Fritz Hess collection, to be held in Lucerne on 1 September 1931, seems to be the earliest reproduction that shows the picture in its present state. This suggests that it received its final retouching sometime between the close of its exhibition in New York in November 1930 and the publication of this illustration in July of the following year. A detail of the picture in its present state, comparing it to an earlier photograph, is reproduced in Maison 1968, 1: no. II-16, fig. 3.

5. On 2 March 1964 K. E. Maison examined the picture with Perry B. Cott of the NGA and at first concluded that it was "not by Daumier. By another hand, painting upon a canvas that might have been begun by Daumier and then discarded by him" (memorandum by Perry B. Cott, dated 4 March 1964, in NGA curatorial files). When writing to John Walker of the NGA, on 18 April 1964 (NGA curatorial files), Maison no longer had doubts about the attribution to Daumier but emphasized the extensive overpainting that he had noted under the quartz lamp and on the X-ray film. He advised against including the picture in a planned exhibition of the Chester Dale bequest and noted that he had found no trace of it among the photographic records of the Durand-Ruel Archive. He subsequently admitted the picture to Part II of his catalogue of Daumier's work in which he discussed "Paintings with restorations so extensive that they may have decisively altered the appearance of part or the whole of a composition" (Maison 1968, 1: no. II-16).

6. Oliver Larkin, in a letter to John Walker of the NGA, dated 29 April 1964 (NGA curatorial files), noted his impression that the five figures in the picture's right half "have been remodelled by someone with a sharper touch, so that Daumier's easy transition from light to shadow, as one sees them in the girl at the left, have been destroyed. I imagine that the spatial relationships of the five retouched figures was [*sic*] more convincing before this happened."

7. The picture's description in the catalogue of the [Eugène?] Hirsch collection sale (Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 7 December 1912, no. 17) bears witness to its sentimental appeal at the time: "D'où viennent-ils? Que demandent-ils? Quel commun destin les a groupés, à cette heure tardive... grappe d'humanité malheureuse, au bord d'un seuil qu'ils regardent tous avec une triste résignation... Un sentiment d'un tragique poignant se dégage de cette oeuvre capitale et fait d'elle, en même temps qu'un superbe tableau, une page de pensée profondément humaine. Ainsi que Breughel peignant le cortège pitoyable des *Aveugles*, Daumier peignant les *Mendiants* a été, cette fois, plus que peintre: il est descendu en lui jusqu'aux sources vives de la Compassion."

8. Bouvy 1933, 2: no. 653. Adhémar (1954, 114, no. 18) was the first to recognize the relationship between this wood-engraved vignette (which he erroneously numbered "Bouvy 738") and the painting now at the NGA (which he mistakenly located in the Boijmans-Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam, where it never was). Adhémar based his dating of the painting to "about 1843" on its connection with the illustration in *La Grande Ville*.

9. Daumier had earlier drawn another, entirely different design for a vignette of beggars that was reproduced in a wood engraving in *Chronique de Paris*, published in 1835 (Bouvy 1933, 1: no. 57). Beggars otherwise do not appear in Daumier's work before the 1840s. Adhémar (1954, 114), remarking on the general rarity of this subject in paintings of the period, not merely in Daumier's work, noted that a picture entitled *Mendiants*, by Canon, was exhibited at the Salon of 1836 and that another of the subject, by Guerman Bohn, was shown in 1846 (now in the Toulouse Museum).

References

- 1888 Alexandre: pl. 28.
- 1908 *Catalogue of Paintings Forming the Private Collection of P. A. B. Widener*. Paris. Part I: *Modern Paintings*, no. 17, repro., as *Paupers Seeking Alms* (in some copies, the entry is numbered 32).
- 1914 Wood, Martin T. "The Grosvenor House Exhibition of Modern French Art." *International Studio* 54, no. 213: repro. 7.
- 1922 *Honoré Daumier*. The Phillips Publications, no. 2. New York: pl. 16 (mistakenly as *Saltimbanques*).
- 1923 Fontainas: pl. 13.
- 1923 Klossowski: 113, no. 291-A.
- 1924 *L'Amour de l'art*, no. 2: 51.
- 1927 Fuchs: 45, repro. opp. 16 (1930 ed.: same page and number).
- 1931 *ArtN* 29, no. 38 (11 July): repro. 13.
- 1931 *Bulletin de l'art ancien et moderne*, November: 438 (mention).
- 1935 *Beaux-Arts*, 13 September: repro. 6.
- 1935 *Bulletin de l'art ancien et moderne*, November: 367 (mention).
- 1938 Lassaigne: 167, no. 93, pl. 93.
- 1954 Adhémar: 114, no. 18, pl. 18.
- 1954 Schweicher, Curt. *Daumier*. London: pl. 44.

- 1965a Dale: 41, repro.
 1965 NGA: 37.
 1968 Maison: 1:191, no. II-16.
 1968 NGA: 30, repro.
 1972 Mandel: 97, no. III, repro.
 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
 1984 Walker: 437, no. 624, repro.
 1985 NGA: 114, repro.

1963.10.14 (1678)

Wandering Saltimbanques

1847–1850
 Oil on oak panel, 32.6 × 24.8 (12⁷/₈ × 9³/₄)
 Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

On back of panel: red wax seal, *Alexis Rouart*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a panel of vertically grained oak 0.7 cm thick. The ground, visible through transparent passages in the paint film and along the painting's edges, appears to be white. X-radiography fails to capture the image and hence to record whatever changes the artist may have introduced in the course of its development, suggesting that a pigment other than lead white (possibly zinc oxide) was used for its lighter areas. Infrared examination has not revealed any underdrawing. The composition is sketched in with dark transparent washes over which more opaque and generally lighter paint was applied. The face of the central figure is modeled by a thin dark wash over a warm, transparent underlayer. The faces of the other figures lack the final layer of defining lighter paint; that of the woman remains undefined as a mere layer of opaque brown, broadly shaped to the oval of a face. White paint, thicker and more roughly textured than the darker colors, has been brushed over the underlying dark glazes to silhouette the two main figures and to highlight the saltimbanque's blouse. This has sometimes been attributed to later retouching by the artist himself,¹ but examination by the NGA Painting Conservation Department indicates that the layer of white paint in the background and the main figure belongs to the original composition and precedes subsequent defining touches in darker colors in this figure and in parts of the background.² A moderately discolored natural resin varnish covers the picture surface. The painting is in good condition.

Provenance: Alexis Rouart, Paris, by 1901; probably by inheritance to Henri Rouart [1833–1912], Paris; (Galerie Etienne Bignou, Paris and New York); sold July 1933 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1878, *Exposition des peintures et dessins de H. Daumier*, no. 79, as *Paillasse*.³ Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1901, *Exposition Daumier*, no. 66, as *Déplacement de saltimbanques*. Paris, Galerie L. Dru, 18 May–11 June 1927, *Aquarelles et dessins de Daumier*, no. 26, as *Saltimbanque—Peinture*. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1980, *Picasso: The Saltimbanques*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1982, *Manet and Modern Paris*, no. 70, repro.

A FAMILY of saltimbanques, mendicant roadside performers, advances wearily along a city street, one side of which is bathed in what may be the light of late afternoon. The man wears the triple-peaked cap and the blouse with large pompom buttons that mark him as a *paillasse*, or clown. He carries under his right arm the rolled-up mat on which he has performed his act and, suspended from his left hand, a small cash box. His wife walks behind him holding the bass drum with which he has tried to attract an audience. At his left, their son, the child acrobat of the small troupe, carries on his head the chair that served the *paillasse* as pulpit in addressing the crowd. Indistinct, irregular, shadowy forms in the background at the right may represent distant passersby.

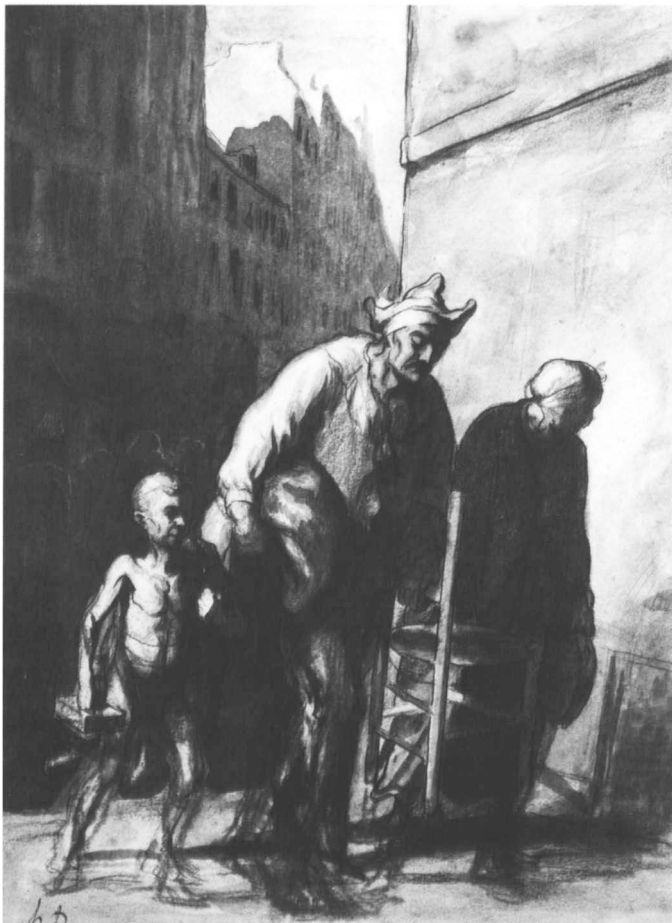
The range of colors that Daumier has used to describe the scene is particularly restrained. The small wedge of dark blue sky at the upper right is its most vivid color accent. A brownish yellow tonality pervades the picture, lightened by the warm white of the light-struck houses in the background and the grayish white of the clown's blouse, but in stark contrast to the blacks and dark browns in the woman's silhouette and the trousers of the clown.

Saltimbanques,⁴ the ambulatory comedians of the boulevards and suburban fairs, figure prominently, along with street musicians, sideshow barkers, strongmen, and mountebanks, in the scenes of popular entertainment that occasionally occupied Daumier from the early 1830s⁵ until the late 1860s. Dressed in a clown costume, the saltimbanque usually appears in a defiantly active pose—fighting to attract an audience, beating a drum, or, mounted on a chair, shouting and waving his arms at the indifferent crowd that drifts past him.⁶ In only two versions of the subject did Daumier show the saltimbanque in defeat, discouraged at having performed in vain, giving up his place on the pave-

ment and moving on wearily with his wife and child. The National Gallery's *Wandering Saltimbanques* is one of these, his only known painting in oil to treat the scene of withdrawal. For his second, more fully developed—though not entirely finished—version of this subject, the Wadsworth Atheneum's *Saltimbanques Changing Place* (fig. 1), Daumier chose the graphic medium of pen, chalk, tonal wash, and watercolor.⁷

Unlike the watercolor in Hartford, which has become one of the most frequently exhibited and published of Daumier's works, the National Gallery's painting has suffered comparative neglect, often mentioned but never seriously discussed in the Daumier literature before 1981. Since they share the same, uncommon subject, it would seem reasonable to think of the painting and the watercolor as having been executed at about the same time. Daumier's several large watercolors of saltimbanques, including the drawing in Hartford,

Fig. 1. Honoré Daumier, *The Saltimbanques Changing Place*, charcoal, crayon, pen, and ink, heightened with chalk and watercolor, 1865–1868, Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund, 1928.273



are generally grouped with the works of his later years, from about 1865 to 1868.⁸ The National Gallery's relatively little known painting was not separately considered in this connection; its date was assumed to be the same as that of the watercolors. But in 1968 Karl Eric Maison, in a brief entry in his catalogue of Daumier's work, somewhat tentatively assigned it the much earlier date of "1847–1850(?)," evidently for reasons of style which, however, he left unexplained.⁹ In 1981 Paula Harper published the first thorough discussion of the picture.¹⁰ She agreed with Maison on its earliness, but put its date back even further, placing it—as well as the drawing in Hartford that Maison had left undated—"about 1840."

In support of her proposal, she cited two lithographs by Victor Adam, *Pierre qui roule n'amasse pas de mousse* (fig. 2) and *La Parade* (fig. 3), both published in 1840, showing families of saltimbanques on the move. She saw in these lithographs, by an artist certainly known to Daumier, the earliest use of the motif of the *déplacement des saltimbanques* as a metaphor of the clown's social dislocation and the immediate models of Daumier's composition.¹¹ Adam's wandering saltimbanques do in fact resemble the corresponding groups in the National Gallery's painting and the drawing in Hartford in several details. It is not unlikely that his lithographs had some influence on Daumier's treatment of the subject. But this thematic and iconographic connection is insufficient to fix the dates of either the painting or the drawing, for both of which "about 1840" seems impossibly early, and it fails entirely to account for the striking differences in style and conception between the National Gallery's *Wandering Saltimbanques* and the *Departure of the Clowns* in Hartford. If Daumier took hints from Adam's lithographs of 1840, there is no reason why he could not have done this at some later time.

Maison's dating of *Wandering Saltimbanques* to 1847–1850, on the other hand, agrees with the evidence provided by paintings generally assigned to those years¹²—the earliest in which Daumier's work in oil assumed a recognizably personal style. The picture exhibits the characteristics of his very early paintings in the compactly monumental grouping of its figures, their slightly stiff bulkiness, and their rough modeling. Maison, commenting on its "somewhat awkward composition," nevertheless related it to the watercolor in Hartford,



Honoré Daumier, *Wandering Saltimbanques*, 1863.10.14

“where the same subject is treated much more freely.”¹³ But the National Gallery’s painting actually differs from the watercolor in nearly every respect of style and expression. The breadth of its handling obliterates the expressions in face and body that give emotional poignancy to the figures in the watercolor and stresses, instead, their physical bulk, making them loom large and massive as they closely confront the viewer in their slow advance. The family group in the Hartford watercolor, observed at a greater distance as it hurries down a city street, by contrast has the look of episodic genre. Despite their similarities of subject matter and detail, the painting in Washington and the watercolor in Hartford are probably separated by a gap of more than ten years, the former dating from no later than 1850, the latter belonging to a stylistically coherent series of saltimbanque scenes in watercolor that are plausibly assigned to the mid- or late 1860s.¹⁴

By that time, saltimbanques had become an anachronism in Paris, abandoned by their urban audience for more sophisticated attractions. The modernization of the city after 1850, with its sweeping transformation of the thoroughfares in which saltimbanques had traditionally set up their shows, was driving them to the suburbs or into the provinces, along with other relics of a more colorful past. An embarrassment to municipal reformers, who regarded them as beggars and vagrants, viewed with suspicion by the police, and hemmed in by regulations, street performers had become a subject for nostalgic recollection by the time Daumier painted them.¹⁵ Writers with a romantic interest in this vanishing tribe idealized them, in retrospect, as free spirits, vagabond troubadours in rebellion against authority, or as impoverished outsiders wasting a treasure of talent on the ungrateful public.¹⁶ In either role, they could be presented as exemplifying the plight of the poet and the artist in modern society.

Daumier gave the saltimbanque a more complex, ambiguous meaning. In political lithographs he often used him allegorically, as a personification of deceit and imposture, and occasionally lent the clown’s cap and checkered coat to the monarchs and statesmen of whom he particularly disapproved.¹⁷ In his paintings and watercolors, the saltimbanque appears as a figure from observed reality,¹⁸ most often as barker in the *parades* of car-

nival sideshows, beating his drum and haranguing the crowd, an aggressive pitchman for dubious spectacles.¹⁹ As such he became the ironic emblem of *Le Charivari*,²⁰ the satirical journal of which Daumier was the chief illustrator. His depictions of the clown’s frenzied courting of the crowd probably contain an element of wry self-caricature. In other images, the saltimbanque drummer stands alone before the show tent or on a street corner; a careworn figure appealing to an unseen and perhaps nonexistent audience, he expresses a tragic resignation, in utter contrast to the *parade* barker’s hectic activity.²¹ In still another version, the saltimbanque, accompanied by his tired wife and starveling children, beats his drum at the margins of a suburban fair and looks out to the distant drifting crowd that shows no inclination to come closer to watch his performance.²² The National Gallery’s *Wandering Saltimbanques* and the drawing in Hartford, finally, represent the ultimate retreat, the *déplacement* of the saltimbanque and his family, all hope lost.

It is this last image of the rejected, homeless performer that, despite its rarity, has chiefly influenced recent interpretations. Jean Adhémar argued that Daumier, a comic artist making a precarious living in an underrated and ill-rewarded profession, recognized himself in the saltimbanques’ struggle and ultimate defeat. “The clowns are figures that touch him. Old and tired, worn out from having worked too long to make others laugh... they surely refer to himself; he sees himself in these weary saltimbanques who have spent their lives amusing the public.”²³ In Adhémar’s opinion, Daumier may have received suggestions from his friend Baudelaire, whose prose poem “Le Vieux Saltimbanque” (1861) describes an encounter with a decrepit entertainer in whom the poet, with a shock, recognizes himself in his future old age.²⁴ More recently, Timothy J. Clark dismissed the National Gallery’s *Wandering Saltimbanques* as “a feeble picture: slapdash paint and a commonplace sadness. Clowns like these crowded the walls of the Salon.”²⁵ But Clark noted that, after this bad start, Daumier progressed in his later watercolors of saltimbanques to a proper appreciation of the essentially political nature of the subject, replacing the commonplace sad clown with more sharply observed victims of governmental oppression. In Clark’s political perspective, Daumier’s wandering saltimbanque is a man

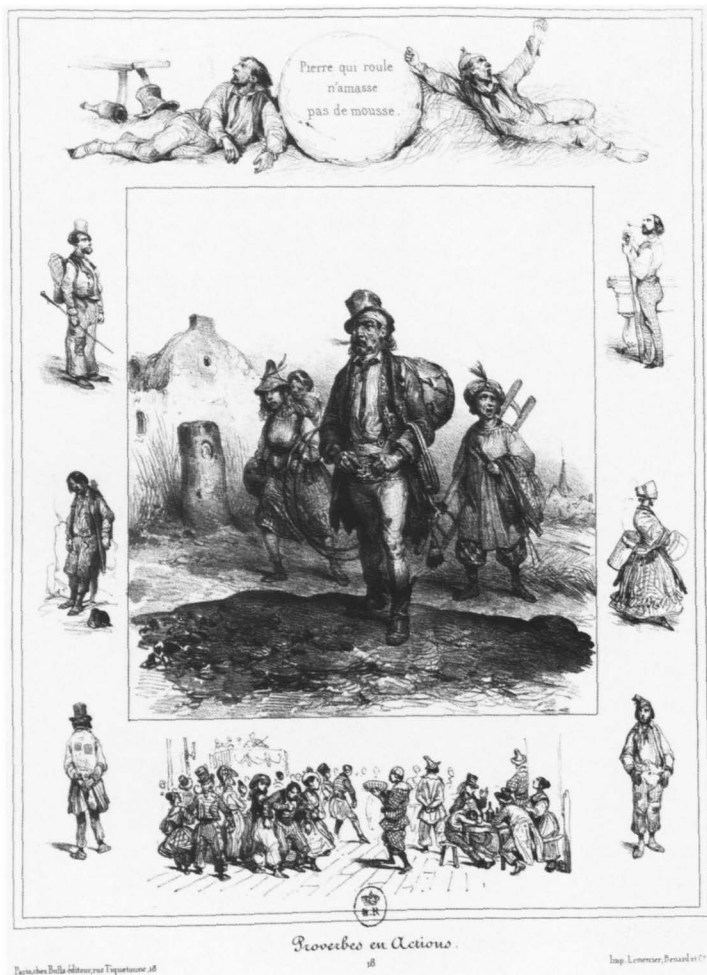


Fig. 2. Victor Adam, *Pierre qui roule n'amasse pas de mousse*, lithograph, published in *Proverbes en action* (Paris, 1840)

denied a place in the city and in society for being both artist and worker, “a mixture too dangerous to be allowed.” It was this mixture, Clark argues, that caused Daumier to adopt the subversive clown, “singer of Socialist ballads and seller of Communist broadsheets” as his “hero, and his central image of the artist.”²⁶

There is little in the National Gallery’s painting that would support so pointed an interpretation, as Clark evidently realized. It lacks both the descriptive specificity and the emotional pathos of the later watercolors, and in this respect seems closer to Victor Adam’s lithographs of 1840 that may have been among its sources. The painting was left in Daumier’s possession until the end of his life.²⁷ Unlike his large watercolors, carefully worked up, saleable performances, it remained a “sketch,” a private work, as did many of his oils. The question



Fig. 3. Victor Adam, *La Parade*, lithograph, published in *Musée pour rire* (Paris, 1840)

of whether it is no more than a rough start, an idea abandoned in mid-development, is difficult to answer in the face of Daumier’s changeable, experimental painting methods. The sketchlike appearance of many of his paintings is usually attributed to the special difficulty he is known to have encountered in finishing his paintings. But it is impossible to determine at what point Daumier considered his paintings complete, and therefore not unthinkable that some of his seemingly unfinished pictures, such as this one, may in fact have carried his intention as far as he wished.

Notes

1. Maison 1968, 1:65, no. I-25: “it seems very probable to me that the painting was not completed when Daumier originally worked on it, but that the artist himself at some later date added various details and im-

provements. These appear to include retouchings to the mountebank's face, cap, and dress and especially the white background."

2. According to Susanna Griswold of the NGA Painting Conservation Department (10 October 1994): "the heavy white paint that can be observed in the main figure as well as in the background is contemporary with the rest of the composition. Judging by the consistent brushwork throughout the white paint it can also be ascertained that [it] was applied in one sitting. Moreover, it was applied before much of the background and the figure was [*sic*] completed. Examination of the surface with the stereo-microscope reveals that adjoining paint overlaps the white paint throughout the main figure and the background. Specifically, the paint of the jacket of the main figure as well as the closure of the white shirt are painted over the completed white shirt. The same is true for the background: the blue and brown paint in the right upper corner, as well as much of the female figure, overlap the heavy white paint of the background."

3. The catalogue of this exhibition gives the dimensions of the picture shown under no. 79, *Paillasse*, as 32 × 25 cm, almost exactly those of the NGA's *Wandering Saltimbanques*. Maison (1968, 1: no. I-240) following Adhémar (1954, 130, no. 172) identified this with *Pierrot jouant de la mandoline* (Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur), which has different measurements (35 × 26.5) and does not represent a *paillasse*. Harper (1981, 111) rectified this confusion and demonstrated that no. 79 in the Durand-Ruel exhibition of 1878 was the painting now in Washington.

4. The term *saltimbanque* (from the Italian *saltimbanco*: bench jumper or mountebank) was loosely used in the early and mid-nineteenth century to designate a variety of street performers: clowns, acrobats, jugglers, quacks, card-trick men, and the advertisers of freak shows. In performance, saltimbanques worked in teams. The *paillasse*, a subaltern figure identified by his clown costume, performed acrobatic stunts and acted in the *parades*, improvised farces staged gratis outside the show tent to advertise the money-making attractions within. In these burlesque pantomimes, performed by traditional comic characters, the *paillasse* played the underdog, victimized by the other actors. Daumier's saltimbanques are in fact *paillasses*.

5. Daumier's earliest use of a saltimbanque figure occurs in the lithograph *Baissez le rideau, la farce est jouée*, published in *La Caricature*, 11 September 1834 (Delteil 86).

6. Turbulent *parades* initially figured in Daumier's graphic advertisements for *Le Charivari*, such as the pen lithograph *La Parade* published in that journal on 6 January 1839 (Delteil 554). In the 1860s they provided the dramatic framework for many of his saltimbanque scenes (Maison 1968, 1: nos. I-126 and I-189; 2: nos. 523-524, 544-547, 551-556). Individual saltimbanque drummers advertising sideshows are the subject of a series of watercolors (Maison 1968, 2: nos. 533-539).

7. Maison 1968, 2: nos. 550 and the related drawings 548-549.

8. In their monographs on Daumier drawings, Jean Adhémar and Claude Roger-Marx (*Honoré Daumier, dessins et aquarelles* [Paris, 1954]) and Maison (*Daumier Drawings* [New York and London, 1960]) agreed in dating Daumier's large watercolors of saltimbanques to the years 1866-1868. In his subsequent general catalogue of Daumier's work, Maison (1968, vol. 2) refrained from putting dates on any of the watercolors and drawings.

9. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-25, pl. 120. In his discussion of the drawing in Hartford, Maison (1968, 2: no. 550) makes no mention of its date. But in his earlier monograph on Daumier drawings (1960, 23, no. 77) he had included it among "the Fair Ground subjects which Daumier created between 1865 and 1870," agreeing with Adhémar who had previously given this drawing the slightly differing dates of "about 1866" (Adhémar 1954, 129, pl. 158) and "1867" (Adhémar and Roger-Marx 1954, 29, pl. 49).

10. Harper 1981, 101-107, pl. 30.

11. Harper 1981, 104-109, pls. 32 and 33. Francis Haskell ("The Sad Clown: Some Notes on a Nineteenth-Century Myth," in Ulrich Finke, ed., *French 19th-Century Painting and Literature* [Manchester, 1972], 13) first drew attention to one of Adam's lithographs as an example of the probable contemporary sources of Daumier's treatment of the wandering saltimbanques, discounting at the same time the likelihood of a connection with the tradition of Watteau's *Départ des comédiens italiens* and *Gilles*.

12. Particularly *Le Baiser* (Maison 1968, 1: no. I-6, "1845-1847"), *Oedipus and the Shepherd* (Maison 1: no. I-7, "1846-1847"), *Femme et enfant* (Maison 1: no. I-9, "1845-1848"), *Au bord de l'eau* (Maison 1: no. I-11, "1847"), *Le Meunier, son fils, et l'âne* (Maison 1: no. I-23, "1848-1849"), and *Sainte Madeleine* (Maison 1: no. I-29, "1849-1850").

13. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-25.

14. See Adhémar 1954, 12; Maison 1960, 11; and Larkin 1966, 189.

15. Victor Fournel, *Les Spectacles populaires et les artistes des rues* (Paris, 1863), 394, the most popular of the urban *parades*, those on the boulevard du Temple, were already in decline "plusieurs années avant la fin de la Restauration," in other words, before 1830. Maurice Alhoy, in "La Parade" (*Le Musée pour rire* 3 [1840]: no. 144), recalled the "true *parades*" of former times and mourned the disappearance of this popular tradition; see also Gérard de Nerval, "Le Boulevard du Temple. Autrefois et aujourd'hui," *L'Artiste*, 17 March, 3 May, 12 May 1844; and Théophile Gautier, *Histoire de l'art dramatique en France depuis vingt-cinq ans* (Paris, 1858-1859), 3:263. The rebuilding of the boulevard du Temple in 1862, under the direction of Eugène-Georges Haussmann, prefect of the *département* of the Seine, spelled the end of the street entertainments and ambulatory trades in that quarter (Henri Beaulieu, *Les Théâtres du boulevard du Crime* [Paris, 1905], 179).

16. See Théodore de Banville, *Pauvres Saltimbanques* (Paris, 1853), for a sentimental account of wandering saltimbanques as unrewarded performers (5) and as

“symbols of the lives of artists” (13). Jean Starobinski, in *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque* (Geneva, 1970), surveys the use of the clown figure in nineteenth-century literature and art as a symbol of the alienation of painters and poets. Haskell 1972 traces the development of this sentimental stereotype in nineteenth-century literature from earlier traditions of the commedia dell'arte, via its revival in popular pantomime most famously represented by the performances at the Funambules of the mime Jean-Gaspard Deburau (1796–1846) and by the writings of Jules Janin, Jules-Antoine Champfleury, and Théophile Gautier, to its final evolution into a poetic and pictorial motif with philosophical overtones that enjoyed a long vogue in the art and literature of the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. With this development, Daumier's work had little in common.

17. Thus King Louis-Philippe appears in the costume of a saltimbanque in the lithograph *Baissez le rideau, la farce est jouée* (*La Caricature* [11 September 1834]; Delteil 86), and the politician Adolphe Thiers, similarly attired, figures as a *paillasse* in another, with the legend “Seul costume réellement approprié à ce personnage” (*Le Charivari* [6 May 1850]; Delteil 2006).

18. Haskell 1972, 11, draws the distinction between Daumier's earth-bound street performers and the poetic fiction of the “sad clown” elaborated by nineteenth-century writers and actors. Though Daumier was undoubtedly familiar with the figure of the “sad clown” as popularized by Jean-Gaspar Deburau (1796–1846) and other famous mimes of the time, he made no use of this sentimental stereotype. His saltimbanques are not afflicted by a vague, metaphysical melancholy, Haskell observes, but have prosaically material reasons for sadness in their failure to attract a public and their consequent poverty.

19. As in the paintings of *parades* (Maison 1968, 1: nos. I-126 and I-189) and the corresponding drawings and watercolors (Maison 1968, 2: nos. 523–524, 551–556).

20. In the title vignette for *Le Charivari* drawn by Grandville in 1833, a design often wrongly attributed to Daumier (Bouvy 1933, 1: no. 6), the contributors to the journal, including Daumier, present themselves as a *parade* performed by mountebank musicians. The same idea was used by Daumier himself in a lithographic advertisement for *Le Charivari*, published in its pages on 6 January 1839 (Delteil 554).

21. The chief works in this group are the several watercolors of *The Sideshow*, known also under the somewhat misleading title of *La Parade*, in the Glasgow Art Gallery (Maison 2: no. 533), in the British Museum (Maison 2: no. 539), and in a private collection (Maison 2: no. 534). To this last drawing, known to him through a reproduction (in *L'Art* 13 [1878]: opp. 30), Henry James devoted a passage in his essay “Honoré Daumier” (1893): “The ‘Saltimbanques’ . . . is a page of tragedy, the finest of a cruel series. . . . It exhibits a pair of lean, hungry mountebanks, a clown and a harlequin beating the drum and trying a comic attitude, to attract

the crowd at a fair, to a poor booth in front of which a painted canvas, offering to view a simpering fat woman, is suspended. But the crowd doesn't come, and the battered tumblers, with their furrowed cheeks, go through their pranks in the void. The whole thing is symbolic and full of grimness, imagination, and pity” (reprinted in *The Painter's Eye* [Cambridge, Mass., 1956], 243).

22. The watercolor *Les Saltimbanques*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (Maison 2: no. 542), and related drawings (nos. 540–541, 543). In the earliest interpretation ever attempted of one of Daumier's saltimbanque scenes, Arsène Alexandre (1888, 348–349) described this drawing as expressing “mankind's existential anxiety in the face of inexorable suffering” and grouped it, together with such compositions as the *Fugitives* and *Emigrants*, among Daumier's epic subjects.

23. Adhémar 1954, 63. Léon Rosenthal (*Daumier* [Paris, 1912], 85) had earlier expressed a similar notion, stressing Daumier's “profonde pitié pour les banquistes et les pitres, dont la destinée a une secrète analogie avec la sienne.”

24. Baudelaire, “Le Vieux Saltimbanque,” 14 in *Le Spleen de Paris, Poèmes en prose*, first published in *Revue fantaisiste*, 1 November 1861.

25. Clark 1973, 119. “Clowns like these” were, in fact, a rare sight in the Salons of the 1840s–1860s, as their catalogues show (see Harper 1981, 107, 126). The Salons of 1846 and 1847 included no pictures of saltimbanques; that of 1848 showed one (in a total of 4,598 exhibits); two were shown in 1849 (out of 2,095); none in 1850. A single *Paillasse* figured in the Salon of 1852, and among the 2,715 paintings at the Salon of 1857 there was only a *Saltimbanque au moyen-âge*, in addition to Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Sortie du bal masqué* (the famous *Duel after the Masked Ball*), neither one of them comparable to Daumier's saltimbanque imagery. The Salons of the 1860s included one saltimbanque picture in 1861, one in 1863, four in 1865, three in 1868, and one in 1869.

26. Clark 1973, 120, 122.

27. Paris 1878, no. 79, *Paillasse*, notes that the picture “appartient à M. H. Daumier.”

References

- 1908 Klossowski: 15, no. 205, pl. 52.
 1923 Klossowski: 104, no. 205, repro. 87.
 1927 Fuchs: 50, no. 123a (1930 ed., same page and number).
 1965 NGA: 37.
 1965a Dale: 42, repro.
 1968 Maison: 1:65, no. 25, pl. 120.
 1968 NGA: 30, repro.
 1970 Starobinski, Jean. *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque*. Geneva: repro. 80.
 1972 Mandel: 90, no. 31, pl. X.
 1973 Clark: 119.
 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
 1981 Harper: 101–107, pl. 30.
 1985 NGA: 114, repro.

1987–1988 Eitner: 2:125, pl. 216.
1992 NGA: 184, repro.
1993 Ives, Stuffmann, and Sonnabend (see Biography): 222, fig. 132.

1963.10.13 (1677)

French Theater

c. 1856

Oil on mahogany panel, 25.9 × 35 (10 1/4 × 13 3/4)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

Along right edge: *b. Daumier*

Technical Notes: The support of the painting is a commercially prepared mahogany panel, oriented horizontally. Thin strips of wood, about 0.5 cm in width, are tacked to the side and bottom edges of the panel, which also carries, on its back, several labels inscribed with inventory or customs numbers. An even white ground extends to the edges of the panel. Over this ground, the image is executed in a fluid paint that has sufficient body to retain a surface texture throughout much of the composition. Finishing touches in a thin, brown-black paint are drawn somewhat calligraphically over parts of the main paint layer to strengthen contours or to accentuate such details as eyes.

The X-radiograph shows many reworkings of the composition (fig. 1).¹ Some of these also appear as ridges in the paint surface that do not correspond to current contours. The heads of the child and of the woman at the left have been extensively changed in the process of execution. The child's head was positioned farther to the left at some stage, and traces of the previous profile of the woman's head can be seen to the right of the present one. The head of the man in the center was blocked in with a smooth contour slightly to the left of his pre-

sent profile. A series of vertical zigzag strokes occupied most of the lower right corner of the panel, which now contains the shoulder and hat of the male figure and the figure of the woman at the right. The painting is in good condition² but covered by a thick, grayed varnish that dulls its colors (1994).

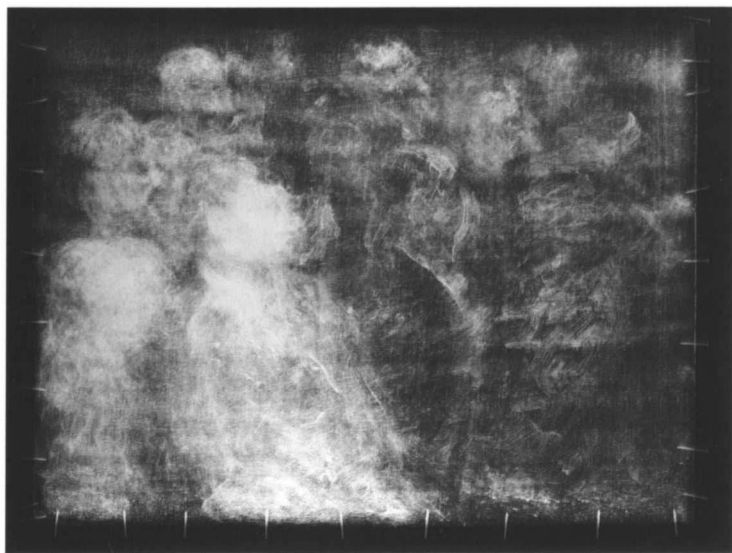
Provenance: Verdier, Paris, by 1878. Egisto Fabbri, Florence, by 1901. Henri Rouart [1833–1912], Paris; (his sale, Galerie Manzi-Joyant, Paris, 9 December 1912, no. 164, as *Un Coin de théâtre*); purchased by (Galerie Heinrich Thannhäuser, Munich), where it remained until at least 1916. Werner Feuz, Bern, by 1926. (Alex. Reid and Lefevre, Ltd., Glasgow); on joint account 1927 with (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold 1930 by (Alex. Reid and Lefevre, Ltd., Glasgow) to (Raphael Gérard, Paris); sold May 1930 to (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); on joint account with (Galerie Etienne Bignou, Paris and New York); sold March 1933 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1878, *Exposition des peintures et dessins de H. Daumier*, no. 64, as *Un Fauteuil d'orchestre*. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1901, *Exposition Daumier*, no. 39, as *Au théâtre*. Berlin, Galerie Thannhäuser, 1926, *Ausstellung Honoré Daumier, 1808–1879*, no. 4. London, Alex. Reid and Lefevre, 1927, *Paintings and Drawings by Honoré Daumier*, no. 4. Berlin, Galerie Thannhäuser, 1927, *Erste Sonderausstellung in Berlin*, no. 62, repro. Delaware, Wilmington Society of Fine Arts, 2–16 February 1931, and Chicago, M. Knoedler & Co., 24 February–14 March 1931, *A Century of French Painting: An Exhibition of French Painting*, no. 8. Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, 1934, *Daumier*, no. 33, repro. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

FOURTEEN SPECTATORS are seated closely grouped in the orchestra stall of a theater. All faces are turned to the right, toward the unseen but apparently proximate stage which sheds its light on them. A family group occupies the front row: at the left, a small boy, perhaps ten years old, leans forward as if to see better; next to him, his mother, formally dressed in black, fingers a lorgnette or folded fan; at her side, the massive form of her bald, mustachioed husband, silk hat on his lap, a cane between his knees; and to his left, the figure of a slender young woman, evidently their daughter, leaning against his shoulder. Behind them appear the heads of nine further spectators in crowded rows, all straining to catch sight of the stage.

The execution of the small panel shows much experimental variety. The figure of the boy at the

Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1963.10.13





Honoré Daumier, *French Theater*, 1963.10.13

left is defined by strong contours and tonal washes, giving it a compactly sculptural modeling. The two central figures in the foreground, by contrast, are painted with blended touches of the pointed brush and are of richly painterly effect. The remaining figures, notably that of the young woman at the right, are broadly sketched with rapid strokes of light color brushed over the dark ground. The picture's pervasive tone is a somber gray, relieved by white accents in the shirtfronts, the muted flesh colors of the faces, and the dark red of the bench.

At its first exhibition in 1878, still in Daumier's lifetime, the painting was titled as *Un Fauteuil d'orchestre* (*An Orchestra Stall*),³ which may well be the title the artist meant to give this picture. Later it was named variously *Au théâtre* (1901),⁴ *Les Fauteuils d'orchestre au Théâtre-Français* (1927),⁵ and *At the Comédie-Française* (1929),⁶ the last two suggesting, without any foundation, that the scene was meant to be located in a particular theater, the Théâtre-Français (formerly the Comédie-Française), sanctuary of French classical drama. The label that the picture has borne since 1963, *French Theater*, somewhat ambiguously echoes that misnomer.

The world of the theater played an important role in Daumier's life and work.⁷ He was familiar with the many theaters of Paris and had a sure sense of their particular atmospheres and their variegated attractions for different publics, from the Opéra's showy opulence and the conservative decorum of the Théâtre-Français, down to the

rowdiness of the popular playhouses on the boulevards. Their vivid exhibition of class divisions made theaters the ideal observation posts for painters of the social scene. Fairly early in Daumier's career, his attention began to shift from the distant spectacle on the stage to the jostling life that surrounded him in the audiences. At first in his lithographs, later in paintings and watercolors, he caught the reflection of the footlights in the faces of spectators and recorded their fluctuating expressions of suspenseful attention, anxiety, boredom, or hilarity. But it was the public's social physiognomy, the picturesque variety of its self-presentation, that most interested and amused him. Close-up studies of theater audiences first appeared, occasionally, among his wood-engraved designs⁸ and lithographic caricatures⁹ of the 1830s and 1840s. Their number greatly increased during the 1850s and 1860s, primarily in his lithographic work for the popular press,¹⁰ but they also began to play a role at this time in his work of a more personal kind, especially in the series of watercolors that he drew for sale in the mid-1860s.¹¹

In Daumier's even more private oil paintings theater audiences appeared rather less frequently: only eight finished oils or oil sketches of this subject have come to light.¹² Like the corresponding lithographs, they present these scenes in two distinct versions. In the first, represented by four paintings¹³ and the majority of the lithographs, the view is taken from within the audience; the spectators, seen in back view or lost profile, look and



Fig. 2. Honoré Daumier, *The Theater Box*, oil on panel, 1854-1857, Baltimore, The Maryland Institute, on permanent loan to The Walters Art Gallery, 37.1988

often gesticulate toward the stage, which is visible in the distance. In the other version, exemplified by the National Gallery's painting, the view is directed at the spectators: Daumier, turning his back to the stage, closely faces the occupants of the loges, galleries, or orchestra seats. Three of his oils,¹⁴ many of his lithographs,¹⁵ and nearly all of his watercolors of theater audiences take this view, concentrating on the physiognomies and facial expressions of the spectators.

The National Gallery's *French Theater* has a close counterpart in *The Theater Box* at the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (fig. 2),¹⁶ a painting that resembles it not only in subject matter but in format and style as well. Both present family groups seated in a loge or stall shown in nearly frontal view, their faces turned toward the right in the picture in Washington, toward the left in that in Baltimore. Both paintings are on panel, and so similar in size that it would be tempting to regard them as pendants, were it not for differences in the scale of the figures and the density of their placement. But both are clearly variants of a single idea and must have been conceived at about the same time. Because of its correspondence to a lithograph published in 1856 (fig. 3),¹⁷ the picture in Baltimore has been plausibly dated to about that year which, given the evident relationship between the two panels, is also likely to be the approximate date of the picture at the National Gallery.¹⁸

In the print media, the tradition of the audience portrait had a history that went back at least to Hogarth's famous *Laughing Audience* of 1733,¹⁹ a work that Daumier may have known. In his own time, humorous characterizations of the different theater audiences of Paris had become a staple of the illustrated press. J.-J. Grandville (1803–1847), Eugène Lami (1800–1890), Gavarni (1804–1866), and Bertall (1820–1882)²⁰ were among the more prominent of his contemporaries who used such subjects in their lithographs or wood engravings for their comical effect or as occasions for mild social satire. A more searching exploration of the class distinctions exhibited by Parisian theater audiences in midcentury was attempted by Gustave Doré in two lithographic suites, *Les Différents Publics de Paris* and *La Ménagerie parisienne*, both published in 1854 (fig. 4).²¹ These albums, issued by one of Daumier's own publishers and undoubtedly well known to him, belonged to the



Fig. 3. Honoré Daumier, "Contemplation devant le vaisseau de l'Opéra," lithograph, published in *Le Charivari* (31 July 1856)

highly popular genre of *physiologies*, collections of semiserious literary or pictorial portraits of different segments of Parisian society, in this instance the spectators typically to be found at theatrical entertainments of varying degrees of social prestige. Doré drew the facial types and expressions of different classes of theatergoers, studied their modish oddities of dress, coiffure, and beard, and detailed their affectations and vulgarities with humorous exaggeration, but in such sharp detail that his lithographs can still serve as social documents. It is possible that they had some influence on Daumier's own lithographic work of the period, though his comic genius, rooted in profound hu-

Fig. 4. Gustave Doré, "Folies nouvelles," lithograph, published in *Les Différents Publics de Paris* (Paris, 1854)



man sympathy, had little in common with Doré's smart wit.

Unlike his lithographs of similar subjects, Daumier's *French Theater* carries no comical charge and attempts no satire. Together with its close relative in Baltimore (see fig. 2), it stands out among his paintings of theater audiences, and indeed among his work as a whole, by its reticence. It does not specify a particular theater, either by its setting or its cast of characters; the presence of women and children merely identifies it as a place of popular but respectable entertainment, though probably not one of the more socially brilliant, such as the Opéra, or intellectually demanding, such as the Théâtre-Français. Their occupancy of orchestra stalls and their somewhat formal but not fashionable attire mark the spectators as belonging to that most unpicturesque of social groups, the comfortable middle class. Devoid of the expressive vehemence of Daumier's paintings of working-class audiences, such as *Le Drame* (Neue Pinakothek, Munich)²² or *The Penny Gallery* (Bührle Foundation, Zurich),²³ the National Gallery's *French Theater* also lacks the sarcasm of his lithographic caricatures, and even the gentler humor of his watercolors of the theater. The bourgeois who are its subjects are presented without the comical exaggerations by which he usually stigmatized them. Appropriately and fairly plainly dressed, they are shown following the action on the stage with quiet attention. Though taken from his imagination, rather than direct observation, no less than his more aggressively satirical inventions, they are cast as individuals, rather than as stereotypes of their class. Presented without comment, their appearance is not calculated to awaken social or psychological preconceptions, nor does it suggest any disparagement on Daumier's part.

What prompted his restraint can only be guessed. Daumier in the late 1850s was beginning to devote more of his time to his private painting. Tiring of his public role as a graphic humorist for the periodical press, he sought to free himself from the constant obligation to amuse. In pursuing his more personal painterly interests, he attempted to achieve a form of realism that would do justice to the ordinary, even banal aspects of humanity, and to this end was willing, on occasion, to renounce the dramatic energy and comic exuberance that were his particular strength. The National Gal-

lery's *French Theater*, together with the *Theater Box* in Baltimore, exemplifies a vein of unassuming realism in his work that shows him capable of restraint, even when dealing with socially sensitive subjects.

Notes

1. Maison, who first published this radiograph (1968, 1:28, fig. 18), commented that it was "a typical example of X-ray photographs of a well-preserved panel painting by Daumier."

2. Maison (1968, 1:136): "a picture in excellent condition, with no more than negligible restorations of cracks in the hands and in some of the faces."

3. Paris, Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1878, no. 64.

4. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1901, no. 39.

5. London, Alex. Reid and Lefevre, 1927, no. 4.

6. Bertram 1929, pl. VII.

7. On Daumier's frequenting the theater and observing its audiences, see Alexandre 1888, 163–171; Larkin 1966, 51–57, 124–129, 130–133, 150–151. On Daumier's free entries at the Opéra Comique, see the account by his friend Théodore de Banville, republished in Courthion 1945, 154–159. Jean Cherpin (*Daumier et le théâtre* [Aix-en-Provence, 1978], 39) makes the highly improbable claim that Daumier did not actually visit theaters in 1830–1850, pointing to what he considers the rarity of Daumier's scenes of the theater from that period: "barely 30 lithographs among c. 2000." He notes an increase of these subjects from 1848 onward, but believes that Daumier only began to visit playhouses frequently about 1852, when the number of his lithographs of theater audiences markedly increased.

8. The earliest such subjects are to be found among the wood engravings after designs by Daumier: *Théâtre des Funambules*, 1836 (Bouvy 82); *Un Jour de première représentation*, 1842 (Bouvy 673).

9. Theater audiences first appeared in Daumier's lithographs in the mid-1840s, beginning with *Une Maîtresse à l'Opéra*, 1845 (Delteil 1149) and *A la porte Saint-Martin*, 1846 (Delteil 1171).

10. The type of audience picture showing the spectators in close frontal view, seated in a loge, orchestra stall, or in the parterre, took definite shape in Daumier's lithographs of the years 1848–1855. Its development can be traced from the lithograph *Le Cinquième Acte à la Gaité*, 1848 (Delteil 1674), to *Physiognomie de spectateurs de la Porte St.-Martin*, 1852 (Delteil 2274), *Le Vaudeville et le drame*, 1855 (Delteil 2719), and *En contemplation*, 1857 (Delteil 2806). It continued, little changed, in lithographs of the 1860s, such as *Les Spectateurs de l'orchestre*, 1864 (Delteil 3262); *On dit que les Parisiens . . .*, 1864 (Delteil 3263); *Le Quatrième Acte d'un drame intéressant*, 1866 (Delteil 3407); and *Décadence du drame en 1866*, 1866 (Delteil 3478).

11. See particularly *L'Entr'acte*, Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur (Maison 1968, 2: no. 500); *Pendant l'entr'acte à la Comédie-Française*, location unknown (Mai-

son 2: no. 501); *Les Spectateurs*, Walter C. Baker, New York (Maison 2: no. 503); *Fauteuil d'orchestre*, lost (Maison 2: no. 505). All the more finished watercolors show rows of orchestra seats or, in one instance (Maison 2: no. 503), an orchestra stall, in very nearly frontal view, occupied by exclusively male audiences. It is a fact perhaps worth noting that in his oil paintings of theater audiences, Daumier nearly always chose a different view of the audience from that which he used in his watercolors and in many lithographs of the subject. In only one of the painted versions of the subject, *Au théâtre: les six spectateurs* (Maison 1: no. I-195), did he show male spectators seated in rows of orchestra seats. In his other paintings, he placed the audience either in the cheap seats of the upper galleries, as in the Zurich *Au poulailler* (Maison 2: no. 46) and the Munich *Le Drame* (Maison 1: no. I-142), or in the privileged loges and orchestra stalls reserved for a more decorous and better-dressed public, generally including women, as in the painting at the National Gallery.

12. They are a) *Au poulailler (Le Spectacle gratis)*, Bührlé Foundation, Zurich (Maison 1968, 1: no. II-46), a much retouched, early work, dating from about 1843-1845; b) *The Theater Box (La Loge)*, The Maryland Institute, on permanent loan to the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (Maison 1: I-72), datable about 1856; c) *Spectators*, Bridgestone Museum, Tokyo (Maison 1: I-104), dated by Maison to 1856-1860; d) *Le Drame*, Neue Pinakothek, Munich (Maison 1: I-142), generally dated to about 1860 (and a much repainted sketch for this picture, now unlocated, Maison 1: II-45); e) *French Theater*, NGA (Maison 1: I-158), dated by Maison to "about 1863," but in the opinion of the author of the present catalogue closer to 1856; f) *Fauteuils d'orchestre*, private collection, Cincinnati (Maison 1: I-187), dated by Maison to 1864-1867; g) *Une Loge de théâtre*, collection of the late Robert von Hirsch, Basel (Maison 1: I-188), dated by Maison to 1864-1867; h) *Au théâtre: les six spectateurs*, formerly Nathan Cummings collection, Chicago (Maison 1: I-195), dated by Maison to 1865-1867.

13. The paintings c, d, f, and g in note 12 above.

14. The paintings b, e, and h in note 12 above.

15. See the lithographs Delteil 1674 (1848), 2274 (1852), 2719 (1855), 2806 (1856), 3262 (1864), 3263 (1864), 3407 (1866), and 3478 (1866).

16. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-72, pl. 123.

17. The lithograph, *Contemplation devant le vaisseau de l'Opéra*, Delteil 2806, published in *Le Charivari* on 31 July 1856.

18. Acknowledging its resemblance to the lithograph Delteil 2806 of 1856, Maison (1968, 1: no. I-72) assigned the date of "1854-1857" to the painting in Baltimore but dated the NGA's closely related picture to "about 1863" (Maison I-158), without explaining why there should be a gap of nearly ten years between them.

19. Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth's Graphic Works*, 2 vols. (New Haven, 1970), 2: no. 130, pl. 130.

20. An early, nonhumorous example of the genre is the painting by Louis Boilly, *L'Effet du mélodrame*, c. 1830 (Musée Lambinet, Versailles). Among J.-J. Grandville's

(Jean-Ignace-Isidore Gérard) many studies of spectators in theater loges are the drawings *Premières Loges*, c. 1828, and *Une Loge de théâtre*, c. 1832, both in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nancy; his use of them for comical effect is exemplified by his illustration to *Un Soir à l'Opéra* (in *Petites Misères de la vie humaine* [Paris, 1843], opp. 94). See also Lami's engravings of opera and theater boxes (in Jules Janin, *Un Hiver à Paris* [Paris, 1843], 160 and opp. 167, 217); Gavarni's (Guillaume-Sulpice Chevalier) *Lionne dans sa loge* (in *Le Diable à Paris* [Paris, 1845], 2: following 10); Bertall's (Vicomte Albert d'Arnoux) *Vue générale d'un rang de loges à l'Opéra, le soir de la visite des anglais (Journal pour rire 2, no. 64 [April 1849]: 2)*. Closer in date to Daumier's paintings is the series of caricatures, published in *Petit Journal pour rire* during 1854, of social types to be found in the galleries or boxes of theaters, among them (no. 43) *Famille d'avant scène*, by Gustave Doré; (no. 110) *Le Soir aux Folies-Nouvelles*, by Riou; (no. 140) *Le Demi-monde*, by Damourette; (no. 159) *Au théâtre*, by Riou; and (no. 181) *Au théâtre*, by "Fine Mouche."

21. Doré's designs were lithographed by Vayron and appeared in two separate albums. *Les Différents Publics de Paris* was published at the Bureau du Journal amusant, Paris, and *La Ménagerie parisienne*, at the Bureau du Journal pour rire, also in Paris; see Gabriele Forberg, *Gustave Doré, das graphische Werk* (Munich, 1975), 2: 1176-1185, 1186-1195.

22. Maison 1968, 1: I-142.

23. Maison 1968, 1: II-46.

References

- 1888 Alexandre: 375 ("Un Fauteuil d'orchestre, 26-35; à M. Verdier").
 1908 Klossowski: 8, no. 88, pl. 42.
 1923 Klossowski: 93, erroneously listed twice, under both nos. 85 and 88, pl. 58.
 1923 Fontainas: pl. 26.
 1927 Fuchs: 51, no. 133 (1930 ed., same page and number).
 1929 Bertram: pl. VII.
 1934 Venturi, Lionello. "Daumier." *L'Arte* 37: 399, fig. 8.
 1938 Lassaigue: 167, repro., 128.
 1945 Courthion: 286, no. 33.
 1954 Adhémar: 111.
 1965a Dale: 43, repro.
 1965 NGA: 37.
 1968 Maison: I:135, no. 158, repro. and X-radiograph, 28, fig. 18.
 1968 NGA: 30, repro.
 1972 Mandel: 105, no. 206, repro.
 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
 1984 Walker: 437, no. 625, repro.
 1985 NGA: 114, repro.

1943.11.1 (752)

In Church

1855–1857

Oil on oak panel, 15.2 × 21.7 × 0.6 (6 × 8⁹/₁₆ × 1/4)

Rosenwald Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *b.D.*

Technical Notes: The support of this small picture is a horizontally grained oak panel. Over a thin white ground, a layer of blue underpaint has been applied. This layer contains an earlier design, which in the X-radiograph (turned clockwise 90 degrees from the present horizontal axis) can be read, indistinctly, as the portrait of a bearded man wearing a hat (fig. 1). Infrared reflectography did not reveal any underdrawing. The image on the top layer is roughly brushed in thin but richly textured oil paint. The contours and features of the head at the left have been drawn with a thin brush steeped in fluid paint over the otherwise dry paint surface. A thin layer of discolored varnish covers the surface. The picture is well preserved.¹

Provenance: Carabin, Paris, by 1901. (Charles Sessler, Philadelphia); sold 30 June 1930 to Lessing J. Rosenwald [1891–1979], Jenkintown, Pennsylvania.²

Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1943.11.1, turned 90 degrees to show a portrait of a bearded man wearing a hat



Exhibited: Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1901, *Exposition Daumier*, no. 28, as *A l'église*. MOMA, *Corot–Daumier*, 1930, no. 76.

TWO WOMEN and a boy are shown shoulder-length, seated closely together. Both the old, careworn woman in the immediate foreground and the young girl beside her wear white caps. Next to them, farther to the right, appears the face of the bareheaded boy, vaguely distinguishable against the darkness of the background. Vague indications at the extreme left and right of the panel seem to hint at further figures.

From the time of its first public exhibition in 1901, the painting has been called *A l'église*, although there is nothing in the image itself that clearly supports this title. If it describes Daumier's subject correctly, it would be the only known representation in his work of churchgoers at their worship. Of miniature size, the picture belongs to a group of drawings and oils, many of the latter also painted on wooden panels, that show heads or bust-length figures aligned in staggered rows or in juxtaposition.³ None of these small works describes any recognizable action or situation. Of very summary execution, they seem not to have been intended as preparatory studies but as practice pieces, casually improvised for their own sake, without any thought of further development.

The National Gallery's very freely brushed study of three heads, suggestive of a family group, seems at any rate to have been abandoned in its unfinished state. No thematically related paintings, drawings, or prints are known. So far as its technique is concerned, the execution of this sketch—for which Daumier reused a panel on which he had previously painted a portrait⁴—suggests an experiment with different painterly devices, and this may well have been its entire purpose. The nearest head, broadly blocked in with scumblings of white and brownish flesh color, is given definition and expression by heavy contours drawn with the brush that trace its withered features, sunken eyes, and sulky mouth. The second head, by contrast, remains a shaped tonal blur. Featureless, except for a pair of dark eyes, it is nevertheless sufficient to suggest the expression and bearing of a young girl. The third head appears merely as a vague presence, a somber foil to the illuminated faces beside it.



Honoré Daumier, *In Church*, 1943.II.I

In their successive degrees of completion, the three heads illustrate some of the steps by which Daumier usually, though not always, developed his oils. He generally began by painting his composition in heavy outline on the toned wood or fabric ground. Over this linear design, he built his forms with transparent glazes, modeling the figures in tonal gradations and completing them with highlights of heavier, opaque paint.⁵ At the very end, he often returned to the linear design, now buried beneath the tonal glazes, to redraw some of its salient contours with the brush over the painted surface.⁶ For the purpose of this rapid sketch, Daumier abbreviated the process. Whatever underdrawing may have begun it has left no trace. The boy's head at the right is a veil of dark tone laid over the darker ground. The heads of the two women are defined as areas of opaque flesh color, lighter than the background and broadly modeled by shaping sweeps of the brush. The features of the old woman then received further definition by the addition of lines drawn with the brush. Despite their extreme summariness, the essential character of each face is impressively established. The means used, combining tone and line, painterly and graphic effect, are similar to those by which Daumier composed his images on the lithographic stone.

The two women in this sketch, both wearing the close-fitting white cloth caps (*marmottes*) of the poor, represent a type that frequently occurs in Daumier's scenes from lower-class family life. A woman resembling in her physiognomy and headgear the older woman of this study appears in an otherwise unrelated, finished painting, *Women and Children under a Tree* (Rijksmuseum Mesdag, The Hague), which Jean Adhémar dated to about 1850⁷ and Karl Eric Maison to 1852–1855.⁸ Similar in motif and manner of execution are several small oil sketches, all of them painted on wooden panels like the National Gallery's study, among them *Conversation* (R. H. Cassirer collection, Johannesburg),⁹ *Listeners* (location unknown), and *Two Heads* (Museu de Arte, São Paulo).¹⁰ Maison and Adhémar agree in dating them to the late 1850s. These relationships of type, style, and technique give support to the date of 1855–1857 that Maison suggested for the Washington *In Church*.¹¹

Notes

1. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-92 calls this "A sketch in perfect condition." Oliver Larkin who examined the picture in early 1964 wrote on 29 April of that year to John Walker, director of the NGA: "*In Church* (Rosenwald) seems to me an excellent study which has gone far enough to indicate the artist's preliminary procedure and has not suffered later 'completion'" (NGA curatorial files).

2. The picture was at the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from November 1938 until March 1941, evidently to be examined. No record of any examination, however, seems to have been preserved either at the Fogg Art Museum or at Lessing J. Rosenwald's Alverthorpe Gallery in Jenkintown. In a letter of 16 March 1966, Elizabeth Strassmann, registrar of the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, notes simply that the painting was received at the Research Department of the Fogg Art Museum in November 1938 and was returned to the Alverthorpe Gallery on 14 March 1941.

3. Rapid pen or pencil sketching of series of heads or busts, lined up side by side, seems to have been a favorite physiognomical amusement of Daumier, judging by the large number of such drawings (see Maison 1968, 2: nos. 115–116, 125–126, 133, 147–151, 155, 163, 165, 170–172, 489–497, 606–610). Much less numerous but of similar inspiration are the corresponding sketches in oil, rough improvisations of small size on wooden panels (see Maison 1968, 1: nos. 48, 93, 94, 120, 150).

4. According to an NGA examination report by Paula DeCristofaro, dated 8 February 1990: "The painting's X-radiograph suggests that an earlier design, in the form of a male portrait, lies beneath the present surface composition. When the X-radiograph is turned clockwise 90 degrees from the present horizontal axis, a shadowed image of a bearded man (?) wearing a top hat (?) can be seen, although it is impossible to state with certainty that this is the actual underlying image" (fig. 1).

5. See Marceau and Rosen 1940.

6. For an example of this procedure in a more fully realized painting, see *Advice to a Young Artist*, pp. 173–179.

7. Adhémar 1954, 119, no. 64.

8. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-52. An old woman of very similar appearance is the subject of a pen-and-chalk drawing in the Brooklyn Museum of Art (Maison 1968, 2: no. 190), which bears on its verso a row of bust-length male figures (Maison 2: no. 170).

9. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-93.

10. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-94.

11. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-120. Another small oil painting on panel of this type, *The Confidence* (C. K. Wilmers collection, Geneva), is dated by Maison to 1862–1863 (1: I-150) and by Adhémar (1954, 127, no. 144) to "about 1860."

References

- 1923 Klossowski: no. 335.
 1930 Fuchs: 4 (mentioned as missing).
 1965 NGA: 37.
 1965 Rey, Robert. *Honoré Daumier*. New York: 34, fig. 43.
 1968 Maison: 1: no. I-93, repro.
 1968 NGA: 30, repro.
 1972 Mandel: 96, no. 121, repro.
 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
 1984 Walker: 437, no. 627, repro.
 1985 NGA: 113, repro.

1941.6.1 (545)

Advice to a Young Artist

1865–1868

Oil on fabric, 41.3 × 33 (16¹/₄ × 13)
 Gift of Duncan Phillips

Inscriptions

At lower left: *b. Daumier*

Technical Notes: The picture's support is a single piece of fine, plain-woven fabric from which the tacking edges have been removed. It had two glue linings prior to 1966, when they were removed and replaced with a double wax lining on linen. The stretcher was replaced at the time of the lining. Over the very smooth and thick white ground, a streaky, reddish brown imprimatura has been brushed. The image is executed in rich, fluid paint applied loosely, with little impasto. The broad forms are laid in with full-bodied paint and are accentuated with highlights and contours of more liquid colors. Broad scumbles of opaque paint modify the surfaces of the floor, sofa, and papers. The picture is in generally good condition. A network of cracks penetrates to the ground, and some minor paint losses along the center top and left lower edges have in the past been repaired by discreet inpainting. A blister near the left foot of the younger man, reported to have occurred in 1941, was repaired at the time and has left no visible trace.¹ The varnish that covers the picture surface is very thick and has reticulated, resulting in a bumpy surface.

Provenance: Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot [1796–1875], Paris; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, part 3, 7–9 June 1875, no. 665, as *Conseils au jeune artiste*); purchased by Arthur Stevens. Guillotin, Paris, by 1901. Adolphe A. Tavernier, Paris, by 1901. [Ernest?] Cronier, Paris, by 1904. Goerg, Reims, by 1905. A. Bergeaud, Paris, in 1910. (Alex. Reid and Lefevre, Glasgow and London), by 1927; sold to D. W. T. Cargill, Glasgow. (M. Knoedler & Co., New York), by 1928. (Galerie Etienne Bignou, New York); sold 1941 to Duncan Phillips [1886–1966], Washington, D.C.

Exhibited: Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1901, *Exposition Daumier*, no. 76, as *Conseils à un jeune artiste*. Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, 1910, *Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'école française: Vingt peintres du XIX siècle*, no. 40, as *Les Amateurs d'estampes*. London, Alex. Reid and Lefevre, 1927, *Paintings and Drawings by Honoré Daumier*, no. 3, repro., as *Les Amateurs d'estampes*. New York, M. Knoedler & Co., 1928, *A Century of French Painting*, no. 9, repro. Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, 1930, *Cent Ans de peinture française*, no. 6, repro. Leningrad, State Hermitage Museum; Moscow, State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts; Kiev, State Museum of Ukrainian Art; Minsk, State Museum of the Belorussian SSR, 1976, *West European and American Painting from the Museums of the USA*, unnumbered catalogue. Rome, Villa Medici, Accademia di Francia a Roma, 1983–1984, *Honoré Daumier—Georges Rouault*, no. 18, repro.

IN A DIMLY LIT ROOM, two men stand side by side. The younger, still an adolescent, wears a gray smock with blue cravat. He has taken a sheet from a portfolio which the older man, soberly attired in dark brown, now studies with deep attention. On the wall behind them, barely visible, paintings hang frame-to-frame above a low sofa, upholstered in dark red, against which a blue box leans. The daylight falling at a slant into the dusky room is reflected by a white sheet in the open portfolio that the young man holds, illuminating his face and upper body while only grazing the profile, gray hair, and beard of his older companion.

Corot, the first owner of this painting, had almost certainly received it as a gift from Daumier, his grateful friend. It was catalogued as *Conseils au jeune artiste* at the posthumous sale of Corot's studio and collection in 1875.² This title—made plausible by the different ages of the two men, and in keeping with the period's taste for anecdotal narrative—has remained attached to it since, though it may not accurately describe the picture's subject. It is not certain that either the young man or his elderly advisor is meant to be an artist, or that their encounter takes place in a studio. More than an artist's studio, the picture's setting resembles those well-ordered cabinets, hung with paintings and drawings, in which Daumier often represented print collectors, “amateurs d'estampes,” conversing while examining the treasures of their portfolios.³ Nor does the older man in the picture, a figure of patrician dignity and—for Daumier—unusual formality, quite fit the type of the “artist” as it usually appears in his work.⁴ He corresponds,

rather, to Daumier's notion of the wealthy and fastidious collector⁵ and here seems cast in a somewhat paternal role, perhaps introducing a young friend to problems of connoisseurship.

Whatever its precise subject, the painting belongs to a numerous group of works in which Daumier dealt with private activity in the artist's studio or the collector's study, and particularly with moments of contemplation and sociability shared by artists and their patrons. Painters at work, watched by amateurs;⁶ collectors rummaging through the offerings of dealers;⁷ connoisseurs in the privacy of their cabinets, bending over portfolios of drawings and prints;⁸ these were among the scenes that often occupied him in his later years. In the exhibition that some friends organized for him in 1878, ten months before his death, no fewer than twelve of the ninety-four paintings on view were of artists or amateurs,⁹ an indication of the importance contemporaries attached to this aspect of his work. One reason for his partiality to such subjects was undoubtedly their ready saleabil-

ity to collectors who appreciated them as tributes to their culture.¹⁰ But his persistent interest in them was also an expression of his personal familiarity and sympathy with the world they reflected. It was natural that this profound observer of society should use his own professional community as material for observation. His scenes of the studio, collector's cabinet, auction room, or dealer's shop contain a large element of autobiography and in this respect invite comparison with the studio pictures painted by Daumier's friend Corot,¹¹ the first owner of *Advice to a Young Artist*.

Subjects from the world of art and art collecting had come to be recognized by the middle years of the nineteenth century as a special branch of genre painting, most famously represented by Ernest Meissonier (1815–1891), himself a passionate collector. Daumier and Meissonier were acquainted, and it is likely that in the course of his long and difficult struggle to bring off exhibitable and saleable canvases Daumier occasionally borrowed ideas for small-scale genre compositions from his famous contemporary.¹² Meissonier's *Artist Showing His Drawings* (fig. 1),¹³ painted in 1850, exemplifies the kind of picture that Daumier may have remembered when he undertook similar subjects, though with an entirely different emphasis. Like Meissonier, Daumier imagined an incident, a conversation about a work of art, but while Meissonier gave his fictions an anecdotal flavor and located them in eighteenth-century interiors crowded with period decor,¹⁴ Daumier treated his scene with austere simplicity. In direct contrast to Meissonier, he minimized the importance of costumes and accessories and allowed no more than a discreet suggestiveness to the setting, concentrating instead on the pantomimic expression of his actual subject, the contemplation of a work of art by two unlike individuals. Intense visual scrutiny, the only activity in this image, is the key motif shared by all the pictures in which Daumier brought together artists and amateurs and in which he seems to insist, by constant iteration, on the primacy of sight in the experience of art (see fig. 2).¹⁵

What particularly distinguishes *Advice to a Young Artist* among his other pictures of this kind is the exceptional completeness of its execution. It is one of the most fully realized of these paintings, the evident result of an effort to produce a harmoniously "finished" picture, something that is

Fig. 1. Ernest Meissonier, *An Artist Showing His Drawings*, oil on canvas, 1850, London, The Wallace Collection, reproduced by permission of the Trustees, P-325





Honoré Daumier, *Advice to a Young Artist*, 1941.6.1



Fig. 2. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Les Amateurs d'estampes*, oil on canvas, c. 1810, Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF 1721, Photo RMN

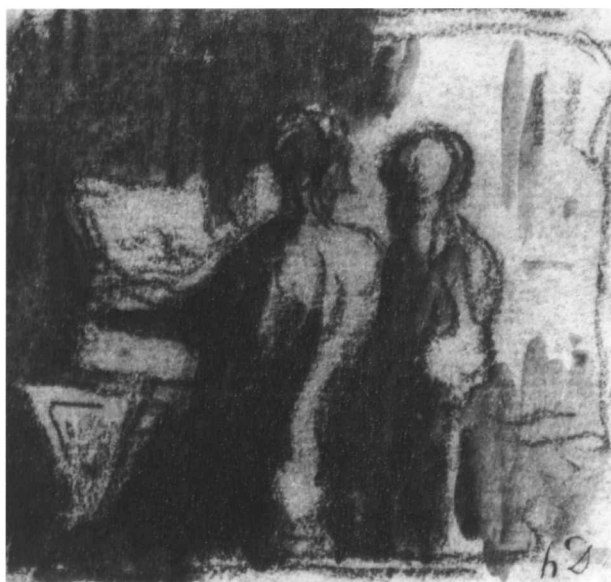


Fig. 3. Honoré Daumier, *Les Connaisseurs*, chalk and ink on laid paper, c. 1865, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, inv. F-11-59

known to have given him trouble.¹⁶ There is only one dissonant note in this harmony: the head of the older man whose face is drawn in heavy black contours, rather than smoothly modeled in tonal gradations like the face of his young companion. It is tempting to regard this as an unfinished area, in which Daumier allowed the outlines of his underlying design to stand exposed after he had covered them in all other parts of the picture.¹⁷ But closer examination reveals that rather than vestiges of an earlier state, these lines, along with some highlights of thick white paint, were final additions to the picture, accentuating its most prominent expressive features. This imposition of strong graphic contours on a tonal image is often found in Daumier's paintings,¹⁸ perhaps as a carryover from his lithographic practice.

No preparatory studies for *Advice to a Young Artist* are known. A thumbnail sketch in Rotterdam (fig. 3)¹⁹ presents a somewhat similar scene, but the closest parallel to the picture is Daumier's unfinished *Amateurs d'estampes*, a project known through three preparatory oil sketches, of which the one in the Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent, seems the most nearly complete (fig. 4).²⁰ Karl Eric Maison believed that this composition dated from 1870–1873, the very last years of Daumier's active life.²¹ For the National Gallery's *Advice to a Young Artist*, which is of comparable style and subject matter but of more complete execution, a variety of dates have been suggested. Jean Adhémar assigned it to the years 1855–1860, without specifying his reasons for giving it such an early date.²² Oliver Larkin placed it "around 1860 or slightly later," also without explanation.²³ Maison, finally, suggested 1863–1865.²⁴ These discrepancies, though not very large, reflect the still unsettled chronology of Daumier's paintings in oil and the difficulty of basing their dates purely on considerations of style and technical handling. Clues of a more concrete kind for the dating of his pictures of studio visits and collectors' conversations are furnished by his watercolors and designs for wood engravings of related subjects, some of them securely datable.²⁵ For *Advice to a Young Artist*, they point to the years from 1862 to 1868, and particularly to the latter part of this period. Further support for that date span is given by the picture's distinctive figure style. The facial type of the older man, with well-groomed beard and mustache, first



Fig. 4. Honoré Daumier, *Amateurs d'estampes*, oil sketch on canvas, 1865–1868, Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten, photograph Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique-KIK, Brussels

appears in Daumier's work of the 1860s,²⁶ while his broad-shouldered and strikingly elongated silhouette recurs with increasing frequency among Daumier's lithographs of the last years of that decade.²⁷

Advice to a Young Artist is devoid of the mildly satirical humor that flavors many of Daumier's pictures of connoisseurs and artists in states of mutual rapture or excited debate. It contains no hint of caricature. The suggestion has been made that, unlike Daumier's pictures of popular life, his scenes of the studio and the collector's cabinet "have no political or social significance."²⁸ But this is not strictly true even of this notably reticent picture. His studio visitors and art collectors belong to a particular social milieu, distinct from those of the broad middle class or petty bourgeoisie, Daumier's usual hunting grounds. His excursions into the world of connoisseurship and art collecting took him into a sphere in which artists and the affluent could meet on terms flattering to both sides. He

himself evidently felt comfortable enough in it to observe its inhabitants with sympathy, proving to be a sensitive and surprisingly tolerant recorder of Second Empire upper-class atmospheres. While not expressing any definite political attitude, Daumier's characterizations of the art-collecting *haute bourgeoisie* are not without social significance: they are rare documents, unequaled in their intimate truthfulness, of an important aspect of nineteenth-century French culture.

Notes

1. Memorandum by Charles Seymour, Jr., acting chief curator, to John Walker, director, dated 8 September 1941, in NGA curatorial files.

2. Corot sale 1875b, no. 665. Corot owned four paintings by Daumier, all presumably gifts of the artist: no. 662 of the sale, *Les Curieux à l'étalage* (William A. V. Cecil, Biltmore, N.C.; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-138); no. 663, *L'Amateur d'estampes* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-71), in subject and format something of a companion to the NGA's picture; no. 664, *Le Barreau* (private collection, Paris; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-139); and no. 665, *Conseils au jeune artiste*, the painting now at the NGA. It may be significant that of the four paintings by Daumier that Corot owned, three represented collectors or artists.

It has been suggested by Catherine W. Blanton (catalogue notes, dated 1966, in NGA curatorial files) that Daumier's gift of *Advice to a Young Artist* to Corot may have expressed his gratitude for advice and encouragement received from Corot who, she surmises, stood in a "pedagogical relationship to Daumier," having guided his "essays in the unfamiliar medium of oil." It seems unlikely, however, that Daumier, nearly sixty years old when he painted this picture, would have cast himself in the role of the "young artist" receiving advice. On the unsettled question of Daumier's indebtedness to Corot's technique of oil painting, see Marceau and Rosen 1940, 14.

3. Maison 1968, 2: no. 376, *Deux Amateurs d'estampes*, Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur; 2: no. 379, *Les Amateurs d'estampes*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London; 2: no. 387, *Trois Amateurs devant la "Revue Nodturne" de Raffet*, Louvre.

4. As, for instance, in *Peintre feuilletant un carton à dessins* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-71), a picture once owned by Corot, like the NGA's *Advice to a Young Artist* to which it may be related as a pendant. Typical examples of Daumier's characterization of the "artist" occur in such paintings as *Le Peintre* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Reims; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-204) and *Le Peintre devant son tableau* (The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-222).

5. Collectors, or amateurs, appear as two distinct types in Daumier's work. In many of the paintings,

they are shown passionately absorbed in the act of examining a work of art (see Maison 1968, 1: nos. I-62, I-146, I-147, I-148, I-176, I-234, I-235, I-236) or browsing among the portfolios or displays of dealers' shops (Maison nos. I-135, I-136, I-137, I-151, I-152). In these scenes, marked by an air of privacy, the collectors are characterized by their temperament, their eager preoccupation, rather than by any external marks of social status. A very different aspect of the collectors appears in the series of highly finished watercolors dating from the 1860s (Maison 1968, 2: nos. 379, 384, 385) in which Daumier strongly emphasized, with an occasional touch of irony, their distinction of dress and bearing, and the *haut-bourgeois* atmosphere of their interiors. The older man in the NGA's *Advice to a Young Artist* belongs entirely to this last type. It is not surprising that so fine an observer of social and cultural distinctions as Daumier should have found in the studios of artists and the cabinets of collectors a diversity of characters as rich as that which he observed among railway travelers and theater audiences.

6. The subject of the artist watched at work or disturbed by intrusive observers was first used by Daumier in a humorous design for a wood engraving, published in 1841 (Bouvy 1933, 1: no. 393). Incursions by amateurs into the artist's workplace later became a recurrent motif in his paintings (Maison 1968, 1: nos. I-63a, I-64, I-225), drawings and watercolors (Maison 1968, 2: nos. 371, 384, 385, 386), and wood-engraved illustrations (Bouvy 1933, 2: no. 928).

7. See *Les Curieux à l'étalage* (Maison 1968, 1: nos. I-70, I-138, I-145) and *L'Amateur d'estampes* (Maison nos. I-135, I-136, I-137, I-151, I-152).

8. As in certain oil studies of *Les Amateurs d'estampes* (Maison 1968, 1: nos. I-62, I-147, I-148, I-176, I-234, I-235, I-236) and, most elaborately, in the highly finished watercolor versions of the subject dating from the 1860s (for instance Maison 1968, 2: nos. 376, 379, and 387).

9. Paris, Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1878, *Exposition des peintures et dessins de H. Daumier*. Selected by Corot's friends the painters Charles-François Daubigny and Jules Dupré and the sculptor Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume, the exhibition included no. 3, *Un Peintre dans son atelier* (Maison 1968, 1: I-71); no. 7, *Amateurs d'estampes* (Maison I-145); no. 12, *Amateur de peinture* (Maison I-146); no. 14, *Amateurs de gravures* (Maison I-147); no. 29, *Le Dessinateur* (Maison I-63); no. 30, *L'Artiste* (Maison I-204); no. 34, *L'Amateur d'estampes* (Maison I-137); no. 40, *Un Peintre* (Maison I-192); no. 44, *Amateurs d'estampes* (Maison I-62); no. 66, *Amateurs* (Maison I-64); no. 75, *Galerie de tableaux* (Maison I-133); no. 93, *La Leçon de peinture* (Maison I-63a). By comparison, the exhibition included only two pictures of saltimbanques: no. 5, *Une Parade de saltimbanques* (Maison I-189), and no. 79, *Paillasses*, now at the NGA (1963.10.14) under the title *Wandering Saltimbanques* (Maison I-25), see pp. 157-164.

10. Alan Bowness, in Bowness and Maison 1961, 15: "One wonders why Daumier returned so often to this

subject [artists and collectors]. . . . The reason may be simple: they were relatively saleable."

11. Corot's *Artist's Studio* at the National Gallery (see pp. 68-74) is a case in point. Both Corot and Daumier, in different ways, drew on the professional milieu that they shared to express their most personal sentiments. But the quiet intimacy of Corot's description of his own workplace contrasts with Daumier's pantomimic staging of active figures in an imagined setting. Dating from 1865-1868, Corot's studio pictures are closely contemporary with Daumier's subjects of a similar kind. It is not far-fetched to see in these thematically related works by artists of different temperament but linked by friendship signs of a common intent. For a discussion of the parallels between Daumier's and Corot's late studio pictures, see Klossowski 1923, 77-79.

12. Delacroix' diary entry for 12 January 1850 links the two artists: "Voir Meissonier et Daumier" (Delacroix 1932, 1:331). It is noteworthy that many of the genre subjects for which Meissonier was famous also occur in Daumier's paintings. Alan Bowness (Bowness and Maison 1961, 15) has pointed out that "before 1860, Meissonier had painted, *Chess Players, Card Player, The Smoker, The Writer, A Man Reading, The Musician, A Painter Showing his Drawings, The Amateurs, A Painter in his Studio*—and all these subjects were later taken up by Daumier." But Daumier remained uninfluenced by what the public most admired in Meissonier's work, his minuteness of finish, and had no use for Meissonier's elaborate historical stagings.

13. Purchased by Meissonier's influential patron, Richard Seymour, fourth marquess of Hertford, the picture remained in the marquess' Paris residence, visible to French artists, until 1872 when Richard Wallace, Hertford's heir, removed it to London.

14. Meissonier's biographer gives this telling description of *An Artist Showing His Drawings*: "A studio, full of miscellaneous objects. A portfolio of drawings on a stool, others in a box, some roses in a glass. Cups, flacons, and paintbrushes on the mantelpiece. On the wall, an autumn landscape. The painter, dressed in black, rests his portfolio on his knee, and shows a drawing to a client in a light coat, who holds another in his hand" (Vallery C. O. Greard, *Meissonier: His Life and Art* [New York, 1897], 366). With all this abundance of detail, Meissonier's picture measures only 38 x 29 cm and is considerably smaller than Daumier's *Advice to a Young Artist*. But the breadth of handling and reduction of bywork that Daumier practiced here are a peculiarity of his oils and point to their private character. In the corresponding watercolors and lithographs, calculated for the market, he gave far more detailed descriptions of the richly furnished interiors of collectors and artists.

15. The image of connoisseurs in the act of intensely examining a work of art has a long history that includes, most famously, Watteau's *Enseigne Gersaint* (1720, Charlottenburg, Berlin). In a painting of more recent date by Louis-Léopold Boilly known as *Les Ama-*

teurs d'estampes (fig. 2), which Wilenski (1931, 232) cited as comparable to Daumier's treatment of this motif, a young woman and two men put their heads together in close scrutiny of a print. Boilly's picture, which served him as a study for his *Tableau du Sacre exposé au Louvre* (1810, MMA), may have had some influence on Meissonier's *Artist Showing His Drawings* and thus affected Daumier's picture indirectly.

16. As is abundantly demonstrated by the large number of paintings that he left in various states of incompleteness. This difficulty, affecting only his work in oil, and surprising in an artist known for the facility and speed of his graphic work, was observed at an early date. In a diary entry of 5 February 1849 Delacroix noted: "M. Baudelaire venu... Il m'a parlé des difficultés qu'éprouve Daumier à finir" (Delacroix 1932, 1:258).

17. See Marceau and Rosen 1940, still the only detailed investigation of Daumier's painting procedures.

18. Daumier's *In Church* at the NGA (see pp. 170–172) provides another example of his practice of adding accentuating contour lines after defining his figures with modulated tonal washes (see also Marceau and Rosen 1940, 23).

19. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. The sketch, measuring 7.5 × 8 cm, is executed in charcoal and wash (Maison 1968, 2: no. 373, pl. 119).

20. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-235. The picture, very broadly sketched in oil on canvas, roughly corresponds in its dimensions (39 × 31 cm) to the panel in the NGA. Two other, slightly less finished versions—one in a Paris private collection (Maison 1968, 1: I-234), the other in the Hans A. Hahnloser collection in Bern (Maison I-236)—are of considerably smaller size. Maison, however, considered the picture in the Hahnloser collection to be the most advanced of the three.

21. Maison 1968 assigned all three versions (1: nos. I-234, I-235, I-236) to the extremely late date of 1870–1873, evidently because of their great freedom of handling. But this appears to be an aspect of their unfinished condition rather than a stylistic trait indicative of their position in the chronology of Daumier's development. Except for the difference between them in degree of completion, the stylistic relationship between the NGA's *Advice to a Young Artist* and the different versions of *Amateurs d'estampes* is close enough to suggest that the two compositions cannot date far apart.

22. Adhémar 1954, 121, no. 79.

23. Letter, dated 29 April 1964, in NGA curatorial files.

24. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-163.

25. The watercolor *Trois Amateurs devant "La Revue Nocturne" de Raffet* (Maison 1968, 2: no. 378) was painted for Hector Giacomelli to celebrate the publication of his book on Raffet in 1862. Of the two versions of *Visiteurs dans l'atelier d'un artiste*, the one in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (Maison 1968, 2: no. 385), corresponds to a lithograph (Delteil 3246) dated 1864, and the other, at the Montreal Museum of Fine

Art (Maison 1968, 2: no. 384), was exhibited by Daumier at the Salon of 1869. The wood engravings representing artists and amateurs that Daumier drew for *Le Monde illustré* were published by that journal in 1862 (Bouvy 1933, 2: no. 928), 1868 (2: no. 952), and 1869 (2: no. 955).

26. For example in the watercolors *Amateurs d'estampes*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (Maison 1968, 2: no. 379) and *Visiteurs dans l'atelier d'un artiste*, Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (Maison 1968, 2: no. 385), both datable about 1862–1864, and in the oil sketch *Le Liseur*, private collection, New York, which Maison (1968, 1: no. I-212) dates to about 1868.

27. See the lithographs "Je dois prévenir..." (Delteil 3723) and "Comme ça la redresse..." (Delteil 3718), both dating from 1869.

28. Alan Bowness, "Daumier the Painter," in Bowness and Maison 1961.

References

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 1923 Fontainas: pl. 2 (cites Maison "pl. 12").
 1927 Fuchs: 39, 50, pl. 111 (1930 ed.: same page and number).
 1928 *Cahiers d'art* 3: repro. 183.
 1929 Goodrich, Lloyd. "Exhibitions in New York." *The Arts* 14 (November): repro. 269.
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 1930 Escholier, Raymond. *Daumier*. Paris: 260, pl. 15.
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 1937 Fleischmann, Benno. *Honoré Daumier: Gemälde und Graphik*. Vienna: 39, pl. 50 (1939 French ed.: 24, pl. 50).
 1938 Lassigne: repro. 72.
 1941 "A Daumier for the National Gallery." *ArtN* 40, no. 12 (October): repro. 6.
 1941 *Magazine of Art* 34 (October): 400.
 1941 Frankfurter: 19.
 1942 "Recent Important Acquisitions of American Collections." *Art Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Winter): 105, repro., 99.
 1942 NGA: 251, repro. 46.
 1944 Cairns and Walker: 158, repro.
 1949 Cassou, Jean. *Daumier*. Lausanne: pl. 35.
 1954 Adhémar: 121, pl. 79.
 1956 Walker: 52, color pl. 20.
 1963 Walker: 250, color repro. 251.
 1965 NGA: 37.
 1966 Cairns and Walker: 2:416, repro.
 1966 Larkin: 153, 156, 189, pl. 74.
 1966 NGA: 30, repro.
 1968 Maison: 1: 139–140, no. I-163, pl. 97.
 1972 Mandel: 106, no. 209, color pl. XLV.
 1979 Symmons, Sarah. *Daumier*. London: no. 40.
 1975 NGA: 92, repro.
 1984 Walker: 434, no. 623, repro.
 1985 NGA: 113, repro.

Honoré Daumier, with additions by later hands

1943.11.2 (753)

Feast of the Gods

c. 1849–1850, with additions by later hands
Oil on mahogany panel, 29 × 39 × 0.6 (11³/₈ × 15¹/₂ × 1/4)
Rosenwald Collection

Technical Notes: The picture's support is a mahogany panel, horizontally grained and 0.4–0.6 cm thick. Over this, a thin gray ground has been applied. An additional thin red ground layer lying over the gray ground was found in one of three cross sections examined by R. J. Gettens at the Fogg Art Museum.¹ X-radiography and infrared examination reveal no traces of underdrawing or tonal underpainting. The image has been built up in several layers. Translucent glazes appear in the dark passages. In the lights the paint forms a low impasto. The X-radiograph reveals an earlier alternative composition (fig. 1), differing mainly in the posture and drapery of the standing female figure at the right. Other, lesser alterations affect the arms and legs of the seated male at the far right. Variations in the paint thickness and the craquelure patterns of parts of the picture suggest that the painting did not only undergo changes in the course of its initial execution but was also reworked at a later date. A thick coating of varnish covers its surface.

Provenance: Oscar Ackermann, Paris, by 1908 until at least 1912. Julius Meier-Graefe, Berlin. Oskar Skaller, Berlin, by 1926. François Monod, Paris. Lessing J. Rosenwald [1891–1979], Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, by 1930.

Exhibited: Munich, Galerie Zimmermann, *Französische Meister*, 1906, no. 11. Saint Petersburg, 1912, *Exposition centennale de l'art français*, no. 238. Berlin, Galerie Mathiesen, 1926, *Ausstellung Honoré Daumier*, no. 58, repro. MOMA, 1930, *Corot–Daumier*, no. 58. Springfield, Mass., Museum of Fine Arts, 1939, *The Romantic Revolt*, no. 31.

FIVE MALE FIGURES, classically half-nude, are seated behind a wide, decked table. The stout, bearded man seated slumped at the left has the look of the drunken Silenus. Next to him three men converse intently, one of them recognizable by his flat helmet as Mercury. A young woman, perhaps Hebe, handmaiden of the gods, approaches from the right, bearing a charger heaped with fruit. Naked except for a drapery slipping from her hip, she turns her head as if startled by the satyr-like male behind her who extends his arm to embrace her waist.

Under the title of *Festin des dieux*, or *Göttermahl*, the picture was long accepted without question as one of the mythological compositions that Daumier was known to have painted early in his career.² In 1940, when still owned by Lessing Rosenwald, it was subjected to a searching technical examination by George L. Stout of the Fogg Museum at Harvard.³ This revealed considerable overpainting in the visible image and, beneath the upper layer, vestiges of a variant composition, leading to the conclusion that “a painting of an unfinished sort was worked over to bring about the present appearance.” In the X-radiograph (fig. 1), it was apparent that all the figures had undergone changes, some slight, others fairly radical. Thus the figure of “Hebe” was originally entirely nude and stood upright in profile view, before she acquired the drapery and the stooping, nearly frontal posture in which she now appears. The examination report left open the question “whether the painting underneath was done by the same person as the painting now evident on the surface; whether what appears here is a correction and development of an idea only partly set down in the neutral tones beneath. The other possibility, of course, is that it was painted at a later time and by another per-

Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1943.11.2





Honoré Daumier, with additions by later hands, *Feast of the Gods*, 1943.II.2



Fig. 2. Franciscus van den Wynegaerde (1614–1679), etching after Peter Paul Rubens' *Marriage Feast of Peleus and Thetis*, date unknown, Haarlem, Teylers Museum, VS 98

son."⁴ Against these early doubts, some scholars came to the picture's defense. The art historian Otto Benesch, who knew it well, was convinced of its authenticity.⁵

In March 1964 the Daumier specialist Karl Eric Maison examined the painting in the National Gallery's Painting Conservation Department and gave it as his opinion that its visible surface was so extensively overpainted that it could not be considered as being by Daumier.⁶ In partial agreement, Oliver Larkin wrote on 29 April 1964 that the picture "could well have started life as a rough and very unfinished sketch by Daumier," but admitted that "most of what one now sees is by another and cruder hand."⁷ With the approval of the Trustees of the Gallery, the attribution of the pic-

Fig. 3. Honoré Daumier, *Feast of the Gods*, oil on panel, c. 1865, New York, private collection (illustrated in Fuchs 1930: pl. 140)



ture was changed, in January 1973, to "Follower of Honoré Daumier."⁸

There can be little doubt that in its present state the picture is a ruin, damaged by repeated clumsy overpainting. The poor quality of its execution, evident in a multitude of details, rules it out, in its present state, as a wholly original work by Daumier. But if it is, as Maison and Larkin imply, one of the many paintings he left in an unfinished state and that were later crudely worked over by unskilled hands, the underlying composition—the idea of the subject and the start of the work—can still be considered as having come from Daumier's mind. Rather than to relegate its authorship altogether to a hypothetical "follower,"⁹ it may be useful to determine what traces of his invention are to be found beneath the overpainting.

As it now appears, the picture is not so much a raw sketch that has been inexpertly completed as one that has been spottily touched up in various parts, while still retaining the facture of a sketch. Most conspicuous among the retouches are the garment of the "Hebe" figure, which X-radiographs show to have been a late addition, and the cloak that covers the legs of "Silenus" at the left (fig. 1). Their shapeless brushwork betrays a hurried, blundering hand. Scarcely less jarring are some cosmetic improvements in the face of "Hebe" and a scattering of brief, disconnected contours in the three central figures intended to sharpen the definition of faces, arms, and hands.

But not all the technical weaknesses and uncertainties of the picture are due to the intervention of later hands. Some of them are characteristic of Daumier's own early struggles in dealing with classical or religious subjects in the still not fully mastered medium of oil. What remains of the underlying original sketch is itself a very rough improvisation whose compositional and technical infelicities have parallels among Daumier's other early essays in oil painting. The upper body of "Silenus," the best-preserved part of the original sketch, exemplifies a peculiar technique of modeling three-dimensional form with stripes of dry paint that is often found in his paintings from the late 1840s.¹⁰ The rough patchwork of contrasting light and dark areas that causes the figures in *Feast of the Gods* to stand out in blurry relief against the vaguely defined ground is also found in such early, many-figured paintings by Daumier as his *Jesus and*

His Disciples (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), which is datable to about 1849–1850.¹¹ The overall composition of the sketch derives from Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) and Jacob Jordaens (1593–1678) under whose influence Daumier labored at the start of his painting career. It draws in particular on their scenes from classical mythology in which gods or mortals are shown feasting round richly decked tables, as for instance Rubens' *Marriage Feast of Peleus and Thetis* (fig. 2), a print of which may have suggested the female nude in its foreground,¹² or Jordaens' *Jupiter and Mercury Entertained by Philemon and Baucis* and *The Satyr and the Peasants*, works of which engravings were widely available.¹³

The fact that the composition initially took shape in several distinct stages, as shown by successive revisions of the female figure at the right, suggests that it began as an experimental improvisation. Its full development, before the addition of the last finishing touches that now disfigure it, can be traced with the help of a second version of the composition (fig. 3), formerly owned by the Daumier scholar Eduard Fuchs and now in a New York collection.¹⁴ In this version, which in the main resembles the one in Washington, the woman holding the charger appears in a stooped posture but is entirely nude, as she was before the final reworking of this picture. Thus it appears that the composition was developed in three steps. It is probable that Daumier himself first sketched it in its original version, revealed in the X-radiograph of the canvas at the National Gallery (fig. 1). He then revised it by changing the posture of the nude woman (fig. 3) but at this point abandoned the project in a still unresolved state. Sometime later, other, less skilled hands were employed to add garments and touch up faces and limbs. By 1906, when it was first exhibited to the public, the picture was in its present condition.¹⁵

Notes

1. At the Department of Conservation and Technical Research, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., as noted in his report of 6 April 1940.

2. See its exhibitions in Munich 1906, no. 11; Berlin 1926, no. 58; New York 1930, no. 58; Springfield, Mass., 1939, no. 31, and early publications in Klossowski 1908, no. 14, pl. 6; Klossowski 1923, no. 14, pl. 27; Jean 1912, 35; Monod 1912, 312; and Fuchs 1930, 63, no. 295, repro.

3. Letter, dated 2 July 1940, to Elizabeth Mongan, Alverthorpe Gallery, Jenkintown, Pa., conveying the results of his "Technical Examination" (15 June 1940), together with a "Microchemical Analysis" by R. J. Gettens (6 April 1940), in NGA curatorial files.

4. Stout 1940, 3.

5. Memorandum (23 April 1946) by John Walker, Chief Curator, NGA: "Dr. Benesch . . . felt the painting to be by Daumier himself. The fact that the color scheme is warmer than one would expect from Daumier, he felt could be explained by the interest of the painter in the work of Delacroix, Rubens and Jordaens. Particularly characteristic of Daumier, in Dr. Benesch's opinion, is the figure on the extreme left." According to a note (24 September 1946) by Elizabeth Mongan: "Dr. Otto Benesch saw the Daumier, *Feast of the Gods* (NGA 753), when he was in the Gallery. He said that he had long known the picture and had seen it years ago in Berlin. He considered it unquestionably Daumier and said that he had consistently used it in his lectures as an example of classical figures and subject matter in the master's work" (NGA curatorial files).

6. Memorandum (4 March 1964) by Perry Cott, Chief Curator, NGA: "Mr. Maison's conclusions are as follows: . . . 753. *Feast of the Gods*. Not by Daumier." Writing to John Walker, Director, NGA, on 18 April 1964, Maison himself explains "what is wrong—very wrong—with this picture: 'The painting now evident on the surface' is later overpainting" (NGA curatorial files). It is noteworthy that Maison's rejection refers to the overpainting, not the underlying image.

7. Letter to John Walker. Larkin adds, "I agree with Maison that it does not deserve to be shown unless one wished to demonstrate the horrid fate that has befallen so many unfinished works by Daumier."

8. In response to a suggestion first made by Charles Parkhurst to J. Carter Brown in a memorandum of 31 March 1971 (NGA curatorial files).

9. The term *follower* may not be entirely fitting. It is highly improbable, nor was it implied by Maison or Larkin, that a follower of Daumier had wholly invented and laboriously developed a composition so little typical of the master's work and hence hardly marketable at the time. It is equally unlikely that a forger, working before 1906 and attempting a saleable imitation of the manner and subject matter of Daumier, would have produced such a painting. Nor does it seem appropriate to call "followers" the obscure menials employed by dealers after Daumier's death to finish his uncompleted sketches, as undoubtedly happened in this instance.

10. For examples of this technique, see *Silène et deux faunes* (private collection, Bern; Maison 1968, 1: no. I-59), *Satyre tenant un enfant* (private collection, Germany; Maison I-60), and *Two Nymphs Pursued by Satyrs* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Montreal; Maison I-32), a painting exhibited at the Salon of 1850–1851 and subsequently reworked by Daumier with a network of color touches and stripes to emphasize the plastic relief of its forms.

11. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-30, pl. 5.

12. Daumier's likely model, the etching by Franciscus van den Wyngaerde, reverses Rubens' oil study at the AIC (47.108).

13. Jordaens' *Satyr and the Peasant*, etching by Jacob Neefs (Hollstein 14:138, no. 24), *Jupiter and Mercury Entertained by Philemon and Baucis*, etching by Jacob Neefs (Hollstein 9:227, no. 26).

14. Formerly in the collections of Dr. Zitzman, Erlangen, and Eduard Fuchs, Berlin, now in a private collection, New York. This version, painted like that in Washington on panel, measures 25 × 36 cm (Fuchs 1930, 51, pl. 140). Fuchs erroneously considered this painting an early version of NGA 1943.11.2.

15. Munich 1906, no. 11.

References

1908 Klossowski: 87, no. 14, pl. 27 (1923 ed.: same as 1908 ed.).

1912 Monod: 312.

1912 Jean: 35 ("Voici encore Daumier satirisant les scènes mythologiques avec ce *Festin des Dieux* appartenant à M. Ackermann, si plein de tumulte et de gaieté").

1930 Fuchs: 51, 63, no. 295, repro.

1965 NGA: 37, as by Daumier.

1968 Maison: 1:438; radiograph fig. 19.

1968 NGA: 30, repro., as by Daumier.

1972 Mandel: 113-114, no. 369, repro.

1975 NGA: 94.

1985 NGA: 115, repro.

Follower of Honoré Daumier

1963.10.117 (1781)

Hippolyte Lavoignat

c. 1860

Oil on fabric, 46.3 × 38.5 (18¹/₄ × 15³/₁₆)

Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: The support of the painting is a fine, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The original tacking margins have been cut off. The portrait was painted over an earlier image that was partly scraped out. Its remains now form a grayish ground whose brushstrokes, unrelated to the visible image, impart a noticeable unevenness to the upper paint layers. The X-radiograph reveals only vague shapes, doubtfully readable as remains of a landscape (fig. 1).¹ The portrait itself is shaped by broad strokes of the heavily charged brush. Its successive paint layers have been applied wet-in-wet, raising some impasto. Small paint losses along the edges and in the face have been re-touched. A thick, fairly discolored varnish covers the surface.

Provenance: The sitter, Hippolyte Lavoignat [1813-1896], Paris; by inheritance to his family; Georges Viau [died c. 1943], Paris, by 1908 until at least 1914. Wilhelm Hansen, Copenhagen, Denmark. Dikran Khan Kelekian [1868-1951], New York and Paris, by 1921; (his sale, American Art Association, New York, 30 January 1922, no. 50); purchased by (Ferargil Galleries, New York); by exchange to Albert E. Gallatin [1881-1952], New York; on consignment 1927 with (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold



Fig. 1. X-radiograph of 1963.10.117

1927 to (Kraushaar Galleries, New York); sold February 1927 to Chester Dale [1883-1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Galerie E. Blot, 1908, *Exposition Daumier*, no. 20.² Vienna, Galerie Miethke, November-

December 1908, *Honoré Daumier, 1808–1879*, no. 13. Saint Petersburg, 1912, *Exposition centennale de l'art français*, no. 241. Bremen, Kunsthalle, 1914, *Internationale Ausstellung*, no. 91.³ Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, 1918, *L'Art français du XIX^e siècle*, no. 50. The Brooklyn Museum, 1921, *Paintings by Modern French Masters*, no. 63. MusFrA, 1928, *100 Years of French Portraits from the Chester Dale Collection*, no. 4. MOMA, 1930, *Corot–Daumier*, no. 79, repro. MusFrA, 1931, *Degas and His Tradition*, no. 19. PMA, 1937, *French Painting*, no cat. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE PORTRAIT shows the head of a man in vigorous maturity, perhaps in his mid-forties, posed against an olive-gray ground. His dark, reddish brown hair has begun to recede from the slope of his forehead. Dark eyebrows shade his eyes. A short, full beard frames his cheeks and covers the energetic prominence of his chin. He wears a dark brown coat. The sitter for this portrait and its original owner, Hippolyte Lavoignat (1813–1896), was a highly skilled wood engraver, much employed by Paris publishers of the 1830s and 1840s in the illustration of books after designs by prominent artists of the period, including Daumier. He played an important role in the technical development of wood engraving toward complex painterly and tonal effects. About 1848, he turned to work in oil, like Daumier, and became a landscape painter whose work was occasionally shown at the Salons of the 1850s and 1860s.⁴ Lavoignat owned at least four paintings by Daumier and in 1878 was among the friends who lent pictures to Daumier's first one-man exhibition.⁵

The portrait first appeared in an exhibition at a Paris gallery in 1908.⁶ Later that year it was shown in Vienna.⁷ It was then owned by the Daumier collector Georges Viau who had acquired it from Lavoignat's heirs sometime after his death in 1896. The picture rapidly became well known through frequent exhibitions⁸ and its inclusion in the standard publications of Klossowski (1923), Fontainas (1923), Fuchs (1927 and 1930), and Adhémar (1954). Until the 1960s, its attribution remained unquestioned, though as a portrait clearly taken from life it held a strikingly exceptional position among the paintings of Daumier who was known to have worked almost exclusively from memory or the imagination. Various portraits that had at some time been attributed to him were all shown to be spurious, prompting Heinrich Schwartz, who had

helped to weed them out, to ask, in 1957: "Are there no genuine portraits by Daumier?" He concluded that "strange as it may seem... we know but one: the portrait of the wood-engraver and painter Hippolyte Lavoignat.... It is unostentatious, yet powerful, painted with large brush strokes and built upon the contrasts of light and dark areas which are held together by an unfailing knowledge of form and an equally profound experience in tectonic values."⁹ Jean Adhémar in 1954 was equally convinced of Daumier's authorship of the portrait, the extreme rarity of which he acknowledged, remarking that "it causes us to regret that Daumier did not paint more portraits, for it equals the best likenesses painted by Manet who was his admirer."¹⁰

The attribution to Daumier was first contested by Karl Eric Maison during a visit to the National Gallery on 4 March 1964, when he examined the Gallery's paintings by Daumier. He found the picture's history "questionable," and the painting itself "technically not at all characteristic of Daumier."¹¹ Explaining himself more fully in a letter of 18 April 1964, he wrote:

This is certainly a good picture, but I cannot see Daumier's hand in it.... It may be taken for granted that the Portrait was first in the possession of the sitter, and the remaining part of the provenance is correct. However the fact that the picture was for a long time in the Georges Viau collection is not unconditionally to be regarded as a recommendation: this collector had many Daumiers, but he made no secret of the fact that he occasionally "finished" them.... I am not saying that the Lavoignat *is* by Viau—it is too good for that—but the history of the picture alone is certainly no proof of its being by Daumier.... There are several Studies of Heads [among Daumier's works], but not one single true portrait, evidently painted from life, like the Lavoignat.¹²

As to who might have painted the picture, Maison suggested that "Boulard père, the Portrait Painter who was very close to Daumier might be a possibility. Blot père, painter and art dealer, probably also finished sketches by Daumier, and there must have been others."¹³ Maison's statement is remarkable, not only for its abrupt rejection of a picture that had previously enjoyed unanimous acceptance but also for his reticence in stating the reasons for its rejection. This is unlikely to have been based solely on the fact that no true portraits by Daumier are known, or on the irrelevant circumstance



Fig. 2. Honoré Daumier, *Third-Class Carriage* (*Un Wagon de troisième classe*), oil on panel, c. 1856–1858, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Purchase: Whitney Warren, Jr. Fund, in memory of Mrs. Adolph B. Spreckles; Bequest funds of Henry S. Williams in memory of H.K.S. Williams, Magnin Income Fund; Art Trust Fund; Alexander and Jean de Bretteville Fund; Art Acquisition Endowment Income Fund in honor of Mrs. John N. Rosekrans, Jr., 1996.51

of Viau's ownership. But Maison never fully explained what caused him to disattribute the picture. The portrait of Lavoignat has since been dropped from the list of Daumier's work, apparently by silent consent and without further examination. Maison's critical catalogue of Daumier's paintings (1968) merely includes it, without comment, in a list of wrong attributions.¹⁴

In style and technical handling, the portrait is, in fact, without parallel among Daumier's paintings. The head's firm structure, its energetic modeling in contrasting shadows and lights, and the shaping brushstrokes that insistently follow its saliences and hollows have nothing in common with the broadly suggestive improvisational manner that Daumier consistently used in his oil studies of heads. Nor does the portrait's sober objectivity agree with the temper and spirit of his work: the sitter's passive pose and absent gaze show little sign of the energetic expressiveness that normally marks his treatment of the human face.

If the picture's excellent provenance and high quality are not sufficient to establish its authenticity, they do raise the possibility of biographical and artistic connections with Daumier. Though it is true that there are no portraits from life by Daumier which can be set beside it, there are, as Ad-

hémar has noted, portraitlike faces in certain of his compositions that offer some physiognomic and perhaps even stylistic parallels. One of these is that of the bearded, middle-aged man in *Third-Class Carriage* (fig. 2),¹⁵ in whom Adhémar believed to have recognized Lavoignat.¹⁶ He seems older and stouter than the sitter of the portrait, but the resemblance is noteworthy. The same distinctive physiognomy, shown at different ages, appears in several other paintings by Daumier,¹⁷ a reminder that the National Gallery's portrait of Lavoignat, whatever its true authorship, did originate in his milieu, which helps to explain its early confusion with his work.

Notes

1. According to a note of 15 September 1994 by Elizabeth Walmsley of the NGA Painting Conservation Department, the underlying image vaguely resembles a landscape "with a curving road and a high horizon line."

2. Evidently the first commercially sponsored one-man exhibition of Daumier's work, Adhémar 1954, 85: "Mais, en 1908, une nouvelle exposition ramène l'attention sur le peintre. Elle a lieu près de la Madeleine, rue Richepanse, chez le marchand Blot: vingt tableaux, dix aquarelles, sépias et dessins; le tout bien choisi appartient à Blot lui-même, à Gallimard, Donop de Monchy, Duret, Sainsère, Chéramy, et surtout à Viau."



Follower of Honoré Daumier, *Hippolyte Lavoignat*, 1963.10.117

3. A label (in NGA curatorial files) formerly attached to the stretcher of this picture attests its receipt (under the title *Männl. Bildnis*) by the *Grosse Kunstausstellung zu Bremen 1914*. A second label names the addressee as *Kunst Verein Bremen*, the organizers of the exhibition. The exhibition's catalogue refers to the picture, lent by "Herr Dr. Viau, Paris," as no. 91, *Männliches Bildnis*.

4. The wood engraver Hippolyte Lavoignat was a native of Laon who had learned his craft in England. Emile Dacier, *La Gravure française* (Paris, 1944), 125, 127, 163. Lavoignat engraved four illustrations by Daumier for Eugène Sue's *Mystères de Paris* in 1843 (see Bouvy 1933, 2: nos. 738-741). He also furnished wood engravings after designs for book illustrations by Jean Gigoux (*Gil Blas*, 1835), Tony Johannot (*Don Quichotte*, 1836), Louis-François Français (*Paul et Virginie*, 1838), Auguste Raffet (*Histoire de Napoléon*, 1842), Charles-François Daubigny (*Les Mystères de Paris*, 1843), and Ernest Meissonier (*Lazarillo de Tormès*, 1846).

5. Paris, Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1878, *Exposition des peintures et dessins de H. Daumier*. The paintings listed as belonging to Lavoignat were nos. 19, *Le Tireur de bateau*; 21, *Un Lecteur*; 22, *Un Homme et son enfant*; 23, *Enfants sous les arbres*.

6. Paris 1908, no. 20.

7. Vienna 1908, no. 13.

8. Jean (1912, 34) enthusiastically hailed the picture on the occasion of its exhibition in Saint Petersburg: "Le voici encore comme portraitiste... avec le *Portrait du graveur Lavoignat*; toutes ses qualités d'observation qui le poussaient à prendre dans la physiognomie humaine les traits essentiels pour les caricaturer, font de Daumier un des plus grands portraitistes du siècle."

9. Heinrich Schwartz, "Daumier, Gill, and Nadar," *GBA*, 6th ser., 49 (February 1957): 95-96, repro.

10. Adhémar 1954, 53-54.

11. Memorandum by Perry B. Cott, Chief Curator, in the NGA curatorial files.

12. Letter to John Walker, Director, NGA curatorial files. Concurring with Maison, Oliver Larkin wrote to John Walker on 29 April 1964, "there is nothing in the *Lavoignat* portrait to indicate that it is by Daumier. So far as I can tell, we have no portrait whatsoever by him" (letter in NGA curatorial files).

13. Letter of 18 April 1964 to John Walker.

14. Maison 1968, 1:43 note 42; 437, no. 15.

15. *Un Wagon de troisième classe*, private collection, Boston (Maison 1968, 1: I-109).

16. Adhémar 1954, 53: "Lavoignat, dont nous croyons reconnaître le visage dans un personnage de l'un des *Wagons*." Schwartz (1957, 96) thought that the NGA's *Portrait of Lavoignat* "shows the 'handwriting' of the painter of *Le Wagon de Troisième Classe*."

17. In, for example, *Causerie dans l'atelier*, David Heyman collection, New York (Maison 1968, 1: no. I-64); *Joueurs de cartes*, John Hay Whitney collection, New York (Maison I-134); *La Partie de dame*, Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur (Maison I-149).

References

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 1912 | Jean: 34. |
| 1923 | Klossowski: 123, no. 405. |
| 1929 | Dale: 3, repro. |
| 1942 | Dale: 25, repro. |
| 1944 | Dale: 25, repro. |
| 1953 | Dale: 31, repro. |
| 1963 | Walker: 323, repro. |
| 1965a | Dale: 44, repro. |
| 1965 | NGA: 37. |
| 1968 | NGA: 30, repro. |
| 1975 | NGA: 94, repro. |
| 1985 | NGA: 115, repro. |

Manner of Honoré Daumier



Manner of Honoré Daumier, *Study of Clowns*, 1970.17.24

1970.17.24 (2396)

Study of Clowns

Possibly early 20th century
Oil on oak panel, 8.5 × 11.1 × 0.5 (3³/₈ × 4³/₈ × 1/4)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

Inscriptions

Falsely inscribed at upper right: *b.D.*

Technical Notes: The picture was painted on a commercially prepared oak panel, horizontally grained and 0.5 cm thick. This support is not covered in the usual manner with a ground layer. Instead, a layer of opaque gray underpaint lies beneath the top half of the picture, and a layer of opaque flesh color under its bottom half. Over this, the image has been painted in large strokes of the fully loaded brush, raising some impasto. The two figures, initially blocked in with broad areas of paint, were subsequently reinforced with outlines and provided with patches of highlights.

Provenance: Captain Edward H. Molyneux [1894–1974], Paris, by 1952; sold 15 August 1955 to Ailsa Mellon Bruce [1901–1969], New York.

Exhibited: Loan to Towson, Maryland, Hampton National Historic Site, May–October 1956. Palm Beach, Florida, Society of the Four Arts, 1958, *Paintings from the Collection of Mrs. Mellon Bruce*, no. 27. San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1961, *French Paintings of the Nineteenth Century from the Collection of Mrs. Mellon Bruce*, no. 16, repro.

THIS PICTURE of unusually small size,¹ painted on panel, is a partial copy of a well-known composition by Daumier, *Les Saltimbanques en repos* (fig. 1), formerly in the Arthur Sachs collection and more recently in that of the Norton Simon Art Foundation, Pasadena, California.² The National Gallery's minuscule copy reduces that composition to the head and shoulders of one of the saltimbanques

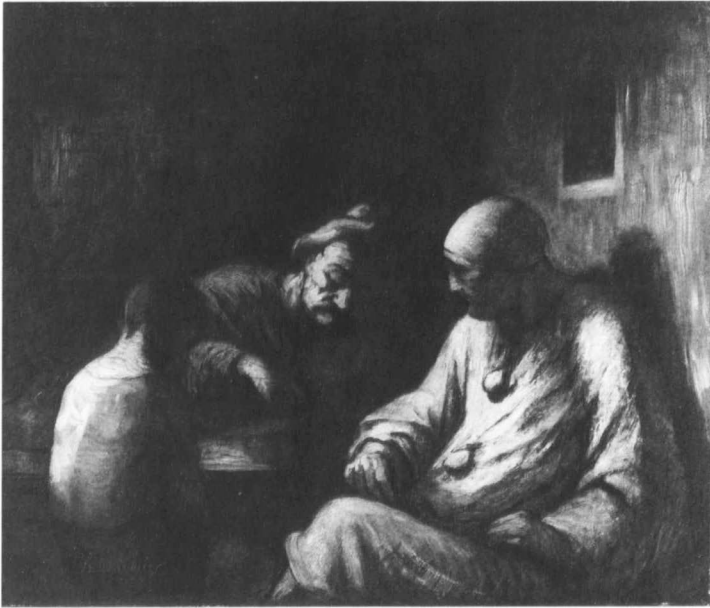


Fig. 1. Honoré Daumier, *Les Saltimbanques en repos* (*Mountbanks Resting*), oil on canvas, 1870, Pasadena, Norton Simon Art Foundation, Gift of Mr. Norton Simon, M.1976.06.P

and very roughly indicates the head of the second, older clown who, in the large picture, is shown counting out money on the table between them.

The execution of the panel is broad and assured, particularly in the head and bust of the white-clad saltimbanque, but its sweeping, showy brushwork differs from Daumier's ways of modeling form, and its mannerisms of handling are unlike those of his hand. The small picture's relationship to the large *Saltimbanques en repos* is not that of a prelim-

inary sketch: derivative, rather than preparatory, it appears to be a copy of fairly recent date, perhaps adapted sometime after 1920 from one of the many reproductions then available of the original.

Nothing is known of the picture's history before 1952. A curatorial recommendation made in 1973, not long after its acquisition by the National Gallery, concluded:

Although the painting is initialed *h.D.*, and is in the style of Daumier, we have no history on it and do not find it in the extensive Daumier literature. The quality of this painting is admittedly poor. John Rewald doubted its authenticity and excluded it from his catalogue of the Bruce collection. None of the other authorities on French painting who have studied the Bruce collection in storage at the Gallery have expressed an opinion supporting the old attribution to Daumier. It is thus recommended we change the attribution of this painting to Manner of Honoré Daumier.³

This was done by action of the Board of Trustees on 2 May 1973.

Notes

1. The only known painting by Daumier of comparably small size is *Le Peintre devant son tableau* (The Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pa.), which measures 11 × 8 cm (Maison 1968, 1: no. I-220).
2. Maison 1968, 1: no. I-185, pl. 136.
3. Memorandum, signed by David E. Rust, curator, Charles Parkhurst, assistant director, and J. Carter Brown, director, in NGA curatorial files.

References

- 1975 NGA: 94, repro.
1985 NGA: 115, repro.

Charles David

1797–1869

CHARLES DAVID was born in Cadenet near Avignon (Vaucluse), the son of a goldsmith and musician. His younger brother, Félicien David (1810–1876), became well known in France as a composer of symphonies and operas. Charles followed a more modest career. After promising art studies at Avignon and Dijon, he enlisted in the army as a bandsman, participated in the French campaign in Spain of 1823, and ended his military service as trombonist in the regimental band of the Royal Cuirassiers. On returning to civilian life, he settled in Paris as a painter of landscapes, portraits, and miniatures. He had chosen to live at 9, quai d'Anjou, the building on the Ile Saint-Louis in which Honoré Daumier lived and worked in the 1840s and that had become a meeting place for artists and writers of the romantic generation.¹ The subject of David's only known submission to a Paris Salon, *View of the Ponds at Ville-d'Avray*, exhibited in 1847,² strongly suggests that he was acquainted with Camille Corot, Daumier's friend, who regularly worked at Ville-d'Avray (see pp. 57–60). The Revolution of 1848 caused David to return to his native province. Earning his living as a painter of miniatures, he occasionally exhibited his larger portraits and landscapes at Aix and Avignon. By his eccentricities, his exuberant good humor, and his arcane studies of the mystery of perpetual motion, he achieved considerable local celebrity. Very little is now known of his work.

Notes

1. Raymond Escholier, *Daumier, peintre et lithographe* (Paris, 1923), 51–55.

2. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure et lithographie des artistes vivants* [exh. cat. Musée Royal.] (Paris, 1847), 59, no. 425.

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1963.10.15 (1679)

Portrait of a Young Horsewoman

1839

Oil on fabric, 74.3 × 60.5 (29 1/4 × 23 13/16)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: 1839 / CHARLES DAVID

Technical Notes: The picture's support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, was relined onto fabric in 1954. Its tacking margins have been removed, but faint cusping visible on all four sides suggests it is close to its original size. Over a smooth white ground, the paint has been thinly and precisely applied, with delicate glazes and scumbles laid over dried lower layers to create the forms. No underdrawing was revealed during infrared examination, although traces of dark lines around the sitter's fingers were visible under magnification. The costume has been modeled in several layers of opaque paint and glazes. There is a 9-cm horizontal repaired tear that extends in from the left background to the sitter's right eye. Retouching covering this damage has discolored. Discolored retouching also covers a 2-cm loss in the jacket and small losses in the left and right background. The paint is slightly abraded in the face, hair, and sky and has been flattened by lining. The varnish applied following treatment in 1954 has yellowed since.

Provenance: Jacques-Victor, comte de la Beraudière [1806–1884], château de Bouzille, near Angers, France; his son comte de la Beraudière, château de Bouzille; his widow, Marie-Thérèse, comtesse de la Beraudière, Paris; (her sale, American Art Association, New York, 11–13 December 1930, no. 42); purchased by (H. E. Russell) for Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MusFrA, 1931, *Portraits of Women, Loan Exhibition: Romanticism to Surrealism*, no. 3. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE YOUNG WOMAN, wearing a long-skirted, dark red riding costume, is seated on a low parapet. Her left hand is gloved, her bare right hand holds a gold-tipped riding crop. A narrow frill collar held by a black silk cravat circles her neck. Behind her, an extensive hilly landscape of southern character opens to the view under a vast blue sky.

The unknown sitter's haircut and slightly an-



Charles David, *Portrait of a Young Horsewoman*, 1963.10.15

drogynous features have at times led to confusion about her sex and caused the picture's subject to be misidentified as a "young horseman."¹ But her costume is of the kind worn by fashionable equestriennes, known as *amazones* in the 1830s.² It is distinguishable from the male riding attire of the period, though it shares some of its features.³

The sharply silhouetted figure, deep crimson against the light blue sky, looms large above a low-lying, very distant landscape. The flattened, decoratively angular folds of the costume lend a slightly archaic note to the portrait in accord with the head's finely stylized features and large eyes. In its flattenings and brusque contrasts of scale the image has something of the effect of an illuminated manuscript page and is reminiscent, at the same time, of early Renaissance portraiture. These traits do not derive from provincial conservatism or folk-art naïveté but exemplify the romantic antiquarianism that was a strand in the complex weave of Parisian fashion in the 1830s when Charles David lived in the bohemian community of painters and poets on the Ile Saint-Louis.

Notes

1. Mrs. Chester Dale, entertaining doubts about the sitter's sex, came to conclude that she was in fact a young man and requested that the picture's title be

changed accordingly (letter of 26 April 1963 in NGA curatorial files). Evidently in deference to the donor's wishes, the picture was published by Katherine Kuh as *Portrait of a Young Horseman* (1963, 36). In 1965 its earlier title was restored by John Walker of the NGA.

2. "Riding became more and more fashionable among women between 1830 and 1835. . . . Most ladies wore a cloth skirt and cambric jacket, with a narrow frill round the neck, held by a silk cravat. . . . The strapped riding trousers were of drill, and boots, reindeer gloves, a rhinoceros-hide switch, or a cane, supplied by the famous Verdier, completed the costume" (Octave Uzanne, *Fashion in Paris* [London, 1901], 93).

3. The sexual ambiguity of the *amazonne*, manifested by her quasi-masculine costume, exerted a particular romantic appeal, most famously exploited at the time by Théophile Gautier in his novel *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, published in 1835.

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 1963 Kuh, Katherine. "The Artist Looks at Children." *Saturday Review of Literature*, 14 December: 36.
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 1975 NGA: 94, repro.
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Jacques-Louis David

1748–1825

JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID was born in Paris in 1748, the son of an iron merchant who was killed in a duel (an unusual circumstance in his social class), when the boy was nine years old. His mother, Geneviève Buron, came of a family of builders and architects and was distantly related to the painter François Boucher (1703–1770). Under the guardianship of uncles on his mother's side, Louis received a sound classical education. His guardians wished to train him as an architect, but he insisted on being allowed to study painting. Following the advice of Boucher, he was placed in the studio of Joseph-Marie Vien (1716–1809), the leading pro-

motor of the neoclassical reaction against the rococo. David's student work, strikingly rococo at first, was slow in adjusting to the ascendancy of classicism. He competed four times for the Rome Prize, beginning in 1771 with an awkward pastiche of Boucher (*Battle between Mars and Minerva*, Louvre); failing again in 1772 with *Diana and Apollo Killing the Children of Niobe* (lost), which enraged him to the point of threatening suicide; and still unsuccessful in his third try in 1773 (*Death of Seneca*, PetitPal). His fourth attempt, *Antiochus and Stratonice* (1774, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris), finally won him the prize and gave the first indication of his

turning to classicism. In Rome from 1775 to 1780, the overwhelming impression of the masters of the Italian High Renaissance and early baroque caused him to purge his work radically of all traces of the modern “French,” that is, rococo, manner. A visit to Naples in 1779 completed his conversion. *Belisarius Begging Alms* (1780, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille), begun in Rome but finished after David’s return to Paris, sums up, in the calm grandeur of its composition and the subdued harmonies of its colors, the gains of his Italian stay. Reports of his talent had preceded him to Paris. The French Academy hastened to admit him with the rank of associate. At the Salon of 1781 the exhibition of his Italian canvases produced a strong impression on critics and public. His marriage in 1782 to Charlotte Pécoul, daughter of the supervisor of royal buildings, brought him influence and financial security. Sponsored by Vien, he was admitted to full academy membership the following year, offering as his reception piece *Andromache Mourning Hector* (Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris). With its antique weapons, furniture, and architectural ornaments, it was the most consciously “Greek” of his works to this time.

Awarded a royal commission to execute a painting on the subject of *Horatius Defending His Son Before the People* for the Salon of 1783, David delayed work on the project and, on his own responsibility, changed its subject to the *Oath of the Horatii*. Deciding that he could carry it out only in Rome, David traveled to Italy with financial help from his father-in-law and there finished the picture in eleven months. Exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1785, its Spartan severity excited general admiration and founded David’s reputation as France’s foremost painter. He followed this success with a private commission for the financier Trudaine, *The Death of Socrates* (MMA), which won praise at the Salon of 1787. His entry in 1789, *Brutus in the Atrium of His House, after the Execution of His Sons* (Louvre), based on a play by Voltaire, was, like the *Horatii*, a royal commission, but its moral lesson—that family ties must yield to the demands of patriotism—was stated with an unyielding hardness that foretold the Terror.

Without professing any political ideology, David’s pre-Revolutionary paintings merely celebrated civic virtue, but with a vehemence that later made them adaptable to partisan rhetoric.

Though little is known of his opinions before 1789, there can be no doubt that he greeted the Revolution with enthusiasm and constantly supported its most radical causes. His political activity was at first confined to the Academy, in which he became the leader of a dissident faction of junior members. By enlisting the aid of the Commune of Paris, then of the National Assembly, and finally of the Jacobin Club, he managed to dismantle the privileges of the academy one by one and, as a member of the Committee of Public Instruction in 1793, obtained the decree that abolished it altogether. An admirer and friend of Robespierre, he voted for the beheading of the king and the queen (January and October 1793) and briefly presided over the Convention. During his years of Revolutionary activity, he did not produce moralizing history paintings, such as might be expected from an artist-legislator. His first service to the Revolution was to commemorate the *Oath in the Tennis Court* at the request of a Jacobin club in 1790. His drawing (Louvre) of that crucial meeting of the Third Estate in an indoor tennis court at Versailles, exhibited at the Salon of 1791, was to have been executed in a large painting paid for by public subscription, but the scheme failed and the canvas remained unfinished. As the leading member of the Committee of Public Instruction, David was in fact, though not in title, Robespierre’s minister of the arts, to whom it fell to plan the huge national pageants that were the Revolution’s chief means of mass indoctrination. He designed their settings of artificial mountains, symbolic sculptures, and monumental altars, sketched the costumes and organized the ceremonial for the Translation of Voltaire’s Ashes to the Pantheon (1791), the celebration of the Mutinous Swiss Guards (1792), the Festival of Brotherhood (1793), and the Feast of the Supreme Being (1794), and volunteered to paint the memorial portraits of the Revolution’s “martyrs”—*Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau* (1793, lost), *Marat* (1793, Musées Royaux, Brussels), and *Barra* (unfinished, Musée Calvet, Avignon).

When Robespierre fell in July 1794, David was denounced as “tyrant of the arts” and had to defend himself before the hostile Convention. Though he had earlier vowed, recalling Socrates, to “drink the hemlock” with his leader, he lost his nerve, lamely exculpated himself, and was spared the guillotine. Imprisoned for several months in 1794 and again in 1795, he was amnestied at the

time of the establishment of the Directory. Feeling betrayed and blameless, he withdrew from the pitfalls of politics into the innocence of art: he felt the Revolution had distracted him from his true vocation, classical history painting. The years between Robespierre's fall (1794) and Bonaparte's rise (1799) were his interlude of artistic independence between two political engagements, a time to concentrate on matters of form and style.

While still in prison, his thoughts turned again to themes from antiquity. Among them he found one that was applicable to France's present situation, the *Sabine Women Stopping the Battle between Romans and Sabines* (Louvre), a scene of reconciliation. The picture, which occupied him from 1795 to 1799, marked a change in his attitude toward classicism. His earlier paintings, he now believed, were too harshly "Roman" and too physical in their display of muscular anatomies. In the *Sabines* he aimed instead for "Greek" purity. He disposed its main figures in a wide frieze, stripped them bare, and defined their smooth and slender bodies with clean contours. He exploited this refined classical manner in portraits of fashion leaders of post-Revolutionary society, among them those of *Mme Verninac* (1799, Louvre) and *Mme Récamier* (1800, Louvre). Impoverished after years without adequate income, he made his peace with the new order. When the academy, which he had helped to abolish, was reestablished under a new name, he immediately became a member. At the same time, he organized his studio as a place of instruction through which in time some four hundred students passed, causing it to become, identified simply as "the French School," a dominant force in European art for several decades.

David first met Bonaparte in the winter of 1797 on the latter's return from his Italian victories. David was eager to ally himself with the hero of the hour, and Bonaparte, already preparing his ascent to power, sensed that the master propagandist might prove of future use. A life-size portrait was begun but remained unfinished. A closer relationship developed in 1799, after Napoleon, now titled First Consul, had become the dictator of France. In *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at the Saint-Bernard* (1801; Versailles and studio repetitions), David celebrated the victor of Marengo, "calm on a fiery horse," as Bonaparte himself had specified. When Napoleon made himself emperor of France in 1804,

he appointed David his First Painter and commissioned him to commemorate the empire's inaugural ceremonies in four paintings of very large size. Only two, the *Coronation* and the *Presentation of the Standards*, were executed, before David's insistent demands for money and administrative power so irritated the emperor that he canceled the project. David had witnessed the coronation in the choir of Notre Dame. In striving to give artistic form to a scene from modern life, he put aside his classicist preferences and followed the example of Rubens' *Coronation of Maria de Médici* (Louvre). His innate realism was roused by the ceremonial: he found that crimson velvet and gold braid, though repugnant to strict classicists, "offered opportunities to a painter," as did the pomp of monarchy to a former revolutionary. A masterly composition of splendid, painterly execution, David's *Coronation* (1805–1808, Louvre) remains the summit of modern history painting. The second canvas in the series, *Presentation of the Standards* (1808–1810, Versailles), which records the armies' homage to the emperor, proved less successful. After its exhibition at the Salon of 1810, David received no further state commissions. Lacking official employment, he reverted to classical subjects of his own choice, taking up again a monumental canvas, *Leonidas at the Pass of Thermopylae* (1812–1814, Louvre), that he had begun under the Consulate in 1799 but abandoned at Napoleon's prompting. At sixty-two, he was beginning to show signs of weariness. The robustly modern realism and the delight in fresh colors that Napoleon's commissions had stimulated hereafter found an outlet only in portraits, notable among them the National Gallery's *Napoleon in His Study* (see pp. 196–208), the private commission of a francophile Briton.

After Napoleon's first abdication in April 1814 and the restoration of Louis XVIII, David remained undisturbed and was able to arrange a private exhibition of his *Leonidas*. In March 1815 Napoleon returned from Elba, swept away the Bourbon court, and reconfirmed David as First Painter. David now signed a declaration of loyalty to Napoleon—an act of courage, since he foresaw the emperor's ultimate defeat. On the reinstatement of Louis XVIII after Waterloo, David was banished from France, together with other regicides who had opted for Napoleon. He settled in Brussels in 1816 and, at sixty-eight, prepared for

a new life. The portraits he painted in these last years prove his sense of composition and vigor of execution to have been almost undiminished. Not so his renewed attempts at classical subjects that, now entirely without ideological relevance, took the form of ingratiating erotic mythologies—among them *Cupid and Psyche* (1817, The Cleveland Museum of Art) and David's disastrous swan song, *Mars Disarmed by Venus and the Graces* (1824, Musées Royaux, Brussels). Preceded by much publicity, this painting, when shown in Brussels and Paris to more than twenty thousand paying visitors, dismayed both friends and foes by its feebleness. David ended his days in bourgeois comfort in Brussels, cared for by affectionate pupils and friends. A heart ailment brought on his death in December 1825. The revolutionary who had stage-managed the pagan funerals of Lepelletier and Marat was borne in solemn cortège to the church of Sainte-Gudule and given a Christian burial.

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1961.9.15 (1374)

The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries

1812

Oil on fabric, 203.9 × 125.1 (80 1/4 × 49 1/4)
 Samuel H. Kress Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: LVD. CI. DAVID OPVS / 1812

Technical Notes: The support is a fine, plain-weave fabric of medium weight that has been lined onto fabric.

The painting has been expanded 0.7 cm on all sides. An off-white ground containing much lead covers the support. The image was formed of fluidly applied, moderately thick paint layers. In the flesh areas, the middle tones were applied thinly over the ground. Shadows were next painted over the toned ground, followed by the highlights, the final touches of paint. Except for some low impasto in the highlights, the paint layers show little texture. Several design changes are apparent: simple visual inspection reveals a slight change in the position of the quill pen, and in infrared examination a change in the curvature of the right rear leg of the chair becomes noticeable. The picture surface is coated with a thick layer of somewhat discolored varnish. The painting is well preserved, apart from a 7.5-cm repaired vertical tear next to the left leg of the desk and abrasion in the middle tones of Napoleon's face.

Provenance: Commissioned by Alexander, marquis of Douglas [1767–1852, from 1819, 10th duke of Hamilton], Hamilton Palace, Strathclyde, Scotland;¹ his son, William Alexander Anthony Archibald Douglas, 11th duke [1811–1863]; his son, William Alexander Louis Stephen Douglas, 12th duke [1845–1895]; (Hamilton Palace Collection sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 8 July 1882, no. 1108); bought by (F. Davis), probably buying for Archibald Philip Primrose, 5th earl of Rosebery [1847–1929], London; his son, Albert Edward Harry Mayer Archibald Primrose, 6th earl of Rosebery [1882–1974], London; sold 15 June 1951 (to Wildenstein & Co., London and New York); by whom sold in 1954 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: London, Tate Gallery; Manchester, City Art Gallery, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1948–1949, *David: Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings*, no. 23, repro. Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, 1955, *De David à Toulouse-Lautrec*, no. 17, repro. Paris, Grand Palais; The Detroit Institute of Arts; MMA, 1974–1975, *French Painting, 1774–1830: The Age of Revolution*, no. 36bis, repro. Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Museum, 1985, *French Connections: Scotland and the Art of France*, no. 49, repro. Louvre; Versailles, 1989–1990, *Jacques-Louis David, 1748–1825*, no. 206, repro.

NAPOLEON (1769–1821) is shown, at forty-three, wearing the blue *frac* with red lining, red cuffs, and white, buttoned-on facings of the foot grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, together with the epaulettes of a general, his regular dress on Sundays and special occasions.² Beneath his coat he wears a white cashmere vest and breeches of the same color; white silk stockings and gold-buckled black shoes complete his costume. On his chest the emperor displays the star of a *commandant* of the Legion of

Honor and the order of *chevalier* of the Iron Crown of Italy, and next to them the large silver star of the *Grand Aigle* of the Great Cross of the Legion of Honor, the distinction to which the crimson band across his chest also refers. He holds a golden snuffbox in his left hand³ and has laid his gold-hilted sword⁴ with its white leather belt on the chair beside him.

Standing in his private *cabinet de travail* (study) in the Tuileries, he has just risen from his throne-like chair of gilded wood, the red velvet coverings of which are embroidered with golden bees, emblems of his reign. The massive writing desk behind him, supported by gilt lions, is littered with documents on which he has been working, among them a manuscript of the Code Napoléon, the crowning achievement of his legal reform.⁵ Above this scroll, on top of the desk, lies a closed portfolio of blue velvet stamped with the fleurs-de-lys, a relic of the Bourbon past and perhaps meant to remind the viewer of the necessary continuity of legislative tradition. The candles in the lamp, burnt down to their holders and about to splutter out, bear witness to the length of the emperor's night labors. The pendulum clock behind him indicates that the time is 4:13 in the morning. A volume of Plutarch's *Lives* lying beneath the desk hints at the sources of the statesman's moral inspiration;⁶ a rolled map on the carpet, farther to the left, speaks of the practical work of the military strategist. The wall that forms the dark background terminates, at the left, in a pilaster with gilt reliefs; beyond it the view opens into an adjacent room filled with bookshelves. As the dawn breaks, Napoleon rises from his night work, to exchange the role of lawgiver for that of soldier. He has laid down his pen and is about to buckle on his sword. The warm candlelight of the night still fills the background, while the emperor, emerging into the cooler, brighter light of early morning, prepares to leave his study to pass his guards in review.⁷

The painting has a carefully calculated structure. Turned slightly to the left, the figure of Napoleon—seen from a low vantage point, no doubt to increase his stature—fills the center nearly from top to bottom. The chair at his side, placed at an oblique, defines the foreground space in which he stands. Behind him, parallel to the picture plane, the massive form of his desk occupies the middle distance. The shadowy rear wall, framed by the

pendulum clock and a decorative pilaster, closes off the background, leaving only a narrow opening at the left.⁸ The flat grays and browns of that wall and the dark green of the carpet below act as a somber foil for the more distinctly defined objects in the picture's middle distance, dominated by the subdued gold and mahogany of the desk, the matte blue of its velvet cover, and the dark green of the lampshade. The strong light that falls into the foreground gives a startling salience to the figure of the emperor and sharpens the contrasts between the brilliant whites, the dark blue, and the accents of crimson and gold in his uniform.

It is remarkable that no more than two fairly rough preparatory drawings for this major work are known. A drawing in the Rush H. Kress collection (fig. 1),⁹ of apparently spontaneous execution, nevertheless shows all the essential features of the final composition. It includes the tall standing clock in the background. In a second drawing, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, Besançon (fig. 2),¹⁰ the figure of Napoleon is more clearly defined by strong contours drawn with a hard pencil over an otherwise rather faint and loose design. This drawing differs from the painting in that the clock in the background is given the form of an ornamental sphere set on a tall base. In both these drawings, the general composition seems equally complete; there is no sign of a progressive development. It is possible that further drawings once existed and have been lost,¹¹ but the apparent scarcity and negligence of these preliminaries are in fact characteristic of David's expeditious working methods. He spent less effort on exploratory sketches and made fewer detail studies than most painters of the period, including his own followers, and left to the final execution with brushes and oils the creation of the powerful sense of physical substance—flesh, cloth, metal—that is the mark of his fundamental realism.

David on this occasion took great pains to lend palpable reality even to seemingly minor details. He managed with evident relish the nuances of color and texture in the snowy white of Napoleon's cashmere vest, the warmer white of his breeches, and the pearly sheen of his white silk stockings. The heavily sculpted gilt chair, with its red, gold-embroidered upholstery, is a marvel of opulent realism. Since David was in the habit of delegating the routine chores in his larger commissions to as-



Fig. 1. Jacques-Louis David, preparatory drawing for *The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries*, pencil on paper, c. 1812, New York, Collection of Mrs. Rush H. Kress

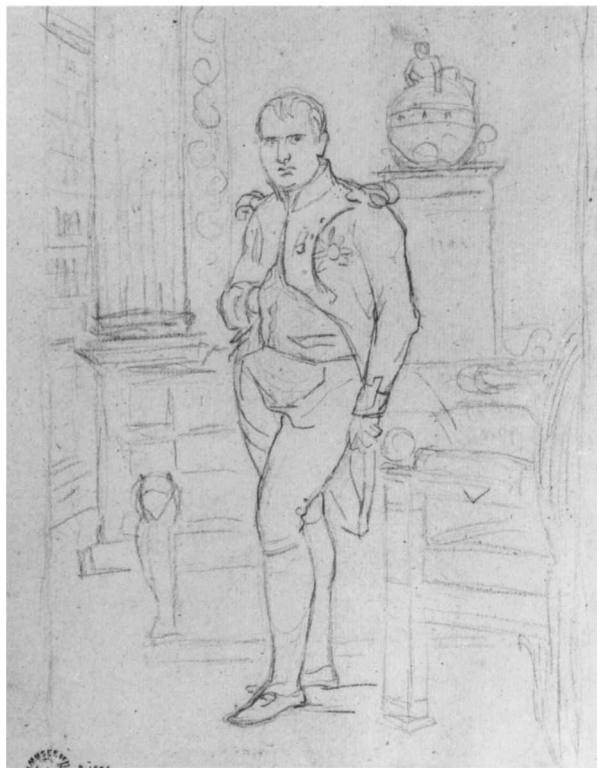


Fig. 2. Jacques-Louis David, preparatory drawing for *The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries*, pencil on paper, c. 1812, Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, D 1979, photograph Ch. Choffet, Besançon

sistants,¹² it is not surprising that their possible share in the execution of *Napoleon in His Study* has been the subject of some speculation.¹³ It is very probable that assistants laid in the broader, somewhat perfunctorily brushed areas of the background, but the masterly execution, not only of the figure of Napoleon himself but also of many of the accessory details, leaves no room for doubt that David finished them with his own hand.

Writing about this painting, some authors have remarked that David seems to have made no effort to show Napoleon's study as it actually was.¹⁴ Several pieces of furniture that he depicted with careful realism as part of its interior are in fact known to have been located in other rooms of the palace. This is true, for instance, of the prominently placed gilded chair, which, as David knew, since he himself had designed it, belonged to the ceremonial appointments of the Grand Cabinet de l'Empereur, rather than to the simpler furnishings of the pri-

vate study.¹⁵ Certain details in the picture, on the other hand, do reflect the actual appearance of that room, among them, surprisingly, the standing clock in the background that one might have taken for a merely symbolic accessory. François Gérard's (1770–1837) portrait *Louis XVIII in Napoleon's Study in the Tuileries*, painted ten years later and exhibited at the Salon of 1824, unmistakably shows the same clock still in its place.¹⁶

The unusual circumstances to which *Napoleon in His Study* owes its existence are closely documented by correspondence between David and his British patron,¹⁷ Alexander, marquis of Douglas (1767–1852), an eccentric nobleman and Scottish nationalist who, on flimsy grounds, claimed to be heir to the throne of the Stuarts. Douglas had spent some years in Italy and while there had begun to collect art in regal style. In 1810 he increased both his fortune and his collections by marrying Susan Beckford, daughter and heiress of the im-



Jacques-Louis David, *The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries*, 1805.9.15

mensely wealthy William Beckford of Fonthill. Nine years later he succeeded to the title of duke of Hamilton. A Whig member of Parliament and later of the House of Lords, he served as ambassador to the Russian court in 1806–1807. Like other Scottish grandees of his political bent, he developed a personal admiration for Napoleon but did not let this interfere with his diplomatic and military service to the British crown.

Douglas commissioned David to paint Napoleon's portrait at a time when Britain and France were at war. His letter to David, dated 3 August 1811,¹⁸ was conveyed to France by the Chevalier Féréol de Bonnemaïson (c. 1770–1827), a French painter and former émigré, who throughout this transaction was apparently allowed by the authorities to act as the marquis' agent. David, responding to Douglas on 20 September 1811,¹⁹ acknowledged his request, which, as he understood it, called on him to "commit the features of the Great Man to the canvas and to show him at one of those moments that have given him immortality." In accepting this charge with evident alacrity, he described himself as highly flattered and promised to put the project at the top of his list of works for foreign patrons. "This painting, I am telling myself, is to occupy a wall in the residence of a gentleman of taste. It will be viewed by the elite of an enlightened nation. It is to represent a man whom the imagination pictures in ways that inevitably fall short of the truth. Eh bien, Monsieur le Marquis, all these reasons taken together will prompt me to undertake it." In closing, he promised to "invest all his reputation in an effort to justify the favorable opinion that a grand seigneur and friend of the arts had formed of his talent." In a follow-up letter of 25 September 1811 to Douglas,²⁰ Bonnemaïson, writing for David who was embarrassed to bring up the delicate matter of payment, stated the painter's terms: twenty to twenty-four thousand francs, according to Bonnemaïson, would be considered appropriate for the portrait.²¹ The bank of Perregaux could handle the money transfer; Bonnemaïson himself would see to the shipment of the picture.

The start and gradual completion of the work are documented in a series of letters by one of David's pupils, Pierre Suau,²² as well as by letters to Douglas from David and from Bonnemaïson. On 4 February 1812²³ Suau wrote to his father that

the portrait, which he had not yet seen, was supposed to be nearly finished. But writing one month later he mentioned that it was still in progress.²⁴ Finally, on 28 March, he reported that he had been allowed to see the picture, apparently just completed.²⁵ On 8 May 1812 David himself announced to Douglas that the portrait, finished six weeks earlier, was attracting crowds of visitors to his studio. The public, according to him, was unanimous in applauding its striking resemblance to the emperor: "nobody until today has painted a more telling likeness of him, one that not only conveys his material features, but also the air of kindness, calm assurance and penetrating intelligence that never leaves him." David used this letter to spell out the narrative program of the portrait and to stress its historical accuracy:

I have shown [Napoleon] in the condition most habitual with him—that of work. He is in his study, after a night spent composing his Code Napoléon. The candles flickering out and the clock striking four remind him that day is about to break. He rises from his desk to gird his sword and pass his troops in review.

I should like your lordship to observe that I have made sure that everything in the picture, down to the smallest detail of costume, furniture, sword, etc., was scrupulously modelled on [Napoleon's] own.²⁶

David added modestly that he would not comment on the excellence of the picture's execution, preferring to leave that to the judgment of England's famous artists.

On 22 June 1812 David wrote to Douglas again,²⁷ to acknowledge the nobleman's reply of 5 June (lost), to thank him for compliments received, and to express his pleasure at finding that his patron's and his own ideas for the portrait of "l'homme immortel" were in agreement. The picture's shipment would be expedited. But by 25 July, when David wrote to Douglas once more,²⁸ it had not yet been sent. Gratified by the marquis' evident impatience to receive his work, David explained that an English import license still had to be procured and that a transfer of one thousand guineas, the sterling equivalent of the agreed-upon price, must still be worked out between the marquis' English and his own French bank.

The real reason for the delay, however, seems to have been David's eagerness to increase his profit from the commission by painting a copy of

the portrait to be sold privately.²⁹ A letter by Suau indicates that work on this copy had started as early as 19 April 1812,³⁰ but by 19 July the copy, though well under way, had not yet been finished. Suau considered it as a second original: “the composition and the general effect are the same, but [David] has reworked everything from nature.”³¹ Douglas meanwhile sent David a bank draft for 1,050 pounds (i.e., 1,000 guineas), which David acknowledged on 20 October,³² noting that at the current rate of exchange this came to only 18,650 francs, whereas he had expected to receive 25,000 francs. Would the noble lord kindly make up the difference? On 13 April 1813 David wrote once again to Douglas,³³ noting that the painting had been shipped to England via Ostende on 21 November 1812 and reminding him of the money that he believed was still owed to him. Douglas’ acknowledgment of the picture’s arrival in England, in a letter dated 31 March 1813 (lost), seems to have crossed David’s reminder. Returning to the charge once more, David, in a letter of 30 April 1813,³⁴ expressed his satisfaction with the favorable reception of the portrait of “l’homme du siècle” in England and renewed his demand for “the sum of six thousand three hundred francs which I am still owed in payment for the said picture.” Douglas seems to have turned a deaf ear.

For all its apparent realism, it is improbable that Napoleon actually posed for this portrait which, in its main features, conforms to the standard representation of the emperor in his sedentary middle age³⁵—balding, his face and jowls heavily fleshed, his body showing the signs of beginning obesity. Napoleon disliked posing for artists and consistently refused requests for portrait sessions. His relations with David, furthermore, were troubled at the time. In 1806 he had angrily rejected the last of the official portraits that David had painted of him and in the years since had, pointedly, given little employment to his First Painter.³⁶ The detailed reports on the picture’s progress given by Suau nowhere mention what would have seemed a very noteworthy fact—the emperor’s sitting to David. In undertaking this privately commissioned portrait for his British patron, at a time when he had fallen from the emperor’s favor, David had to rely on his visual memory or on sketches furtively taken. Some contemporary observers nevertheless judged it to be Napoleon’s truest likeness,³⁷ but

Etienne Delécluze, who was both a loyal pupil of David’s and familiar with Napoleon’s appearance, found that the head was of no more than “mediocre resemblance” and “treated in too idealized a style.” He felt moreover that David, by failing to make Napoleon’s features express the weariness of his nocturnal labors, had missed the “poetic” possibilities inherent in his subject.³⁸

David’s *Napoleon in His Study* is not, strictly speaking, a historical picture. Its action is imaginary, its setting is only loosely based on the emperor’s workplace, and its accessories, however concretely rendered, are mainly of symbolic or suggestive, rather than factual, significance: the portrait is not so much a documentary record as a dramatic fiction. Though privately commissioned by a foreigner who was the citizen of a nation at war with France, it has all the earmarks of official Napoleonic propaganda. Under the circumstances, David very likely had had to submit his project to the emperor’s approval,³⁹ and the question naturally arises of whether Napoleon himself may not have exerted some influence on its conception, or even have given it a particular political slant.

Sometime in the late spring or early summer of 1812, the English writer Fanny Burney (Mme d’Arblay) saw the finished picture in David’s studio, prior to its shipment to Scotland.⁴⁰ Since David could not be present, Mme David welcomed the distinguished visitor to the studio and showed her the two most important pictures it contained, a version of *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at the Saint-Bernard* and the just completed *Napoleon in His Study*. Burney’s account of this visit, written several years later, contains some memory lapses,⁴¹ but it is of interest in documenting how the picture was presented by a member of the artist’s family and how it was seen by a perceptive Englishwoman. According to Mme David, the artist had sought Napoleon’s approval, and the emperor, responding with pleasure to “so splendid a mark of favour of a British Peer,” had agreed to sit for the portrait.⁴² His deeper purpose, according to Burney, echoing Mme David, was, not to gratify a French artist, but to send a message to the British public. To this end, every significant detail in the picture was prescribed by Napoleon himself:

[the emperor’s] expression as simple, as unaffected, & as unassuming as his attire [with the gesture of his] hands, which are very finely finished, he seems



Fig. 3. Jean-Antoine Gros, *Portrait of Napoleon as the First Consul*, oil on canvas, 1802, Paris, Musée National de la Légion d'Honneur et des Ordres de Chevalerie, photograph by Lauros-Giraudon



Fig. 4. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul*, oil on canvas, 1804, Liège, Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain

to mean making an appeal to the British Nation.... Look at me, Britons! survey me well! What have you to fear or doubt? What is there to excite such deadly hatred, in a Man so soberly & modestly arrayed as the plainest John Bull among yourselves, & as philosophically employed, without state or attendance?— The burthen of this appeal was ‘*Why should you not make Peace with me?*’⁴³

Sharply watched by Mme David as she admired the portrait, Burney had the impression that “both the artist & his mate were curious to know what would be the sentiment of an Englishwoman” concerning a picture in which the emperor “displayed himself as the pacific inviter to Fraternity from the English.”⁴⁴

The theme of *Napoleon in His Study*—the ruler in his bureaucratic role, shown in the privacy of his place of work—was not original with David.

As a subject for state portraits, Napoleon offered an unusual range of pictorial possibilities, since he combined in his person the threefold character of monarch, military leader, and civil administrator. In David’s own work, three portraits represent these distinct aspects of Napoleon’s government: *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at the Saint-Bernard* (1801) celebrates the military hero;⁴⁵ *Napoleon in His Coronation Robes* (1806) pays tribute to the monarch;⁴⁶ *Napoleon in His Study* describes the legislator-administrator. This last, to be sure, also hints discreetly at Napoleon’s other roles by its symbolic emphasis on the sword and the thronelike chair.

The different types of state portraiture corresponded to the various functions for which they were designed. Portraits of the bureaucratic or legislative type were suitable for administrative buildings, while those that showed Napoleon as military

commander or monarch were generally destined for palatial settings. But this was not the invariable rule; David's ill-fated *Napoleon in His Coronation Robes*, for example, had been intended for the Appeals Court of Genoa. The portrait that David painted for the marquis of Douglas had no official purpose and was meant to decorate a private residence, albeit a very grand one. This does not mean, however, that it was unrelated to David's role of First Painter to the emperor. It is possible that the plan for a portrait of this kind had been on David's mind for some time but had been frustrated by his estrangement from the emperor after 1810.⁴⁷ The marquis' commission may merely have enabled David to carry out an idea that under ordinary circumstances would have resulted in yet another state portrait for a government building. There is, at any rate, something anomalous about a portrait of this monumental and official kind being contrived for a private, not to mention foreign, patron.

Napoleonic iconography included some formal precedents for David's portrait, which in fact was a latecomer in its class. Gros' *Portrait of Napoleon as the First Consul* of 1802 (fig. 3)⁴⁸ and Ingres' rather similar *Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul* of 1804 (fig. 4)⁴⁹ both show Bonaparte in the uniform of his consular rank standing beside a table covered with documents that testify to recent achievements. Ingres' portrait in particular presents analogies to the picture in the National Gallery in its combination of symbolic accessories: the pen, the sword, and the throne. The type established in these portraits became a staple of the mass production of Napoleonic portraits by the studios of Gros, Gérard, Robert-Lefèvre, and Girodet. The early, consular portraits differed from the later, imperial ones in their theatrical staging and pantomime: the youthful Bonaparte, pointing commandingly to the documents on the table beside him, seems to be performing before an audience. In contrast to this dramatization of the revolutionary autocrat, the later portraits of the emperor in his role of lawgiver—and David's *Napoleon in His Study* is among the last of this type—present him as tireless bureaucrat and use elements of genre realism to suggest the prosaic everyday reality and privacy in which the emperor actually carried on his work. Etienne-Barthélemy Garnier's (1759–1849) *Portrait de S. M. l'Empereur et Roi dans*

son intérieur (fig. 5),⁵⁰ exhibited at the Salon of 1808, which showed Napoleon, leaning on a table covered with maps and dictating to a secretary in a cabinet lined with books and adorned with classical busts, represented an earlier, rather prolix statement of the theme that David was to raise to its final, most concentrated, and impressive form.

The originality of David's *Napoleon in His Study* lies in its balance of quiet grandeur with insistent still-life realism, its avoidance of both the bombast of official portraiture and the triviality of genre. Its style and manner of execution powerfully reinforce the picture's meaning. Forsaking neoclassical ideality in his effort at realism, David indulged his gift of precise visual observation, recording the minute particulars of wrinkled stockings, of a button undone, of reflections of red velvet in the gloss of gilt wood. The material concreteness of the objects within his picture's focus lends them a persuasive presence and gives to the portrait as a whole the appearance of something that it is not—a painting taken directly from life. This confident power of evocation, however, falters somewhat in its main feature, the emperor's head, which by contrast to

Fig. 5. C. Normand after Etienne-Barthélemy Garnier, *Portrait de S. M. l'Empereur et Roi dans son intérieur*, etching, 1808, lost (illustrated in Landon 1801–1809, 2:32–35, repro.)



the vividness of the surrounding detail seems to lack substance, perhaps reflecting David's difficulty in giving to this face, drawn from memory, the plastic concreteness of observed life.

Notes

1. Two of the three lists that David made of his works mention *Napoleon in His Study*: "List B," compiled about 1815, describes it as "Le portrait en pied de l'Empereur représenté dans son Cabinet. Tableau pour l'Angleterre" (Schnapper et al. 1989, 20); "List C," dated 1819, refers to the original painting under no. "49. *Napoléon* en pied dans son cabinet.—Pour le marquis Douglas en Angleterre" and to David's copy of it under no. "50. Une répétition du même avec des changements dans l'habillement.—Pour M. Huibans" (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, no. 1938; Schnapper et al. 1989, 21).

2. According to information from Jean Brunon, Membre du Conseil d'Administration du Musée de l'Armée, Paris (conveyed by Capt. Ross F. Collins, USN, in a letter, dated 23 March 1956, in NGA curatorial archives), the uniform worn by Napoleon in David's portrait is that of a foot grenadier of the Imperial Guard, modified in certain details, such as the lighter epaulettes, for the sake of comfort. Napoleon used this uniform in the later years of his reign as "tenue de société," to be worn on formal or festive occasions. His workaday uniform was the green coat of the Chasseurs of the Guard.

3. The golden object in Napoleon's left hand, difficult to recognize in the painting, is identified as a snuffbox in a letter of 28 March 1812 written by Pierre Suau (1786–1855), a pupil of David who worked in the master's studio at the time the portrait was in progress; see Mesplé 1969, 100.

4. The intricately sculpted golden handle of the sword closely resembles that of swords made for the emperor by the court jeweler Martin-Guillaume Bien-nais (1764–1843); see Hubert et al. 1969, 133, no. 371, repro. 138, and 157, no. 437.

5. Suau, in a letter of 4 February 1812 (see Mesplé 1969, 100), described the placement of the Code atop a sheaf of maps as signifying Napoleon's extension of his law to his conquests: "il pose le code Napoléon sur les parties des continents qu'il a soumises." (See also Eisler 1977, 353.) Johnson (1993, 216) has argued, erroneously in my opinion, that David's late portrait of the emperor was in fact intended to celebrate Napoleon "at a much earlier moment in his career—when, as a young man, during the Consulate, he was working on the Civil Code." She concludes, on the basis of this highly debatable reading of the painting, that it "belongs to David's subversive iconography, for his celebration of the First Consul at this late date implies a direct criticism of the Emperor."

6. Volumes of Plutarch's *Lives*, said to have been Napoleon's favorite reading, appear to have been a

standard symbolic accessory in his official portraits. The idea of including this detail did not, at any rate, originate with David. Robert-Lefèvre (1755–1830), the official portraitist of the imperial family, in 1806 painted a *Napoléon debout devant une table avec un Plutarque*, later exhibited at the Salon of 1810 and now in Versailles (see Georges Wildenstein, "Table alphabétique des portraits peints, sculptés, dessinés, et gravés exposés à Paris au Salon entre 1800 et 1826," *GBA* 61 [January 1963]: 24, fig. 11).

7. David himself outlined the picture's scenario in a letter addressed on 8 May 1812 to his patron, the marquis of Douglas: "[L'empereur] est dans son cabinet, ayant passé la nuit à composer son Code Napoléon; il ne s'aperçoit du jour naissant que par ses bougies qui sont consumées et qui s'éteignent, et par la pendule qui vient de sonner quatre heures du matin; alors il se lève de son bureau pour ceindre l'épée et passer la revue de ses troupes" (Tait 1983, 401, no. 3).

8. The painting's spatial composition in four successive "planes" is described in one of Suau's letters (28 March 1812; Mesplé 1969, 100) in a way that indicates a clear awareness of this arrangement among the pupils in David's studio at that time: "J'ai été voir le tableau de l'Empereur par M. David. Il est comme tout ce qu'il fait, c'est à dire très bien. S[a] M[ajesté] est debout et paraît réfléchir... derrière est un secrétaire sur lequel sont des bougies qui vont s'éteindre... sur le troisième plan est une pendule... sur le quatrième une bibliothèque, un fauteuil est sur le devant du tableau."

9. Pencil on paper, formerly in the collection of Charles Gasc. Eisler (1977, 353, fig. 133) believes, erroneously in my opinion, that this is the later of the two drawings.

10. Pencil on paper, 22.6 × 18.8, inv. D 1979; Eisler 1977, 353, fig. 132; Schnapper et al. 1989, 477, no. 207, repro.

11. Eisler (1977, 353) mentions a third drawing, belonging to an unnamed collector, that was shown in the *Napoléon* exhibition at the Grand Palais, Paris, in 1969 but omitted from the catalogue. More closely investigated after the exhibition, this drawing was found not to be by David (according to a communication from Nicole Hubert of the Musée National du Château de Malmaison, dated 9 December 1969, in the NGA curatorial files).

12. When David in 1806 painted *Napoleon in His Coronation Robes*, he made extensive use of an assistant, Georges Devillers, reputed to be one of his weaker pupils, although he had promised to execute the portrait entirely by his own hand. This became one of the reasons for its rejection by Napoleon (Hautecoeur 1954, 200). Undeterred by this fiasco, David in 1808 again employed an assistant, Georges Rouget (1784–1869), on a second version of that portrait destined for Jerome Bonaparte (Schnapper et al. 1989, 435–436). In a letter of 12 February 1812 David's pupil, Pierre Suau, reported that this same Rouget was currently painting the draperies and, occasionally, the "flesh" in David's paintings (Mesplé 1969, 102). Suau's remark may refer

specifically to work on *Leonidas at the Pass of Thermopylae*, which David had recently resumed, but it is well to remember that *Napoleon in His Study* was also on David's easel at the time.

13. The question of an assistant participating in this painting was raised by Helen Rosenau (1949) and Douglas Cooper (1949a, 175), both of whom believed that "most of the background and fittings are studio work as is to be expected of a painting commissioned in 1810 and finished in 1812" (Rosenau 1949). Colin Eisler noted that Napoleon's head in the painting is "executed in a thicker pigment layer than the remainder of the canvas, indicating that David may have worked over this most important area. There is the possibility that as the master had several requests for this portrait he may have 'laid it in', leaving the bulk of the execution to his helpers" (1977, 355). But these opinions were based, in part, on faulty information. The portrait was not commissioned in 1810 and David was not in fact pressed by "several requests" for copies. As for Eisler's suggestion that David may have confined himself to the preliminary underpainting and left the finishing to assistants, the brilliant execution of the accessory details strongly suggests just the opposite. Although the observant Suau made no particular mention of David's use of helpers for this painting, he did note, on 4 March 1812, that David himself had on the previous day worked on the emperor's uniform (Mesplé 1969, 100, and Eisler 1977, 355).

14. See Eisler 1977, 356, who describes David's representation of the setting as a "free reconstruction" of Napoleon's study. The actual appearance of that room is reflected in a sepia drawing attributed to Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767–1855), formerly in the Hugo Finaly collection (Eisler 1977, 352, fig. 131). The furnishings shown in this drawing, and particularly Napoleon's chair, correspond to those described in an inventory of the emperor's study drawn up in 1809–1810 (see Ledoux and Lebard 1952, 192).

15. Designed by David as part of the new furniture for the Grand Cabinet, the chair was only delivered on 11 July 1812, in other words after its image had been incorporated in the portrait (see Eisler 1977, 352 and 356, no. 4).

16. C. P. Landon, *Salon de 1824* (Paris), 2:29, pl. 23. Spared in the sack of the Tuileries during the Revolution of 1830, the painting was subsequently in the collection of Prince Beauvau-Craon. A copy by Jean-Pierre Franque (1774–1860) is in Versailles (MV 721, inv. 4866); see J. Christopher Herold, *The Age of Napoleon* (New York, 1963), 365, repro.

17. The surviving correspondence between David and the marquis of Douglas was published by Tait 1983, 394–402. For a biography of the marquis, see the obituary notice in *Gentleman's Magazine* (London) (October 1852), 424–425.

18. Tait 1983, 401, no. 3.

19. Tait 1983, 401, no. 1.

20. Tait 1983, 401, no. 2.

21. David cannot have been unaware that this was

an exorbitant demand: the price he asked for this one portrait was exactly double the amount of his yearly salary as Napoleon's First Painter. For large, many-figured history paintings, the imperial government generally paid no more than 12,000 francs. Only works of unusual importance surpassed this sum. Antoine-Jean Gros' (1771–1835) huge *Napoleon Visiting the Plague Hospital at Jaffa* (1804, Louvre) was bought for an exceptionally generous price of 15,600 francs. Portraits naturally commanded much lower prices. The series of sixteen state portraits of ministers and marshals commissioned in 1806 was assessed at 4,000 francs per portrait, considered a very high price at the time. Full-length portraits of the emperor such as were produced in quantity by the studios of Gérard, Girodet, and Robert-Lefèvre for prefectures and town halls generally were paid 3,000 to 3,500 francs. When David, in 1806, submitted his *Portrait of Napoleon in His Coronation Robes* for which he asked 15,000 francs, Napoleon angrily canceled the commission (see François Benoit, *L'Art français sous la révolution et l'empire* [Paris, 1897], 165, and Schnapper et al. 1989, 433–435).

22. Pierre-Théodore Suau, who hailed from Toulouse, was David's pupil from 1810 to 1813. During this time he maintained a lively correspondence with his father in Toulouse to report on the progress of his studies under David's tutelage, on David's work and teaching, and on general conditions in the master's studio. Excerpts from these letters were published by Mesplé 1969, 91–102.

23. Mesplé 1969, 100.

24. Mesplé 1969, 100.

25. Mesplé 1969, 100.

26. Tait 1983, 401, no. 3.

27. Tait 1983, 401, no. 4.

28. Tait 1983, 401, no. 5.

29. An old but baseless tradition claims that David painted as many as four copies of *Napoleon in His Study* (see *Notice* 1824, 72, and A. Th. 1826, 184), but he did in fact paint only that single repetition on which he was seen to be at work from April through July 1812 (Mesplé 1969, 100–101) and which he noted in his inventory of 1819 ("List C"; see note 1 above) as having been painted for a M. Huibans. This repetition departs from the original in two main respects: it shows the emperor wearing the green coat of the Chasseurs of the Guard, and it changes the time indicated by the clock in the background to 4:00. It was one of the three paintings that David sent to London in April 1815 (and not in "1822 or 1823," as stated by Schnapper et al. 1989, 474) to be exhibited at 20 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, and probably to be sold (see the *Times*, no. 9501, Tuesday, 25 April 1815, 1). David, however, did not sell the picture then but kept it with him in Brussels until about 1824, when he sold it through the agency of a M. d'Alquier (Schnapper et al. 1989, 474). It subsequently passed through sales in Paris (1850) and Beauvais (1857) before being bought, in February 1860, by Napoleon III who had it placed in the Salle des Maréchaux of the Tuileries. It survived the sack of that palace in 1871 and in 1880 was returned to the ex-

Empress Eugénie by court decree. Eugénie gave it to the emperor's cousin, Princesse Mathilde, who passed it on to Prince Napoleon, from whose descendants it was acquired by the French government in 1979 "sous réserve d'usufruit" (see Hubert et al. 1969, 51, no. 158, repro.; Schnapper et al. 1989, 474, no. 206). It was this repetition, rather than the original (which remained inaccessible in its Scottish palace), that served as model for the reproductive drawing by David's pupil, Michel Stapleaux (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, no. 2041, 31), on which the etchings by Vallot, Laugier, and Jules David (David 1880, 647, and *Suite d'eaux-fortes d'après ses oeuvres*, 9th fascicule, repro.) were based. It also spawned a number of later copies, in oil and of various sizes, that have occasionally been misattributed to David (see Eisler 1977, 354). Kirstein (1969, 21), confounding the NGA's painting with these imitations, described it as "a coarse version" and seems to have preferred the repetition then still owned by Prince Napoleon.

30. Mesplé 1969, 100.

31. Mesplé 1969, 100.

32. Tait 1983, 402, no. 9.

33. Tait 1983, 402, no. 10.

34. Tait 1983, 402, no. 11.

35. An example of the type, strikingly similar in physiognomy, expression, and costume to David's portrait, is the bust-length *Portrait of Napoleon in Uniform* by François Gérard (1770–1837) in the collection of Mme M. H. Bachman-Naegeli, Zurich; see Hubert et al. 1969, 176, no. 489.

36. David's relations with Napoleon deteriorated in the course of time, mainly because of David's efforts to interpose himself, in his honorary capacity of First Painter, between the emperor and the regular art administration, headed by Vivant Denon, director-general of the museum and coordinator of Napoleon's art enterprises. Denon firmly resisted these inroads on his authority; and David's importunities soon exhausted the emperor's patience. Napoleon first showed his annoyance in 1806, on the occasion of David's submission of *Napoleon in His Coronation Robes*, commissioned for the Appeals Court of Genoa. The emperor angrily rejected the painting, forbade its use, and refused to pay for it (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, nos. 1484, 1486, 1493). From this time on, Napoleon met his First Painter's proposals with marked reserve, while Denon, who enjoyed the emperor's full confidence, delighted in frustrating David's claims. Napoleon's public commendation of David, on the occasion of the exhibition of the *Coronation* picture in 1808, brought no lasting conciliation. David found himself barred from access to the emperor (Schnapper et al. 1989, 370). After the completion of the *Presentation of the Standards* in 1810, it was made clear to him that Napoleon had lost interest in going on with the series of great state commissions that he had held out to David at the time of his coronation (Schnapper et al. 1989, 373). From 1811 onward he received no further major commissions in his official role and was left to devote himself to personal projects and private commissions. In March of that year he was informed

that the emperor had no intention of having his portrait painted by him (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, nos. 1609 and 1610). The deliberate neglect of David by the imperial art administration is all the more striking when compared to the large production of portraits that it sponsored at the time: thirteen grand portraits of the emperor were commissioned from various artists in 1810 (Benoit 1897, 164) and no fewer than thirty-six from Girodet alone in 1812 (Hubert et al. 1969, 51–52, no. 159).

37. See *Notice* 1824, 72; A. Th. 1826, 184; Lenoir 1835, 10.

38. Delécluze 1855, 346–347.

39. Many of the early sources cite the highly quotable phrase of self-praise with which Napoleon is said to have rewarded David on being shown his portrait: "Vous m'avez deviné, mon cher David; la nuit je m'occupe du bonheur de mes sujets, et le jour je travaille à leur gloire" (You have understood me, my dear David; at night I devote myself to the well-being of my subjects, during the day I work for their glory; see A. Th. 1824, 184; Delécluze 1855, 347; David 1880, 487). It is, however, by no means certain that Napoleon ever saw the picture. Delécluze writes that "Napoleon, having heard the portrait talked of"—which suggests that the emperor had neither posed for the picture nor been consulted about it—"wanted to see the picture. It is reported that he seemed very satisfied and that, having examined it attentively, he said to his First Painter: 'You have understood me... etc.'" But in the latter years of the empire Napoleon was not in the habit of making private visits to the studios of artists, and there are no records of a transport of the picture to one of the imperial residences, such as those that document the conveyance of *Napoleon in His Coronation Robes* to Saint-Cloud in 1806, when Napoleon inspected and rejected that portrait (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, 172, nos. 1478–1480). It is probable that the anecdotes suggesting the emperor's personal involvement with the painting—whether as model, guiding influence, or approving critic—originated in David's circle and were perhaps intended to impress his British patron. It has been noted that Napoleon's reported compliment to David is like an echo of the one he is supposed to have paid the artist on the occasion of the showing of the *Coronation* picture in 1808 (see Eisler 1977, 355). Napoleon's *mot* also bears a certain resemblance to the comment by Charles-Paul Landon on Garnier's *Portrait of the Emperor in His Study* (Salon of 1808; fig. 5) which showed Napoleon at work in his double role of provider of military glory and of civil welfare: "l'Empereur, au sein des vastes projets qui tendent à porter au loin la gloire de ses armes, ne perd pas de vue la prospérité intérieure de son empire" (see Landon 1801–1809, 2:34, repro.).

40. Burney visited David's studio, accompanied by Mme Larrey, the wife of Napoleon's surgeon, sometime between May and July 1812. She recorded her memories of the visit in a notebook of eighteen handwritten pages, at a somewhat later date but probably not before 1815 (see Burney 1975, 620–626).

41. Thus she misremembered the clock as indicating "the stroke of 5," imagined a "spacious Globe [which] has marks of having been studiously pored over," and believed that she had seen a bed or sofa in the picture, "as well as the peeping out, on a Corner of the Table, of an Imperial Diadem" (Burney 1975, 622–623), but in other particulars her memory was quite precise. What she reported of Napoleon's willingness to pose for the portrait and of his political motives for facilitating this project evidently was in large part suggested by Mme David's commentary and should therefore be taken as David's own, not entirely disinterested version of events, rather than as the literal truth.

42. Burney 1975, 622.

43. Burney 1975, 623.

44. Burney 1975, 625.

45. Schnapper 1980, 206–208, repro.

46. The definitive painting, completed in 1806, is lost; its composition is recorded in the preliminary study, dated 1805, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille (see Schnapper 1980, 242, repro.).

47. Eisler 1977, 355 note 50.

48. Hubert et al. 1969, 33 note 113, repro. (frontispiece).

49. Rosenblum 1967, 60–61, repro.

50. Garnier's painting, now unlocated, is described and illustrated in Landon 1808, 2:32–35, repro.

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1961.9.14 (1373)

Madame David

1813
 Oil on fabric, 72.9 × 59.4 (28³/₄ × 23³/₈)
 Samuel H. Kress Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: L. David 1813.

Technical Notes: The portrait is painted in oil on a heavy-weight, open, plain-weave fabric with many slubs and irregularities. The tacking margins have been removed, but cusping evident on all sides suggests the painting retains its original dimensions. It was lined on-to fabric in 1955. The fabric was prepared with a thick ground of lead white applied by brush. The strong texture of these brushstrokes is visible in the more thinly painted areas of the picture, particularly in the background and the red drapery. Infrared reflectography does not reveal any underdrawing. The draperies and background were underpainted with brown paint. The highlights in the dress, applied with a heavily charged brush, stand out in lively impasto. The painting is generally well preserved, with little retouching evident. The picture surface is traversed by a series of long, horizontal cracks, probably caused by overstretching, that have become disturbingly visible across the face and chest of the sitter, as well as in the background. The painting is covered with a varnish that has become grayish and opaque in patches throughout the dark background.

Provenance: Bequeathed in 1826 by the sitter, Marguerite-Charlotte, née Pécoul,¹ to her daughter, Baronne Claude-Marie Meunier, née Laure-Emilie-Félicité David [1786–1863], Calais;² her daughter-in-law Baronne Jules Meunier, née Pauline Derode [1824–1903]; the artist's great-granddaughter, Mme Marius Bianchi, née Mathilde Jeanin, by 1913; her daughter, Caroline-Pauline-Thérèse, Comtesse Joachim Murat [1870–1940], by 1930; her sister, Renée, vicomtesse de Fleury (1869–1948); (Pierre Cailleux, Paris), 1948–1953. (Jointly owned by Otto Wertheimer, Paris, and M.

Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York); sold in 1954 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Bazar Bonne Nouvelle, 1846, *Exposition au profit de l'association des artistes peintres et sculpteurs*, no. 11. Paris, Palais des Beaux-Arts, 1913, *David et ses élèves*, no. 56, repro. Copenhagen, Royal Museum, 1914, *Exposition d'art français du XIX^e siècle*, no. 65. Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, 1948, *David*, no. 68. London, Tate Gallery; Manchester, City Art Gallery, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1948–1949, *David, Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings*, no. 27, pl. VII. Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, 1949, *Les Magiciens de la peinture*, no. 13. Paris, Galerie Charpentier, 1950, *Cent Portraits de femmes*, no. 25c, repro. Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, 1952, *Peintres de portraits*, no. 16, repro. Hamburg, Kunsthalle; Munich, Alte Pinakotek, 1952, *Meisterwerke der französischen Malerei von Poussin bis Ingres*, no. 14, repro. Louvre; Versailles, 1989–1990, *Jacques-Louis David, 1748–1825*, no. 213, repro.

MARGUERITE-CHARLOTTE PÉCOUL (1764–1826), daughter of a prosperous building contractor in the king's service, married David in 1782, shortly after his return from Rome, where he had been a pensioner of the French Academy. He was thirty-four and she seventeen years old. After Mme David had borne him two sons, in 1783 and 1784, and twin daughters in 1786,³ the couple quarreled and separated in 1790,⁴ evidently for domestic, rather than political, reasons. David's good friend and early biographer, Alexandre Lenoir, suggested that it was this marital unhappiness, and not any truly political vocation, that first drew David into his revolutionary involvements.⁵ Political differences, at any rate, seem not to have been the original cause of the breakup of the marriage. Mme David in the beginning seems to have shared her husband's sentiments. She was one of the group of patriotic women who in 1789 ceremonially presented their jewels to the National Assembly as a gift to the national cause.⁶ But David's growing, and in the end fanatical, attachment to Robespierre may have contributed to their estrangement. After the execution of the king on 21 January 1793, Mme David left Paris and moved with her daughters to her father's estate at Saint-Ouen.⁷ A divorce decree dissolved her marriage on 16 March 1794.⁸ Four months later, Robespierre was overthrown and executed. David, imprisoned as his accomplice, had reason to fear the guillotine. At this point, Mme David rallied to him with great courage, and by



Jacques-Louis David, *Madame David*, 1788.9.14

her continuous, desperate appeals to the authorities succeeded in having him freed.⁹ Reunited by a second marriage on 12 November 1796,¹⁰ the couple stayed together for the remainder of David's life. Mme David, a shrewd and parsimonious businesswoman, is said to have kept a sharp eye on her husband's financial affairs. In 1816, after Napoleon's second abdication, David was expelled from France as a regicide. Mme David accompanied him into exile in Brussels, where she died on 9 May 1826, a year after her husband. David spoke of her, in 1824, as a "woman whose virtues and character had assured the happiness of his life."¹¹

When, in 1813, he painted this first portrait of his wife,¹² she was forty-eight years old and had been married to him for more than thirty years. The picture concluded a series of family portraits begun by David three years earlier when he had painted, one after the other, his two daughters in court dress and their husbands in embroidered uniforms,¹³ each posed full-face and bust-length, showing arms and hands, recalling the format that David had first used for his portrait of comtesse Daru in 1810 (fig. 1).¹⁴ What motivated David in painting the women of his family and their husbands—but not his two sons—remains unknown. His official employment as the emperor's First Painter had lately been curtailed by the withdrawal of Napoleon's personal favor, but he remained entirely dependent, in position and income, on the fortunes of the empire of which he was in effect a prominent functionary. The declining years of the empire, during which France suffered increasingly serious reverses in Spain, Russia, and Germany, were therefore a time of great anxiety for David, who not only saw his own existence threatened but also feared for his family. Both of his daughters were married to career officers recently ennobled and promoted to general's rank. His sons served in the army and the French military administration. The disasters of Napoleon's last campaigns immediately affected them all: one of his sons-in-law was severely wounded in Spain, the other in Saxony; his elder son was taken prisoner in Hanover, the younger nearly died of his wounds on the battlefield of Leipzig.¹⁵ It was at this time that his pupils observed his quiet depression and his need to surround himself with his family.¹⁶ These circumstances probably had a part in determining David to undertake the series of portraits that cul-



Fig. 1. Jacques-Louis David, *Comtesse Daru*, oil on canvas, 1810, New York, The Frick Collection, 37.1.140

minated in 1813, a year of crisis, in the portrait of the woman who had once saved his life and had since been his comfort and support.

Unlike the slightly earlier portraits of his daughters, which for some reason he had left in an unfinished state, he completed the portrait of his wife carefully, but without minuteness, with a free and painterly touch.¹⁷ Early commentators noted its substantial, sensuously applied oils and fresh colors.¹⁸ The picture's handling exemplifies David's lively response to material reality: the stimulus of a sharp visual sensation, such as the satin sheen of Mme David's dress, could wean him from the austerities of classicist style. In this intimate likeness, he was able to dispense with the studio help that he generally used for his larger and more formal portraits. The entire painting is autograph. A common vivacity of touch pervades all its parts—there are no areas of perfunctory execution alternating with bravura passages: the master's hand alone conducted all the work and gave it an exceptional coherence and harmony.

Mme David is shown seated before a dark gray-green background. She wears an elaborate head-dress of white plumes over a bandeau that holds back her dark brown hair, symmetrically curled around her forehead. Her face has a fresh, somewhat ruddy complexion, which is effectively set off by the lustrous, glacial silvery white of her high-waisted court dress. Her bare arms are crossed on her lap. A deep red shawl with narrow embroidered border lies in folds across her left arm and encircles her body. The back of her chair is covered in yellow cloth edged with blue.

In painting this intimate portrait of his wife in her middle years, David did not let sentiment temper observations sharpened by lifelong familiarity. He posed her in festive dress, as he had the other sitters in this series of family portraits, but made no effort to idealize her features. The result is one of the most impressively individual of all his portraits. It records, without reserve but also without undue emphasis, the homely detail of her face, the small, sharp eyes of very dark blue color and the nose of slightly bulbous shape above a mouth set in a faint smile. The effect is one of unflattering but not unsympathetic realism: a plain woman, self-assured, though not entirely comfortable in the finery of her costume. The picture strikingly accords with the verbal portrait of Mme David that Fanny Burney (Mme d'Arblay) drew of her after a visit in early 1812:

Madame David was alone to receive us, & continued so during our stay. She was a woman of no sort of elegance, either of person or attire; & if ever she had possessed any beauty, it had deserted her at an early period, & without leaving any mark, either in her face or form, that there it once had been. Yet she was by no means old; though also by no means young....Mde David appeared to me to be shrewd, penetrating, sagacious & sarcastic....I could by no means consider myself upon safe ground, while I saw the sharp black eyes of Madame David always directed to my face.¹⁹

It was long believed that David also painted his own likeness in 1813, to complete this series of family portraits.²⁰ But David in fact left this task to his assistant, Georges Rouget, who represented his master in the format and dimensions of the other family portraits, as a pendant to David's own portrait of his wife. Rouget's painting, now unlocated, passed by inheritance to a descendant

of David, the vicomtesse de Fleury,²¹ in whose collection it came to be mistaken for a work by David himself (see pp. 330–333).²² The portrait of Mme David was engraved by Léopold Robert (1794–1835) and published with a legend misidentifying her as Louise-Marie-Adelaide de Penthièvre, dowager duchesse d'Orléans.²³ David's grandson and biographer, Jules David, published an etching of the portrait in a portfolio of copies after David.²⁴

Notes

1. In a chronological list of his works which David drew up in about 1815 ("Liste B"), *Madame David* figures in next-to-last place as "Le portrait de Me David mon épouse" (Schnapper et al. 1989, 20).

2. Mme David's last will, dated 6 March 1826 (Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier Central, CVIII, 1013; Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, 239, no. 2045), and the posthumous inventory of her possessions, dated 27 June 1826 (CVIII, 1014; Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, 247, no. 2071; Schnapper et al. 1989, 636), both mention this portrait and indicate that it had been bequeathed to Baronne Emilie Meunier, her daughter.

3. The eldest son, Charles-Louis-Jules David (1783–1854), studied ancient languages in Göttingen and subsequently served as a civil administrator in Civita Vecchia and Hanover. François-Eugène David (1784–1831), a professional infantry officer, fought in Spain and Germany, until invalidated by his injuries at the Battle of Leipzig in 1813. Laure-Emilie-Félicité (1786–1863) in 1805 married Claude-Marie, Baron Meunier (1770–1846), promoted to the rank of general in 1810. Her twin sister, Pauline-Jeanne David (1786–1870), in 1806 married Jean-Baptiste, Baron Jeanin (1769–1830) who became a general in 1808. See David 1880, 507–510.

4. The legal separation is documented as of 2 August 1790, on which day a division of Mme David's dowry between herself and her husband was arranged and Mme David was authorized to retire to a convent (Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier Central, LXXXIII, 652; see also Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, 33, no. 272; and Schnapper et al. 1989, 223, 576).

5. "David suffered great domestic chagrins on which I shall not comment. Deeply afflicted, he sought distractions of a kind not normally to his taste; his friends nominated him as a deputy, and he had the weakness to accept, and to think himself fit to defend the people's rights" (Lenoir 1835, 1).

6. On 7 September 1789 a deputation of twenty-one artists' wives, led by Mme Moitte and including Mme David, attired in vaguely classical costumes, presented themselves before the National Assembly at Versailles, to offer them their gold and jewels as a gesture of Roman patriotic sacrifice. An account of the ceremony was published in *Le Moniteur universel*, no. 54, 8 September 1789 (see also David 1880, 63–64).

7. David 1880, 230.
8. The divorce decree is lost, but its date, 16 March 1794 (26 Ventôse An II), is indicated in the contract of the remarriage of 12 November 1796 (22 Brumaire An IV; Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier Central, LXXXIII, 679; Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, 136, no. 1236; Schnapper et al. 1989, 586).
9. David 1880, 231.
10. See note 8.
11. *Notice* 1824, 21.
12. According to Hautecoeur (1954, 265), David painted a second portrait of his wife, in about 1818. This second portrait, said to have been in the collection of the vicomtesse de Fleury in Paris, is at present unlocated.
13. The portrait of *Baroness Emilie Meunier*, unfinished and undated, is now in the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (Cantinelli 1930, 113, no. 129, repro.); that of *Baroness Pauline Jeanin*, unfinished and undated, in Oskar Reinhart Stiftung, Winterthur (Cantinelli 1930, 113, no. 128, repro.); the portrait of *General Baron Jeanin*, finished and dated 1810, was until the 1950s in the vicomte de Fleury collection (Cantinelli 1930, 113, no. 124), as was that of *General Baron Meunier* (Cantinelli 1930, 113, no. 127). These last two portraits, as of 1991, are unlocated. According to his biographer Jules David (1880, 647), David painted the portraits of his two daughters and that of General Meunier "in about 1812," at a time when, between campaigns, the family was briefly united. All the portraits in this series measure about 73 × 60 cm.
14. Inv. 37.1.140, discussed in *The Frick Collection. Illustrated Catalogue*, ed. Harry D. M. Grier (New York, 1968), 74–77, repro.
15. David 1880, 509.
16. Delécluze 1855, 340–341; David 1880, 509.
17. David expressed his opinions about detail and finish to his friend Alexandre Lenoir while painting his portrait in 1815–1817: "il dédaignait ces minuties de détail et cette chétive exécution dont quelques artistes abusent et qui rapellent les temps gothiques de nos bons aïeux.—'Ces hommes là ne me comprennent pas, me disait il en me peignant; ce n'est pas en abusant du fini qu'on arrive à la perfection, c'est par le ton vrai de la nature, mis à sa place. Que l'on observe attentivement mes tableaux... on verra qu'ils ne sont pas plus travaillés qu'il ne convient de le faire; s'ils font l'effet de l'être beaucoup, c'est parce que la valeur des tons et la vigueur des touches sont calculées pour les plans, et combinées avec la distance où le spectateur doit se mettre pour voir le tableau'" (Lenoir 1835, 9).
18. Théophile Thoré, who saw the portrait exhibited with other paintings by David in Paris at the Bazar Bonne Nouvelle in 1846, was struck by its "grasse exécution" (Thoré 1846, 12).
19. See Burney 1975, 624–625. Fanny Burney visited David's studio sometime before her departure from France in the first days of July 1812. She was received, in the artist's absence, by Mme David who showed her about the premises. Her recollections of the visit are recorded in a notebook entitled "Memory / Anecdotes

of Nearly 12 Years' Residence in France," and dated 1812, though probably written somewhat later.

20. Cantinelli 1930, 113, no. 133, repro.; Hautecoeur 1954, 230.
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22. Cantinelli 1930, 113, no. 133, repro.; Hautecoeur 1954, 230. Rouget's lost original is reflected in several copies, including the one now in the NGA (see pp. 330–333).
23. David 1880, 648.
24. Jules David, *Le Peintre Louis David, 1748–1825, suite d'eaux-fortes d'après son oeuvre* (Paris, 1882), 2^d fascicule.

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Circle of Jacques-Louis David

1963.10.118 (1782)

Portrait of a Young Woman in White

c. 1798

Oil on fabric, 125.5 × 95 (49 1/2 × 37 1/2)

Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: The original support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric that was lined in 1935 onto fabric.¹ Although the tacking margins have been cut off, cusping along all four edges indicates that the painting retains its original format. A smooth reddish brown ground layer is visible in abraded or thinly painted areas in the background and in the sitter's hair. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. The paint that forms the image has been applied thinly and smoothly with brushwork apparent only in the drapery. The palette consists of fairly opaque colors, save for red glazes in the cloth that falls in many folds from the console beside the sitter. Changes in the folds of that drapery, in the console table, and in the position of the sitter's hand are visible in the X-radiograph. The paint is somewhat abraded in the drapery and chair leg. Retouches cover small paint losses in the background and along the edges. The painting is covered with a hazy yellowed varnish that distorts the palette and diminishes the sense of depth within the painting (1998).

Provenance: (Gimpel & Wildenstein, Paris);² sold 1914 to Louisine Waldron Elder [Mrs. Henry Osborne] Havemeyer [1855–1929]; (her estate sale, American Art Association, New York, 10 April 1930, no. 79); sold to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

THE YOUNG WOMAN, wearing a light muslin dress whose transparent top thinly veils her bosom, sits

in an attitude of languid repose beside a console or sewing table on which she has deposited a purplish red shawl. Her hair, parted in the middle and braided above her forehead, falls in loose strands to her neck. She inclines her head, glancing to the left as if in thought, while her body and bare arms are turned to the right.

The portrait, of obscure provenance, carried an attribution to Jacques-Louis David at the time Mrs. Louisine Havemeyer bought it from Gimpel & Wildenstein (Paris) in 1914.³ But in the documents and early literature about David's work there is no mention of it, and its omission from subsequent monographs and exhibitions⁴ suggests that David's authorship was never fully accepted. It nevertheless attracted unusual public interest in 1930, when it was bought by Chester Dale amid a flurry of illustrated press notices,⁵ undoubtedly prompted in part by the erotic appeal of its subject. Uncontested and without further examination, it entered the National Gallery of Art in 1963 as a work of David and continued to be exhibited as such until 1971,⁶ when the attribution was revised to "Circle of David" on the advice of art historians.⁷

At the time of its purchase by Chester Dale in 1930 the painting was simply called *Portrait of a Young Woman*, but by 1941 its sitter had become identified as "Madame Hamelin,"⁸ apparently for no better reason than that she reminded some commentators of that scandalous celebrity of Directory society, nicknamed "la jolie laide," who had made fashion history in 1797 by walking in the Champs-Élysées so transparently covered as to ap-



Fig. 1. Andrea Appiani, *Madame Hamelin*, oil on canvas, 1797/1798, Paris, Musée Carnavalet, inv. P 1685, Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris, photograph by Abdourahim

pear bare-breasted.⁹ This identification was maintained for more than two decades but proved untenable after the discovery of an authentic likeness of Mme Hamelin (fig. 1)¹⁰ at about the time the picture's attribution to David was also dropped.

Since then the portrait has remained doubly anonymous, its sitter nameless and its painter unidentified. That it owes a large debt to Davidian classicism is apparent, however. In both pose and composition, it follows a scheme consistently used by David, in which the sitter is shown at knee-length, the face nearly frontal, the body half-turned to the right before a neutral background: the portrait type classically exemplified by David's *Madame de Verninac* of 1799 (fig. 2).¹¹ But the National Gallery's *Young Woman in White* also bears marks of a different artistic individuality, one that sets it apart from David's work. The figures in his portraits occupy the picture space fully, though without crowding. In *Young Woman in White*, by contrast, the background space has gained an unmotivated enlargement—the sitter's figure seems unrelated to the picture format. Placed asymmetrically in an unusually wide space that, at the left, is partly filled with a piece of furniture and a fall of drapery, the young woman seems diminished in her setting. She sits humbly in her chair, in contrast to the commandingly enthroned *Madame de Verninac*. Unlike the subjects of David's portraits who emphatically engage the viewer with their gaze, she looks dreamily to one side, with an expression nowhere to be found in David's work. The inclination of her head and her averted glance suggest a shy sensibility very unlike the assertive bearing of David's sitters, and slightly at odds with the provocativeness of her revealing costume, an authentic fashion note of the period. For all the signs of classicist style in the portrait's accessories and arrangement, the young woman's features are treated with a marked degree of individual realism.



Fig. 2. Jacques-Louis David, *Madame de Verninac*, oil on canvas, 1799, Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF 1942-16, Photo RMN



Circle of Jacques-Louis David, *Portrait of a Young Woman in White*, 1963.10.118

Her face, closely framed by the elaborately braided and curled coiffure, is neither classically idealized nor conventionally pretty. The heavy nose in the wide oval of the face and the small-lipped mouth would make her seem a rather plain girl, were it not for the touching, melancholy pensiveness of her expression. Youth, sentiment, and erotic suggestiveness combine to make this portrait memorably effective and no doubt favored its former attribution to the leading master of the French school of the time.

A troubling characteristic of the picture is the unevenness of its execution. The masterly treatment of the face and bust suggest the hand of a major artist, but its compositional awkwardness, the weak structure of the folds in the lower parts of the sitter's dress, the feeble modeling of her left arm and hand, and the crude brushwork in the prominent drapery at the left appear to be the work of a fairly mediocre painter. So marked are the differences in quality between its various parts that they raise the possibility of a workshop collaboration: begun by a master, the portrait may have been finished by assistants.

Its actual position within the numerous circle of David's followers has not been determined. Georges Wildenstein in 1963 raised the possibility of Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson's (1767–1824) authorship,¹² but this suggestion, improbable on stylistic grounds, has met with no acceptance. Despite its distinctive character, it has as yet not been possible to link the picture convincingly with the work of any of the known masters of the period.

Notes

1. The relining was carried out by Stephan Pichetto who was also involved in work on the painting in 1941, when it received a new stretcher. The picture underwent further treatments in 1942, 1943, 1965, and 1966.

2. The picture's early history is unknown. According to Frelinghuysen et al. 1993, 322, no. 180, it was acquired by Gimpel & Wildenstein from an "unknown source in 1914" and sold by them to Mrs. Havemeyer later that year. Two different accounts of the portrait's earlier provenance, both of dubious accuracy, are contained in the Chester Dale papers in the NGA's curatorial records. According to one of them, apparently furnished by Wildenstein Inc., the portrait was first "sold by Wildenstein to Mr. Gardner, but later bought back and sold to the Havemeyers in about 1912. Miss Cassatt accompanied Mrs. Havemeyer to the Wilden-

stein gallery in Paris and persuaded her to buy the picture." A different version, sent to Chester Dale by the Paris dealer Etienne Bignou, informed him that "this is the pedigree of the picture by David which you bought at the Havemeyer sale, 'Sold to the French collector Sigismond Bardac of Paris by Mr. Levy. Mrs. Havemeyer bought the picture from Mr. S. Bardac for about \$20,000, in 1902 through Miss Mary Cassatt and Baron Christian de Marinitch.'" It may be noted that a *Portrait de femme. Epoque de la Révolution*, of somewhat similar dimensions (given as 100 × 80 cm in the catalogue), had appeared in an anonymous sale in 1894 (Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 15 March, no. 27), when it brought the modest price of 300 francs.

3. It is unknown by whom and on what grounds this identification was first proposed.

4. The painting is nowhere mentioned in the catalogues of David's work (David 1880, Cantinelli 1930, Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973) or in the comprehensive monographs (Holma 1940, Hautecoeur 1954, Schnapper 1980), nor was it included in the major exhibitions that followed its public appearance in 1930 (London, Tate Gallery; Manchester, City Art Gallery, 1948–1949, *David: Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings*; and Louvre; Versailles, 1989–1990, *Jacques-Louis David, 1748–1825*).

5. See References below for the years 1930–1931.

6. Prominently on view at the National Gallery from 1941, the picture enjoyed considerable popularity and was continuously exposed to critical inspection. In spite of this, and in spite of questions then being raised about other paintings grouped under the label of "School of David," its authorship remained uncontested in the literature. The catalogues of the Chester Dale and National Gallery collections continued to attribute it to David until 1968. Kimball and Venturi (1948, 162, no. 74) endorsed that attribution and the identification of its subject as Mme Hamelin without qualifications, pointing to "a very similar portrait by David, probably of the same year . . . that of his daughter at work on a tapestry (collection of the Marquis de Ludre)," a work that is also no longer given to David. By the fashionable coiffure of the supposed Mme Hamelin, Kimball and Venturi confidently dated the portrait to 1802, two years later than David's portrait of Mme Récamier (1800, Louvre), which they otherwise considered to be closely related to it.

7. In an undated memorandum, evidently written in 1971, David Rust, curator at the NGA, noted that "David authorities" did not accept the picture, which "has never been included in a publication on David." Citing negative judgments by René Huyghe, Robert Rosenblum, Jacques de Caso, Charles Parkhurst, Sherman Lee, Perry Cott, and Wolfgang Stechow, all solicited or volunteered in 1971, Rust suggested that the picture's attribution be changed to "Circle of David."

8. By 1941 the catalogue of the Chester Dale collection stated that the picture's "subject has been identified by some critics as Mme. Hamelin" (Dale 1941, 5). Alfred Frankfurter (1941, 16) published it as such in *ArtN*.

Originating in a guess, the identification had hardened into certainty by that time (see Kimball and Venturi 1948, 162, no. 74, and Dale catalogues from 1941 to 1968).

9. Mme Hamelin, née Fortunée Lormier-Lagrave (1776–1851), in 1792, at sixteen, married Antoine-Romain Hamelin, a military contractor and chronic bankrupt. One of the professional beauties of the Directory, she counted Chateaubriand among her admirers (see Alfred Marquiset, *Une Merveilleuse (Mme. Hamelin) 1776–1851* [Paris, 1909]). She was popularly credited with having launched the fashion of the shirtless, transparent top: “Un beau jour ce dernier article [i.e., the shirt] est supprimé: un beau jour, les salons de Paris apprennent que de la veille au soir la chemise n’est plus mise. . . . Dans l’audace même du nu il y a des audaces: un decadi [Sunday] soir de l’an V, deux femmes se promènent aux Champs-Élysées, nues, dans un fourreau de gaze; une autre s’y montre les seins entièrement découvertes” (Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Histoire de la société française pendant le Directoire* [Paris, 1855], 422). The fad was extremely short-lived, according to the Goncourts, who dated it to a single week of year 5 of the Revolutionary calendar (1797): “Les journaux annoncent que madame Hamelin s’est décidé à remettre des chemises. Une semaine la mode des *sans-chemises* avait duré” (423). In fact, it seems to have had a longer duration. The *Journal des débats* for 18 Fructidor An 10 (August 1801) still mentions, among the dresses worn by women of “la classe opulente” at Frascati and other public resorts, “tuniques transparentes.”

10. Her portrait by Andrea Appiani (1754/1756–1817), signed *A. Appiani a Milano, anno 6* (1797/1798), was given to the Musée Carnavalet, Paris, by Mme Heurtault, great-granddaughter of Mme Hamelin. It was a photograph of this painting, sent to NGA curator David Rust in 1971, that proved beyond doubt that the young woman in the NGA’s portrait could not be Mme Hamelin.

11. The underlying compositional arrangement and pose that David favored for his portraits of seated women throughout the 1790s—*Madame Trudaine* (c. 1793, Louvre), *Madame Sériziat* (1795, Louvre), and *Henriette de Verninac* (1799, Louvre)—remained consistent throughout the changes in costume and style that occurred during the decade. David’s formula, echoed in the NGA’s *Young Woman in White*, was widely imitated by followers; see, for example, Jean-Baptiste Desoria’s (1758–1832) *Madame Elizabeth Dunoyer* (1797, AIC).

12. An article by Georges Wildenstein (“Table alphabétique des portraits peints, sculptés, dessinés, et gravés exposés à Paris au Salon entre 1800 et 1826,” *GBA* 6th période 61 [January 1963]: 20–21) proposed an attribution to Girodet on the basis of a sketch by Monsaldy (Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Paris) of a portrait by Girodet, *Portrait of Mme X*, supposedly shown at the Salon of 1799. But the *livret* of that Salon does not list such a portrait by Girodet, and the sketch by Monsaldy (Wildenstein 1963, 21, fig. 8) bears no resemblance to the portrait at the NGA, which at any rate is stylistically unlike Girodet’s portraiture.

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- 1985 NGA: 117, repro.
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Eugène Delacroix

1798–1863

EUGÈNE DELACROIX was born in 1798, the son of Charles Delacroix who had served briefly as minister of foreign affairs under the Directory and who was on a mission to Holland, as the ambassador of the French Republic, at the time of his son's birth. His mother, Victoire Oeben, was descended from a family of artisans and craftsmen. Both parents died early, the father in 1805, the mother in 1814, leaving Eugène in the care of his older sister, Henriette de Verninac, wife of a former ambassador to Turkey and minister-plenipotentiary to Switzerland. The fall of Napoleon's empire spelled the temporary ruin of this family of high officials, and with it that of young Delacroix. But the influential relations among which his birth and childhood had placed him were to protect his subsequent career, particularly in those periods, after 1830 and again after 1850, when Bonapartist interests were on the rise. As a child he had played on the knees of Talleyrand, his father's successor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a family friend. It has been suggested, but not proven, that Talleyrand, to whom Delacroix in later life bore a marked facial resemblance, was in fact his actual father.

In 1815 Delacroix, aged seventeen, began to take painting lessons from Pierre Guérin (1774–1833) through whose studio Théodore Géricault had briefly and turbulently passed a little earlier. Guérin was a tolerant teacher who attracted the sons of the middle class. His classicist instruction had little effect on Delacroix; it was less important for his development than the literary education that he had received at the lycée. The example of Géricault with whom he was acquainted and for whose *Raft of the Medusa* (Louvre) he posed in 1818 left its mark on him, but in every essential respect he was, like many of his contemporaries, a self-taught artist, whose real school was the Louvre, where, even after the removal of the Napoleonic loot, the splendor of Titian, Veronese, and Rubens shone brightly enough to eclipse the school of David. Among his fellow copyists in its galleries he met the young Englishman Richard Parkes Bonington (1801–1828) who, together with his friend Raymond Soulier,

was to introduce him to watercolor painting and a British tradition of colorism, and who helped to awaken his interest in Shakespeare, Byron, and Scott, the main literary sources of his romanticism.

Delacroix' student work did not show extraordinary promise, but in 1822 his Salon debut, the *Bark of Dante* (Louvre), attracted some attention. Though it has a deserved place in the history of art, as the start of a great career, it is still an immature effort, heavy-handed in its combination of reminiscences of Géricault, Rubens, and Michelangelo, and incoherent in its composition. Two years later, his *Massacres of Chios* (Louvre) burst upon the Salon of 1824 as "a terrifying hymn in honor of doom and irremediable suffering" (Baudelaire 1869). The picture's resonant harmonies gave an early indication of Delacroix' mastery of color, and its lustful stress on horror and death struck a note that was to sound throughout much of his subsequent work. The government's purchase of the work enabled Delacroix to visit England in the spring and summer of 1825. He had already seen landscapes by John Constable (1776–1837) in Paris while at work on *Massacres of Chios*. Further impressions of English art and literature gathered during his months in London were to influence him in the following years, as is evident in his *Portrait of Baron Switer* (1826, National Gallery, London), a bravura performance in the manner of Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), and in his use of subjects from Scott and Byron. His *Execution of the Doge Marino Faliero* (1826, Wallace Collection, London), based on a play by Byron and painted with something of Bonington's nervous brilliance, is the crowning achievement of his English phase.

After these paintings of exquisite finish and relatively small format, the colossal, orgiastic *Death of Sardanapalus* (Louvre), shown at the Salon of 1827, came as a shock to the public. Delacroix had taken the subject from a play by Byron but supplied the voluptuous cast of this scene of slaughter from his own imagination. He paid for his audacity with a temporary loss of official favor. The following years were a difficult but productive period during

which he experimented with a variety of subjects: studies of lions and tigers, oriental scenes, sensuous nudes, and turbulent battles.

The Revolution of 1830 inspired his one truly popular work, *Liberty Leading the People* (Louvre). In the place of the febrile romanticism of his paintings of the 1820s, he now used a larger, more sober manner and colors of muted intensity. Dealing with this modern subject he achieved poetic effect without morbidity or false grandeur: even Liberty, abundantly physical, has the effect of adding a note of actuality rather than allegorical artifice to the tumult on the barricade. For once, public and critics united in praise of the artist, and the government of Louis-Philippe awarded him the Legion of Honor.

In early 1832 Delacroix visited North Africa in the suite of a French embassy to the sultan of Morocco. Islamic Africa surpassed all his expectations. The classical beauty for which he had vainly looked among the plaster casts in Guérin's studio he now encountered along roadsides under the African sky. He filled sketchbooks with observations of Arab life and gathered a store of ideas that served him for the rest of his life. On his return to Paris, he began a series of oriental subjects, not Byronic fantasies now but recollections of actual experience. *Algerian Women in Their Apartment* (1834, Louvre) records his recollection of a visit to a harem with the quiet authority of fact rather than the fictions of romantic exoticism. The sensuous intensity of the painting results from stylistic means that seem simpler but are in fact more complex than those that produced the sensational *Sardanapalus*. It signals the attainment of his mature style, quieter but grander than his earlier manner, more monumental yet no less expressive, more restrained but more powerful.

Early in his career, Delacroix had been hailed by the young French romantics as their leader. During the 1830s he outgrew this affiliation, not because he had changed his course, but because his fellow romantics were failing to keep up with him. The "romantic battle" had been won too easily. After 1830 French romanticism became popular and died. Its followers, agreeable but minor talents for the most part, rapidly declined into picturesqueness and mannerism. Delacroix, by contrast, increasingly identified himself with the grand traditions of the Venetians and Flemings, with

Veronese and Rubens above all. His later works expressed a growing concern with traditional subject matter and monumental form. In his *Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople* (Louvre), shown at the Salon of 1840, he resumed compositional devices that he had used earlier in *Massacres of Chios*, but the former violence is stilled by the somber harmony of the colors and the weight of the great colonnade that dominates the scene. In his *Justice of Trajan* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen) shown at the same Salon, an even more elaborate architectural setting contains, with its strong verticals and diagonals, the animation of the figures.

Behind Delacroix' new concern with compositional structure and balance lay the experience he had gained in carrying out the architectural decorations that occupied him during the latter part of his life. The governments of Louis-Philippe and Napoleon III favored him with important monumental commissions, beginning in 1833 with the allegorical decorations of the Salon du Roi in the Palais Bourbon (Chamber of Deputies). This was closely followed by the even larger enterprise of the Palais Bourbon's library (1838-1847), where Delacroix covered a succession of domes and pendentives with scenes celebrating the heroic lineage of the arts and sciences, in a dramatic succession beginning with Orpheus' gift of civilization to mankind and ending with Attila's destruction of Italy. Before this was finished, he received the further commission of decorating the library of the Senate in the Luxembourg Palace (1840-1846), where, in the central dome, he painted the presentation of Dante to Homer and the other great men of Greek and Roman antiquity, to symbolize the meeting of the classical pagan with the modern Christian culture. There followed the ceiling of the Galerie d'Apollon in the Louvre (1850-1851), the decorations in the Salon de la Paix of the Hôtel de Ville of Paris (1852-1854, destroyed in 1871), and the Chapel of the Holy Angels in the church of Saint-Sulpice (1854-1861). No other painter of the time was so continuously employed in monumental work on the grandest scale, none was given such opportunities to triumph in public on ceilings, domes, and walls. His murals, exceptional achievements in a time when monumental painting languished, prove that this nervously frail artist had the energy to compose on immense surfaces and the mental vigor to invent images that dominate

those walls. His superiority rested in part on his mastery of color that provided both the emotional force and the formal structure of his murals, in part on his command of expressive pantomime, of the movement, tension, and clash of bodies. He was the most versatile of the painters of his time, including in the range of his subjects battlefield and barricade, *Faust* and *Hamlet*, royal tiger and odalisque.

The Universal Exposition in 1855 showed thirty-six of his paintings, a tribute to him (together with Ingres) as one of France's two preeminent living artists. Having long been denied admission to the Academy, of which he privately took a coolly realistic view, he was at last admitted to this body of distinguished mediocrities in 1857. Frequently ill with bronchial infections and economizing his physical strength, he lived a frugal bachelor's life but worked with unabated energy until the end. For all his courtesy, his person could command awe and, on occasion, a secret terror. In one of his last works, the National Gallery's *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains* (pp. 228–232), he remembered once more his African voyage, the great adventure of his early years. He died, not long after completing this painting, on 13 August 1863.

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1963.10.127 (1791)

Christopher Columbus and His Son at La Rábida

1838

Oil on fabric, 90.3 × 118 (35½ × 46½)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *Eug. Delacroix 1838*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a plain-weave, medium-weight fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been removed, but pronounced cusping on all four sides indicates the painting retains its original dimensions. The paint is applied over a light-colored ground brushed on in diagonal strokes thick enough to mask the fabric weave. Brushed underdrawing remains visible through the outer paint layers that form the image. Infrared reflectography revealed a few contour adjustments in the figure behind Columbus. Unusually thin glazes, laid over more opaque paint, establish the color and tonal modeling of the lighter areas of the architectural setting. The figures are painted in thicker, more heavily worked paint that in some of the darker passages— notably the costumes of Columbus and his son and the black of the monks' robes—shows deep cracking. A recent conservation treatment removed the discolored varnish.

Provenance: Commissioned by Count Anatole di Nicola Demidoff [1813–1870], prince of San Donato; (his sale, 26, boulevard des Italiens, Paris, 21 February 1870, no. 25);¹ purchased by Edouard André, Paris, for 38,000 francs; purchased 30 November 1887 by (Arnold, Tripp & Co.); by whom sold 1 December 1887 to E. Secrétan, Paris; (his sale, Christie, Manson and Woods, London, 13 July 1889, no. 13, 30,187 francs); purchased by (Durand-Ruel et Cie., New York and Paris); (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris) by 1890; Peter A. B. Widener [1834–1915], Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, by 1892; by whom sold in 1910 to (M. Knoedler & Co., London and New York, and P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold to (Galerie Georges Petit, Paris); Ferdinand Blumenthal [d. 1914], Paris, by 1912; Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt [d. 1965], Paris, by 1930; by whom sold to (Galerie André Weil, Paris); by whom sold to (La Peinture Contemporaine, Lucerne, and Galerie Georges Petit, Paris), by 1931; by whom sold 9 February 1932 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais des Tuileries, Pavillon de Flore, 1878, *Tableaux anciens et modernes exposés au profit du Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, no. 80. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1885, no. 239A (Supplément). Paris, Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1928, *Oeuvres*

d'Eugène Delacroix. Louvre, 1930, *Exposition Eugène Delacroix*, no. 91. Paris, Musée Permanent des Colonies, 1931, *Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris*, Part 1, "Exposition retrospective de la section de synthèse," unnumbered, repro., as *Christophe Colomb découvrant l'Amérique*. MMA, 1932, *Taste of Today in Masterpieces of Painting before 1900*, no cat. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA; Cleveland Museum of Art; Paris, Grand Palais, 1975–1977, *European Vision of America*, no. 277, repro. (NGA only). NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist.

IN THE LONG, white-washed entrance hall of the monastery, Columbus stands in an attitude of weary waiting, his left foot resting on the bench on which his young son Diego lounges exhausted. He has let his heavy cloak drop to the floor and deposited a small bundle, their only baggage, at the wall beside the bench, next to the staff that the boy used as they climbed the path to the monastery. Behind Columbus approaches the portly prior of the monastery. Dressed in the black-and-white habit of the Dominican order, he raises his hand as if to address his guests. He is followed by a young friar who motions toward the left as if to draw the prior's attention to the group of three monks who converse at a window, their backs turned to the room. Oblivious of their presence, Columbus stands in deep thought, holding his son's hand on his knee, his eyes fixed on a map of the Indies that hangs on the wall before him, beneath a small sculpted relief representing the Adoration of the Magi—treasure-laden travelers from the East at the goal of their voyage. Above, four age-darkened paintings line the long recession of the wall that carries the eye, beneath arches, toward the doors and shutters that close off the monastery's inner recesses.

Delacroix's composition pictures Columbus' visit to the Andalusian monastery of Santa Maria de la Rábida, where in 1491—penniless and discouraged after having vainly solicited the courts of Portugal and Spain on behalf of his search for a westward passage to the Indies—he is said to have been reduced to asking for the charity of the friars. But while at La Rábida, according to these largely legendary accounts, Columbus was received by Fray Juan Perez, formerly the confessor to the queen, who was able to procure for him the audience that finally brought him the royal commission that set him on his expedition to the New World. The episode was recount-

ed by, among others, Washington Irving, whose popular *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, published in London in 1828, is the most likely contemporary source Delacroix would have used.²

The picture and its companion, *The Return of Christopher Columbus* (fig. 1),³ were commissioned as a pair by Count Anatole Demidoff⁴ for the estate of San Donato, near Florence, that he had bought in 1833. What brought about this commission and how its subject matter was determined are unknown. Lee Johnson has suggested that Demidoff, himself something of an explorer who in 1837 conducted expeditions in southern Russia and the Crimea, may at the time have taken a personal interest in Columbus.⁵ But Delacroix' own concern with Columbus had an earlier origin, as Johnson also notes.⁶ In a sketchbook of the early 1820s Delacroix listed among various possible subjects for paintings "Christophe Colomb persecuté" immediately beneath "Tasse à l'hôpital des fous,"⁷ indicating that these two topics, both centered on the persecutions suffered by men of genius, had begun to occupy him by that time. His visit to Cádiz, during a brief excursion to Spain in May 1832,⁸ gave him an occasion to remember Columbus who had set out on his first voyage from nearby Palos, and it may have been then that his proximity to that harbor and to the neighboring monastery of La Rábida brought the episode of Columbus' reception by the monks to his mind. It is at any rate noteworthy that a watercolor that he painted at the time of the vestibule of the Dominican monastery at Cádiz (fig. 2)⁹ was later adapted by him with little change for the setting of *Christopher Columbus at La Rábida*. In a journal entry, jotted down in Cádiz on 19 May 1832, he described his impressions of a monastic interior: "Corridors as far as the eye can see... geographical maps on the walls"¹⁰—as if anticipating his future use of such motifs. When, in 1838, he arranged the setting of his painting, he repeated the watercolor's description of a room in the monastery at Cádiz, slightly shifting and deepening the perspective to provide space for the figures of Columbus and his son. In the painting, Delacroix extended the wall at the right farther into the foreground, placed the small relief of the Adoration of the Magi above the map of the Indies,¹¹ and added a fourth to the row of dark paintings at the top of the wall.

During Delacroix' lifetime, *Columbus at La Rábi-*



Fig. 1. Eugène Delacroix, *The Return of Christopher Columbus*, oil on canvas, 1839, The Toledo Museum of Art, Gift of Thomas A. DeVilbiss, 1938.80

da and *The Return of Columbus* remained inaccessible at San Donato, unknown to the public and the critics, with the apparent exception only of Théophile Gautier who, in an article on the Demidoff collection that was published on the occasion of its sale in 1870, claimed to have visited it in 1850.¹² Gautier's article, the earliest and most insightful discussion of the two pictures by a contemporary, is all the more remarkable for dealing with them together, as a contrasted pair, each complementing the other: "*Christopher Columbus at the Monastery of Santa Maria de la Rábida* is one of the pictures that, being without movement and of tranquil aspect, prove this eminently romantic master to be capable of expressing unruffled calm with as much effect as turbulent action and passion.... One senses in it a coolness and repose that invite one to rest, to forget the fatigues and excitements of the world.... Never has this great painter achieved a more suave and gentle harmony. As in some mysterious choir, its tones sound only *sotto voce*."¹³ Considering the picture and its

companion as parts of one expressive composition, Gautier defined their relationship in musical terms: "One might say that, in this symphony of colors, [*Columbus at La Rábida*], held to a limited range and moderate pace, functions as the andante to the allegro of *The Return of Columbus*."¹⁴

It is apparent that Delacroix calculated each of the two pictures for its narrative and pictorial contrast with the other: the hero's early humility and his later hour of triumph are given visual drama by the confrontation of the formal clarity¹⁵ and austere color¹⁶ of the first with the animation and Venetian opulence of the second. Their full meaning becomes apparent only when they are seen together. Delacroix evidently envisaged them as a pair from the very outset while executing them one after the other, *Columbus at La Rábida* in 1838, *The Return of Columbus* in 1839. This is the only instance in his work of two images joined to form a historical narrative, the before and after of a heroic accomplishment. But the particular, personal significance that this pairing evidently held for



Eugène Delacroix, *Christopher Columbus and His Son at La Rábida*, 1963.10.127



Fig. 2. Eugène Delacroix, *The Vestibule of the Dominican Monastery at Cadiz*, watercolor, 1832, Paris, Département des Arts Graphiques, Musée du Louvre, RF 9255, Photo RMN

Delacroix—that of genius inspired in obscurity, conceiving an idea beyond the ken of ordinary men, followed by genius justly and spectacularly rewarded in the end—links them with a larger group of works in which Delacroix celebrated historical examples of high intellectual or artistic achievement.¹⁷ It is certainly significant that when he painted these tributes to Columbus he was also planning the cycle of monumental decorations for the library of the Palais Bourbon that pays elaborate homage to the historical heroes and martyrs of civilization,¹⁸ the great men of the past who had advanced knowledge in the sciences, history and philosophy, law, theology and poetry. But the most immediate thematic parallel to these scenes from the life of Columbus is probably to be found

in the several versions of *Tasso in the Madhouse* or *Tasso in Prison* that had occupied Delacroix from 1824 onward,¹⁹ and of which the first sign had already occurred in that list of projects of about 1820, in which Delacroix had followed the entry of “Tasso in the Madhouse” with that of “Columbus Persecuted.”²⁰ As exemplars of genius misunderstood or oppressed, Columbus and Tasso remained closely linked in Delacroix’ mind, and it was no mere coincidence that, at the very time when he painted his pictures of Columbus in adversity and triumph, he also turned once again to the episode of Tasso in the madhouse, making it the subject of one of his submissions to the Salon of 1839.²¹

While the events of Columbus’ career earned him a wide popularity in the course of the nineteenth



Fig. 3. Sir David Wilkie, *Columbus in the Convent of La Rabida Explaining His Intended Voyage*, oil on canvas, 1835, Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, Gift of Hirschl and Adler Galleries, G.57.17.1

century as the prototype of the enlightened intellectual who is made to suffer for being in advance of his time, they also gave him the more romantic appeal of the lone visionary, tempting artists to adopt him as a model for self-portraiture.²² He was shown defending himself before the junta of Salamanca, betrayed by his sovereigns, languishing in prison, or requesting, at the point of death, that the chains he had worn in captivity be placed in his grave. The rather less melodramatic episodes of his arrival at the monastery of La Rábida, near destitution, and his sympathetic reception by Fray Juan Perez seem not to have been represented in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. David Wilkie's *Columbus in the Convent of La Rábida Explaining His Intended Voyage* (1835, fig. 3),²³ which shows Columbus, seated at a table and accompanied by his son, explaining his project to Juan Perez, marks the earliest use of the events at the monastery in a painting of some importance.

Delacroix' choice of this rare subject, though given a different narrative and compositional form, was probably indebted to Wilkie, an artist whom he had visited during his English stay in 1825 and whose work he admired.²⁴ While traveling in Spain in 1827–1828 Wilkie had met the American writer Washington Irving (1783–1859) when the latter was about to complete his biography of Columbus.²⁵ On the lookout for fresh material, Wilkie caught Irving's enthusiasm for the subject and was immediately attracted to the as yet unexploited incident of Columbus' visit to La Rábida as described by Irving.²⁶ Wilkie's sketch of this subject, dated "Madrid, 13 October 1827," shows that it was already on his mind at that time.²⁷ On his return from Spain, in June 1828, Wilkie passed through Paris, where he renewed his acquaintance with Delacroix, who was sufficiently impressed by this visit to recall it many years later: "He came to see me to show me some drawings that he had brought back from a big voyage in Spain."²⁸ These drawings may have included Wilkie's sketches for *Columbus at La Rábida*. Wilkie, at any rate, was probably the intermediary who drew Delacroix' attention to Irving's account of the life of Columbus and to the particular episode that occupied Wilkie at the time. But his influence did not extend to Delacroix' subsequent, entirely independent interpretation and compositional realization of this episode.



Fig. 4. Eugène Delacroix, preparatory drawing for *Christopher Columbus and His Son at La Rábida*, pen, c. 1838, private collection (illustrated in Terry-Engell Gallery, *Master Drawings Presented by Adolph Stein*, London, 1975, no. 37)

Delacroix' picture was painted at a particularly busy time in his life, which may account for the paucity of preliminary studies. In arranging its architectural setting, he was able to rely on his watercolor of 1832 (see fig. 2). The figural composition appears to have been developed with brush and oils directly on the canvas. The only preparatory drawing for it that has thus far come to light (fig. 4) is a rapid pen sketch, once in the collection of Delacroix' friend Philippe Burty, of the monk who stands behind the prior in the picture's middle.²⁹

Notes

1. The original etching by Félix Bracquemond was published in the catalogue of the Demidoff sale, 21 February 1870; its reproduction by the photographic zincplate process of Gillot père appeared in *L'Illustration*, 5 February 1870, 101.

2. *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (London, 1828; New York, 1829), 32–33: "The first trace we have of Columbus in Spain . . . is contained in the deposition of one Garcia Fernandez, a physician, resident in the little sea port of Palos de Moguer, in Andalusia. About half a league from Palos is a solitary height overlooking the sea coast, and surrounded by a forest of pine trees, there stood, and stands at the present day,

an ancient convent of Franciscan friars, dedicated to Santa María de Rábida. A stranger travelling on foot, accompanied by a young boy, stopped one day at the gate of the convent, and asked of the porter a little bread and water for his child. While receiving this humble refreshment, the guardian of the convent, Friar Juan Perez de Marchena, happening to pass by, was struck with the appearance of the stranger, and observing from his air and accent that he was a stranger, entered into conversation with him. The stranger was Columbus, accompanied by his young son Diego. He was on his way to the neighbouring town of Huelva, to seek a brother-in-law, who had married a sister of his deceased wife." Columbus' first visit to La Rábida in fact already occurred in 1484 or 1485 when, on leaving Portugal, he entrusted Diego, his son by his recently deceased wife, to the friars of the monastery. Seven years later, disappointed by his fruitless negotiations with Spanish government committees at Córdoba (1486), Salamanca (1486–1487), and Málaga (1488), and a final, unsuccessful hearing by a Spanish junta in 1491, Columbus decided to leave Spain and to offer his services to Charles VIII of France. He therefore returned to La Rábida in 1491 to retrieve his son and transfer him to the care of an aunt at nearby Huelva. It was only on this occasion that he met with Fray Juan Perez, the former confessor to Queen Isabella, who arranged that audience with the queen, then at the siege of Granada, which persuaded her to sanction his projected voyage (see John Cummings, *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus* [London, 1992], 37–41). Among French sources that may also have been available to Delacroix were Nepomucène Lemerrier's *Christophe Colomb* (Paris, 1809); the comte de Lajunais' "Notice sur Christophe Colomb," in *Etudes biographiques et littéraires* (Paris, 1832); and Alexander von Humboldt's *Examen critique de l'histoire de la géographie du nouveau continent* (Paris, 1836–1839), but none of these corresponds as closely to his picture as Washington Irving's account.

3. Robaut 1885, no. 690; Johnson 1981–1989, 3: no. 266, 4: pl. 83. Dated 1839, the picture in Toledo has slightly smaller dimensions—85 × 115.5 cm—than its pendant in Washington (90.3 × 118 cm).

4. Count Anatole Demidoff (1812–1870), a rich Russian expatriate, scandal-ridden bon vivant, and collector of art, was created prince of San Donato after his purchase of that Tuscan property in 1833. In 1841 he married and five years later was divorced from Princess Mathilde, a daughter of Jerome Bonaparte and cousin of Napoleon III, who in her own right became an important patroness of artists and writers during the Second Empire. In 1833 Delacroix included Demidoff in a double portrait, *Count Charles de Mornay and Count Anatole Demidoff* (destroyed; Robaut 1885, no. 443; Johnson 1981–1989, 3: no. 220), that was shown at the Paris Salon of that year. Demidoff himself later commissioned, in addition to the two Columbus subjects of 1838 and 1839, *Charles V at the Monastery of Yuste* (lost), dated 1839 (Robaut 695; Johnson 3: L 143), and *Moroccan Troops Forging a River* (Louvre), dated 1858 (Robaut

1347; Johnson 3: no. 406). He also acquired, in 1856, *Arab Cavalry Practicing a Charge* (Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt), dated 1833 (Robaut 468; Johnson 3: no. 353). Delacroix' acquaintance with Demidoff continued until 1846, but was never close.

5. Johnson 1981–1989, 3:85, no. 265. Demidoff's account of these travels, *Voyage dans la Russie méridionale et la Crimée*, with lithographic illustrations by Auguste Raffet (1804–1860), was published in Paris in 1838.

6. Johnson 1981–1989, 3:85.

7. Delacroix 1932, 3: no. 343, supplément. The sketchbook is now in the Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre, RF 23357.

8. Delacroix during May 1832 interrupted his Moroccan voyage for a trip to Spain, crossing the straits from Tangier for brief visits to Cádiz (16–21 May) and Seville (22–30 May); see Delacroix 1932, 1:152–154.

9. This watercolor is dated 20 May 1832 (Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre, RF 9255; Johnson 1986, 3:86, repro.). Robaut 1885, no. 1645, recognized that it served for the background of *Columbus at La Rábida*, but he misread its date and wrongly identified it as an interior of the Carthusian monastery of Seville, which Delacroix visited several days later (25 May, see Delacroix 1932, 1:155).

10. Delacroix 1932, 154, "Samedi 19 mai." The entry refers to Delacroix' visit that day to the Capuchin monastery in Cádiz.

11. The bas-relief is an imaginary detail, inserted by Delacroix into a setting otherwise closely based on the vestibule in the Dominican monastery of Cádiz as he had recorded it in his watercolor (see note 9 above). The idea of including the relief may, however, have been suggested by yet another memory of Cádiz where, on 19 May, Delacroix had noticed in a corridor of the Capuchin monastery "[une] petite sculpture d'une Piéta incrustée dans le mur" (Delacroix 1932, 1:154). In confronting Columbus with a representation of the Adoration, Delacroix may have intended to allude to the westward voyage of the Three Kings of the Orient as a prevision of Columbus' own. The scene of the Magi doing homage at the end of their voyage to the enthroned Virgin and Child serves at the same time as a forecast of this picture's sequel, *The Return of Columbus*, with its homage by the traveler at the sovereigns' throne. Delacroix' model appears to have been a relief of a type common in Italian sculpture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The fact that his composition reverses the usual left-to-right orientation of the scene suggests that he may have modeled it on an engraving.

12. Gautier 1870, 100: "Etant en Italie à Florence, en 1850, à San Donato, nous revîmes, à San Donato même, le tableau de Eugène Delacroix."

13. Gautier 1870, 101.

14. Gautier 1870, 101.

15. Huyghe 1963, 293–294, commenting on the firmness and clarity of the spatial setting of *Columbus at La Rábida*, "where the scene takes place in a white-walled parlour whose lines of recession are combined with verticals and horizontals and strict arcs," points to the

resemblance of this setting to that of Delacroix' roughly contemporary *Jewish Wedding in Morocco* (Louvre). He notes that in both pictures the scene is enclosed in a "cubic space...in accordance with the severest traditions handed down by the Renaissance" and attributes this geometric order to Delacroix' "discovery of true classicism" during his Moroccan voyage (303–304).

16. Color throughout the picture is subordinated to tonal contrasts. The yellowish white and light gray of the walls and ceiling, harmonizing with the fairly light terracotta of the floor, provide the dominant color scheme. In contrast to this pervasive lightness, the principal figures, the paintings on the wall, and the arched opening in the background are defined as dark and nearly colorless shapes. The black and white of the monks' habit give the key to what Delacroix probably intended as an expression of monastic plainness. In the midst of this sobriety, the bright red cap that Columbus holds at his hip provides the one strong accent of color in the picture and—like an exclamation point—identifies him as its protagonist.

17. The sequence of Delacroix' tributes to history's cultural and moral heroes—the conservative counter-current to the anarchically romantic strain in his work exemplified by the *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827)—began in the 1820s with the monumental *Justinian Drafting His Laws* (1826, burned in 1871) and reached its apogee in the 1840s with the *Justice of Trajan* (1840) and the great program of decorations for the library of the Chamber of Deputies (1838–1847). *Columbus at La Rábida* and *The Return of Columbus*, though of more modest scale and less official character, form part of this thematic context.

18. Delacroix received the commission to undertake the decoration of the two hemicycles and five cupolas in the library of the Chamber of Deputies (Palais Bourbon), the largest monumental enterprise of his career, on 30 August 1838. He began the preparatory planning in the fall of that year, developed the iconographic program during 1839–1840, but only brought the work to a conclusion in 1847. For the fullest account of the project, see Johnson 1981–1989, 5:33–77.

19. In a diary entry of 3 September 1822 (Delacroix 1932, 1:4), Delacroix had noted his intention of painting a *Tasse en prison* the size of life, but later used this subject in two paintings of modest scale. The earlier of these, *Le Tasse dans la maison des fous*, now in Zurich (Hortense Ande-Bührle collection; Robaut 1885, no. 88; Johnson 1981–1989, 1: no. 106), was exhibited at the Salon of 1824; the second, dated 1839, and now in Winterthur (Oskar Reinhardt Stiftung; Robaut 199; Johnson 3: no. 268), was rejected by the Salon jury of that year. In addition, Delacroix treated the subject in several drawings dating from 1824 to 1826 (Robaut 89, 135, 185, 1496).

20. See note 7 above.

21. Robaut 1885, no. 199 (repro. in reverse); Johnson 1981–1989, 3:88–89, no. 268, 4: pl. 91.

22. See Hugh Honour, "L'Image de Christophe Colomb," *Revue du Louvre*, no. 4 (1976): 255–267.

Delacroix' *Columbus at La Rábida* had little influence on subsequent French painting, no doubt in part because of its inaccessible location until 1870. But it is noteworthy that Alfred Dehodencq (1822–1882), an artist who owed much to Delacroix, chose the subject of "Christophe Colomb arrivant au couvent de la Rábida (Espagne)" for his submission to the Paris Salon of 1864 (no. 528). Though badly hung at the beginning of the exhibition, it was bought by Napoleon III after its close. In the romantic tradition—and in the spirit of Delacroix—Dehodencq intended his picture to be understood as a statement about the plight of unrecognized genius, and specifically about his own plight. According to his biographer, Gabriel Séailles (*Alfred Dehodencq, l'homme et l'artiste* [Paris, 1910], 145), "Dehodencq y a mis les émotions de sa propre vie... son Colomb lui ressemble comme un frère...serait-il reconnu? Trouverait-il dans le public ce prier qui discerne le génie dans la foule?"

23. The picture was shown at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1835; see William J. Chiego et al., *Sir David Wilkie of Scotland (1785–1841)* [exh. cat. North Carolina Museum of Art.] (Raleigh, 1987), 234–237, no. 36, repro.

24. Delacroix' visit to Wilkie in London is mentioned in letters to Raymond Soulier (6 June 1825) and Jean-Baptiste Pierret (18 June 1825), Joubin 1935–1938, 1:158 and 160.

25. Wilkie befriended Washington Irving in Spain during his stay in Madrid and Seville in the winter and spring of 1827–1828. Irving was at the time still immersed in archival researches for his *Life of Columbus*. Shortly after his return to England, Wilkie commemorated their Spanish encounter in his painting *Washington Irving at the Archives of Seville* (Leicestershire Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester), originally entitled *Washington Irving, in the Convent of La Rábida, Searching the Archives for the Life of Columbus* (Chiego et al. 1987, no. 31, repro.).

26. Wilkie expressly acknowledged that he owed this subject to Washington Irving (Chiego et al. 1987, 237), and in his catalogue entry for the picture's exhibition at the Royal Academy quoted Irving's account: "A stranger, travelling on foot, accompanied by a young boy, stopped one day at the gate of a convent of Franciscan friars, dedicated to Santa Maria de Rábida" (Chiego et al. 1987, 236). The same passage from Irving's book was later used, in French paraphrase, to describe Delacroix' picture in the catalogue of the San Donato sale of 1870.

27. See J. P. Campbell, "Drawings Related to Wilkie's Painting of *Columbus at the Convent of La Rábida*, North Carolina Museum of Art," *Bulletin* (Leicestershire Museum and Art Gallery) 8, no. 3 (March 1969): 20, fig. 2.

28. Letter to Théophile Silvestre, 31 December 1858 (Joubin 1935–1938, 4:60).

29. Mentioned by Lee Johnson (1981–1989: 3:85) who very kindly supplied the reproduction illustrated in fig. 4.

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 1930 Hourticq, Louis. *Delacroix. L'Oeuvre du maître*. Paris: 69, repro.
 1932 *ArtN* 30, no. 28 (April): 6, repro. on cover.
 1941 Dale: 7-8, pl. XIV.
 1942 Dale: 23, repro.
 1944 Dale: 23, repro.
 1951 Lambert, Elie. "Delacroix et l'Espagne." *La Revue des arts*, September 1951: 168, 170.
 1952 Cairns and Walker: 148, color repro.
 1953 Dale: 25, repro.
 1963 Huyghe: 294, 303.
 1963 Johnson, Lee. *Delacroix*. London: pl. 32.
 1963 Walker: 232, repro.
 1965 NGA: 40.
 1965a Dale: 33, repro.
 1966 Cairns and Walker: 2:408, repro.
 1968 NGA: 33, repro.
 1971 Trapp, Frank A. *The Attainment of Delacroix*. Baltimore: 115, 193-194, fig. 113.
 1975 NGA: 100, repro.
 1976 Honour, Hugh. "L'Image de Christophe Colomb." *La Revue du Louvre*, no. 4: 261-262, repro.
 1984 Georgel: 107, no. 339, repro. 106.
 1984 Walker: 423, no. 605, repro.
 1985 NGA: 123, repro.
 1981-1989 Johnson: 3:84-85, no. 265; 4: pl. 82.
 1993 Luxenberg, Alisa. "Over the Pyrenees and through the Looking-Glass: French Culture Reflected in Its Imagery of Spain." In *Spain, Espagne, Spanien: Foreign Artists Discover Spain*. [Exh. cat. The Equitable Gallery in Association with the Spanish Institute.] New York: 17-18, repro.

1966.12.1 (2329)

Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains

1863

Oil on fabric, 92.5 × 74.5 (36 1/2 × 29 1/2)
 Chester Dale Fund

Inscriptions

At bottom center: *Eug. Delacroix 1863*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is an extremely finely woven lightweight fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been removed,

but the cusping of the original canvas along all edges suggests that its dimensions have not been changed. The paint was applied in several layers, in a loose and fluid technique, over a thin white ground. Glazes were used to deepen colors, and scumbles to build up the forms, often with moderate impasto. Sky and background were broadly laid in with dry, thin scumbles, applied in superimposed layers. Areas of foliage and the figures of the foreground were shaped with thicker, stiffer paint, applied with small brushes. There is no sign of preparatory underdrawing. All areas appear to have been initially roughly sketched in with the brush and then defined more distinctly in successive revisions, resulting in some small changes but no major alterations. The painting is unusually well preserved, with all glazes intact. The varnish applied in 1955 remains clear.

Provenance: Sold 12 April 1863 by the artist to (Tedesco Frères, Paris). Edouard André, Paris, by 1878 until at least 1885. A. Smit; by whom sold 4 February 1893 to (Durand-Ruel, Paris); (Durand-Ruel, New York), December 1895; by whom sold 6 March 1896 to Matthew Challoner Durfee Borden [1842-1912]; (his estate sale, American Art Association, New York, 14 February 1913, no. 77); (Durand-Ruel et Cie., New York); by whom sold 17 February 1913 to James J. Hill [d. 1916], Saint Paul; his son, [James] Jerome Hill [1905-1973], Saint Paul and New York, by 1962.

Exhibited: Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais des Tuileries, Pavillon de Flore, 1878, *Tableaux anciens et modernes exposés au profit du Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, no. 77, as *Combat d'Arabes*. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1885, *Exposition Eugène Delacroix*, no. 239 B (Supplément). AIC, 1930, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Watercolors, and Prints by Eugène Delacroix*, no. 45, as *The Collecting of the Arabian Tax*. Louvre, 1930, *Centenaire du romantisme: Exposition E. Delacroix. Peintures, aquarelles, pastels, dessins, gravures, documents*, no. 199a, as *Combat de Marocains (perception de l'impôt arabe)*. New York World's Fair, 1940, no. 249, as *Arab Tax Collecting*. New York, Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1948, *Loan Exhibition of Masterpieces by Delacroix and Renoir*, no. 14, repro., as *La Perception de l'impôt arabe*. Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1958, *The James J. Hill Collection*, unnumbered checklist. The Art Gallery of Toronto; Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, 1962-1963, *Delacroix*, no. 25, repro. Louvre, 1963, *Centenaire d'Eugène Delacroix*, no. 527, as *La Perception de l'impôt arabe*. Saint Paul Art Center, 1965, *Jerome Hill: Painter, Film Maker, Collector*, no. 178, as *The Arab Tax*. NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist. London, Royal Academy of Arts, 1984, *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse*, no. 17, as *The Collection of Arab Taxes*. Zurich, Kunsthau; Frankfurt-am-Main, Städtische Galerie im Städelschen Kunstinstitut; Madrid, Villahermosa Palace, 1987-1988, *Eugène Delacroix*, no. 127, repro., as *La Perception de l'impôt arabe, ou Combat d'Arabes dans les montagnes*. MMA, 1991, *Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863): Paintings, Drawings, and Prints from American Collections*, no. 14, repro. Paris,

Grand Palais; PMA, 1998–1999, *Delacroix, les dernières années*, no. 139, repro.

THE VIEW ranges over a wide valley bordered by high mountains that rise steeply toward the right. In the foreground, a fold in the terrain forms a diagonal rampart from behind which a band of Arabs prepares to launch an attack. At the left, a horse and its rider have fallen. A wounded Arab struggles to rise, supporting himself on his rifle. In the distance, beyond the valley that extends through the middle ground, the battle rages. Densely massed troops, firing their rifles, break from an ambush covered by trees and shrubs. On an eminence high above the smoke of the battle, the towers of a massive fortress rise into the lightly clouded sky.

Delacroix painted this, his last important picture, four or five months before his death on 13 August 1863. By the time he finished it he had been in declining health for some weeks¹ and was soon to find it impossible to continue painting. But there is as yet no sign of declining energy or faltering control in this final work, which, on the contrary, is of particularly careful and yet vigorous execution.² In his payment receipt for the picture, addressed to his dealer Tedesco on 12 April 1863, he called it *Combat d'Arabes dans les montagnes*.³ Early writers, beginning with Achille Piron⁴ and followed by Alfred Robaut,⁵ referred to it by the more specific title of *La Perception de l'impôt arabe* (*The Collection of the Arab Tax*), although on whose authority is not known. There is no indication in Delacroix's letters or journals that he ever witnessed such an incident during his stay in North Africa in 1832. Lee Johnson has suggested that he may have imagined the scene, based on the memory of a conversation with Amin Bias, the Moroccan minister of foreign affairs, that he recorded in his journal at the time.⁶ On their way to Meknes, as they were crossing the river Sebou together in a primitive and dangerous vessel, Bias told Delacroix that it was Moroccan policy to leave rivers unbridged, because this "facilitated the capture of thieves, the imposition of taxes, and the arrest of subversives."⁷ A distant memory of this conversation may have induced Delacroix in 1863 to invent a scene of fighting between tax collectors and rebellious Arabs, though it is not altogether obvious why his actual experience in 1832—a hazardous river cross-

ing—should have led him to visualize a pitched battle in the mountains.⁸ Whether Piron based his title for the picture on information from Delacroix is unknown, but its connection with the episode on the Sebou river seems remote.

Johnson notes that Delacroix introduced into the North African subjects of his later years "an element of poetic fantasy, whereas his earlier pictures tended to be more documentary,"⁹ citing the passage from the *Journal* (17 October 1853): "I did not begin to do passable work in my trip to Africa until the moment when I had sufficiently forgotten the small details to recall in my pictures only the striking and poetic aspect; up to that point I was haunted by that love of exactitude which people are apt to mistake for truth."¹⁰ The dramatic scenes of warfare in Moroccan settings that recur among Delacroix's late paintings no longer corresponded to any contemporary reality at the time they were painted. Nor were they derived from the memory of actual events witnessed during Delacroix's African stay thirty years earlier. *Arabs Skirmishing* and other subjects of this kind from his last years are pure fantasies, the aging artist's dreams of danger and violence, savored in the well-guarded peace of his studio on the place Furstenberg.

A complex fusion of light hues establishes the atmosphere of this late painting in which no one color or color accord dominates. The upper half of the picture is occupied by an atmospheric mountainscape, defined by areas of diffusely luminous color and enlivened by small, more definite touches that dissolve in the silvery haze. The fresh, cloud-veiled blue of the sky continues into the smoke of battle in the middle distance and is reflected, muted, in the shaded parts of the mountains. A warmer yellowish gray marks the fortress and its hill and extends, slightly tinged with green, into the nearer terrain, which is defined by an animated texture of overlapping transparent touches of the brush. The dark, strong green of clustered trees marks off the immediate foreground, the scene of the picture's action. Here a scattering of strong accents of color—yellows, crimsons, blues, and whites—shapes the figures of the battling men and animals in crisp relief and sets them off, in sharply defined corporeality against the hazier, lighter forms of the distance. In the red saddle of the fallen rider at its forward edge the picture's color composition reaches its highest pitch.

The dominance of landscape is characteristic of Delacroix' late work,¹¹ in which the settings tend to increase in spaciousness while the figures become proportionately smaller and are subordinated to the larger effects of space and atmosphere. A peculiarity of *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains* is the verticality of its format: in contrast to most of the other landscape-based easel paintings of his last years, such as the London National Gallery's *Ovid among the Scythians* (1859),¹² its space develops in depth, rather than in panoramic width. The picture is structured by the shapes of its mountainous setting. Its figures, scattered across an immense stage, are not "composed" in any conventional sense but held together by the lines of the terrain, a zigzag of ascending diagonals. The eye is led upward from the fallen horse and rider at the lower left along the group of Arabs lying in ambush farther to the right and is then directed leftward by the rider galloping toward the distant battle, only to be turned once again toward the upper right, where a chain of mountains closes off the view. It is an arrangement of the kind that René Huyghe found to be fundamental to the work of Delacroix' last years, when

"his plastic invention seemed to incline towards a highly baroque type of composition—that of the S curve which, starting from one of the lower corners, impinges against the frame on the opposite side and swirls back... [then] resumes its original direction, ending at the upper corner opposite to its starting point."¹³ The lofty conception and format of *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains* lend it a monumentality that may owe something to Delacroix' recent occupation with mural painting, the frescoes of *Heliodorus Driven from the Temple* and *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* in the church of Saint-Sulpice, his last great enterprise, completed in 1861.¹⁴

By the nervous breadth of its handling, the picture gives the impression of fairly rapid, improvisational execution. Precisely when the idea for it had first occurred to Delacroix is not clear. A small painting on panel that Robaut catalogued as *Combat entre des Marocains et des Arabes* and dated to 1856 was annotated by him with a reference to the picture now in the National Gallery of Art,¹⁵ implying that he considered it an earlier version of the same subject. But the two paintings are in fact entirely unrelated. The sole extant sketch for *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains* appears to be the pen drawing at the Louvre (fig. 1), dated "25 8bre 62," in which Robaut recognized an early idea for the group of the fallen horse and rider in the painting's immediate foreground.¹⁶

Fig. 1. Eugène Delacroix, *Sketch for Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains*, pen, 1862, Paris, Département des Arts Graphiques, Musée du Louvre, RF 9545, Photo RMN



Notes

1. Letter to Andrieu, 21 May 1863: "Je n'ai pas eu à me louer de ma santé. Le rhume que j'ai depuis près de trois mois est aussi violent, et j'y ai ajouté les inconvénients d'une chute que j'ai faite sur l'angle d'un meuble, et qui m'a causé un grand ébranlement" (Joubin 1935–1938, 4:374).

2. Lee Johnson (in Toronto and Ottawa 1962–1963, 60, no. 25) rates *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains* "one of the very few large easel paintings—and perhaps the best—that Delacroix finished after completing his decorations in the church of St. Sulpice in 1861."

3. Joubin 1935–1938, 4:372.

4. Piron 1865, 111.

5. Robaut 1885, no. 1448.

6. Johnson 1981–1989, 3:211.

7. Delacroix 1932, 1:137 (12 March 1832).

8. Nothing in the picture's action supports the assumption that it represents a scene of forcible tax collecting. Fairly large numbers of troops are shown clashing in what appear to be two separate engagements. The figures in the foreground, some still in ambush, others advancing to the middle distance, are about to attack,



Eugène Delacroix, *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains*, 1966.12.1

but it is not clear whom they are attacking. Farther off, a major engagement is in progress. Arabs on foot are firing into the valley at the right, evidently the location of their foes. To that action, the impending attack in the foreground appears to be unrelated, or only marginal. It seems likely that Delacroix did not have any very definite operation in mind but merely imagined, as his chosen title suggests, a typical incident of Arab warfare in an African mountain setting.

9. Toronto and Ottawa 1962–1963, no. 25.
10. Delacroix 1932, 2:92.
11. Huyghe 1963, 417.
12. Robaut 1885, no. 1376; Johnson 1981–1989, 3:150, no. 334, 4: pl. 142.
13. Huyghe 1963, 416.
14. Robaut 1885, nos. 1339, 1341; Johnson 1981–1989, 5:191–192, nos. 601–602, 6: pls. 68–69.
15. Robaut 1885, no. 1292, with the remark “voir la *Perception de l'impôt arabe*,” i.e., the NGA’s *Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains*. Johnson catalogues this small, presently unlocated painting, as *Combat of Arabs* (1981–1989, 3:206, no. 409) and provides an illustration (4: pl. 220) that proves it to be unrelated to the picture at the NGA, of which it has sometimes been considered a “smaller version” (see the exhibition catalogues Chicago 1930, no. 45; New York 1940, no. 249; and New York 1948, no. 14).
16. Serullaz et al. 1984, no. 482; mentioned by Robaut 1885, no. 1446, and by Escholier 1929, 3:261 repro.

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- 1913 Meier-Graefe, Julius. *Delacroix, Beiträge zu einer Analyse*. Munich: 250.
- 1916 Moreau-Nélaton: 2:207, fig. 430, as *Combat de Marocains*.
- 1922 Meier-Graefe, Julius. *Delacroix*. Munich: 233, repro.

- 1929 Escholier: 3:259.
- 1930 Hourticq, Louis. *Delacroix, l'oeuvre du maître*. Paris: 181, repro.
- 1935–1938 Joubin: 4:372.
- 1942 Rudrauf, Lucien. *Eugène Delacroix et le problème du romantisme artistique*. Paris: 142.
- 1958 Davis, Richard S. “The Collection of James J. Hill.” *The Minneapolis Institute of Arts Bulletin* 47, no. 2: 16, 27, repro., as *The Arab Tax*.
- 1963 Maltese, Corrado. *Delacroix*. Milan: 179, no. 100, repro.
- 1963 Huyghe: 416–417, 424, 538, pl. 319.
- 1963 Serullaz, Maurice. *Memorial de l'exposition Eugène Delacroix organisée au Musée du Louvre à l'occasion du centenaire de la mort de l'artiste*. Paris: 409, no. 532, as *La Perception de l'impôt arabe*.
- 1966 Prideaux, Tom. *The World of Delacroix, 1798–1863*. New York: 172, 179, repro. 178.
- 1968 NGA: 33, repro., as *The Arab Tax*.
- 1971 Serullaz, Maurice. *Delacroix*. New York: 32, 39, 43, fig. 51.
- 1971 Trapp, Frank A. *The Attainment of Delacroix*. Baltimore: 71.
- 1972 Bartolatto, Luigina R. *L'Opera pittorica completa di Delacroix*. Milan: 134, no. 805, color pl. LXIV (French ed.: 1975).
- 1975 Walker: 428, no. 618, color repro. 429.
- 1975 NGA: 102, repro.
- 1979 Watson, R. *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. London: 106, color repro. 105.
- 1980 Serullaz, Maurice. *Delacroix*. Milan: 170–171, repro. 199, no. 480.
- 1982 Rosenthal, Donald. *Orientalism: The Near East in French Painting, 1800–1880*. Rochester: 69, repro. 67.
- 1985 NGA: 124, repro.
- 1981–1989 Johnson: 3:21, 211, no. 419; 4: pl. 227.
- 1987–1988 Eitner: 1:195, 2:108, fig. 186.
- 1987 Arama, Maurice. *Le Maroc de Delacroix*. Paris: 122, repro. 215, note 61.
- 1992 NGA Guide: 179, repro.

Follower of Eugène Delacroix

1963.10.126 (1790)

Algerian Child

Late 19th century

Oil on fabric, 46.5 × 38.1 (18³/₈ × 15)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

Falsely inscribed at lower left: *Eug Delacroix*

Technical Notes: The picture's support is a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been removed. The absence of cusping along the bottom edge suggests the original canvas was cropped slightly at the bottom. The white ground is covered by a dark brown imprimatura layer over which the image was painted thinly and smoothly, with only a few low impasto passages. No underdrawing is evident during infrared examination. The "signature" at the lower left was painted over earlier age craquelure and is clearly of more recent date than the portrait.¹ The paint in the background and girl's face is abraded, and the background is heavily repainted. A thick yellowed varnish covers the painting.

Provenance: (Seth Morton Vose [1831–1910], Providence, Rhode Island); by whom sold to Mrs. David P. Kimball [d. 1920], Boston; taken in trade 21 February 1905 by (Robert C. Vose, Boston); (sale, American Art Association, New York, 4–5 April 1917, no. 103); purchased by (Otto Bernet). Joseph Stransky [1885–1936]; by whom sold to Mr. Meyer, New Jersey; repurchased by Joseph Stransky, by whom sold 14 September 1928 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MusFrA, 1928, *100 Years of French Portraits from the Chester Dale Collection*, no. 3. AIC, 1930, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Watercolors and Prints of Delacroix*, no. 9, repro. Springfield, Massachusetts, Museum of Fine Arts, 1939, *The Romantic Revolt: Gros, Gericault, Delacroix, Daumier, Guys*, no. 24. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE GIRL, about three or four years old, is shown full face, wearing an elaborate cap of red-and-black material. A fringe of black hair is combed low over her forehead. Her complexion, her large black eyes, her earrings and exotic apparel suggest a southern Mediterranean origin, but the title *Algerian Child*, which the portrait has borne since the 1920s, is without factual base.²

The picture is, in fact, undocumented and appears neither in Robaut's fundamental catalogue of Delacroix' work (1885) nor in the subsequent literature.³ Its provenance has not been traced beyond Seth Morton Vose (1831–1910), an art dealer of Providence, Rhode Island, who according to his son, Robert C. Vose, "imported [it] fifty or sixty years ago," that is, in about 1870–1880.⁴

Prominently inscribed with Delacroix' name, the picture was without question attributed to Delacroix in the several sales and exhibitions through which it passed between 1917 and 1939.⁵ It continued to be described as by Delacroix in National Gallery of Art guides until 1969.⁶ But as early as 1955 René Huyghe had verbally expressed the belief that the portrait could not be by Delacroix and that its signature must be a forgery.⁷ In a later, written statement, Huyghe again gave it as his opinion that the picture was not by Delacroix, from whose work it differed both in handling and choice of colors,⁸ but recalled, instead, the style of the French orientalist Alfred Dehodencq. Pierre Rosenberg in 1962⁹ and Lee Johnson in 1971¹⁰ agreed with Huyghe in rejecting the attribution to Delacroix, but at the same time voiced doubts about an attribution to Dehodencq. In May 1972 the picture's official designation was changed to "Follower of Eugène Delacroix."

Its general character, color, and brushwork in fact rule out Delacroix' authorship. It is, however, a work of the period and of a distinctive style that does, as Huyghe rightly observed, show a marked resemblance to that of Alfred Dehodencq (1822–1882), a painter whose work and career were deeply influenced by his lifelong admiration of Delacroix. After a long residence in Spain in the 1850s, Dehodencq eventually found a congenial setting in Morocco, to which he reacted with passionate enthusiasm, much as Delacroix had two decades earlier. He remained in North Africa for nearly ten years and found in its Arab and Jewish communities an inexhaustible source of pictorial motifs on which he continued to draw after his return to France in 1863. In his later years, Dehodencq frequently painted intimate portraits of children, most often of his daughter Marie (fig. 1), that



Follower of Eugène Delacroix, *Algerian Child*, 1963.10.126

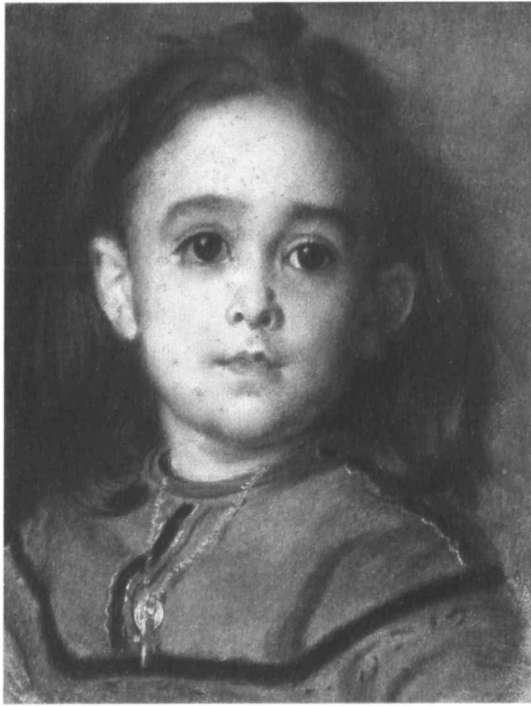


Fig. 1. Alfred Dehodencq, *Portrait of Marie*, pastel, 1871, Stanford University Museum of Art, Committee for Art Fund (1980.136)

resemble in their breadth of handling and in certain mannerisms, particularly his treatment of eyes as excessively prominent, dark, and glossy, the National Gallery's *Algerian Child*. Its attribution to him, while not provable at this point, is at any rate not to be dismissed.

Notes

1. See note 7 below.
2. New York 1928, no. 3, as *Algerian Child*.
3. Except for its cautiously qualified inclusion in Bartolatto 1972, no. 242.
4. Robert C. Vose letter, 6 December 1930, in NGA curatorial files. The elder Vose then sold it sometime before 1905 to Mrs. David P. Kimball of Boston, from whom Vose's son took it back in exchange for two oth-

er paintings in February 1905, as indicated by photocopies of ledgers from Vose Galleries in NGA curatorial files.

5. The picture's first appearance in print was its entry in the auction catalogue American Art Association, New York, 4–5 April 1917, no. 103, as *Head of a Child*, with an unqualified attribution to "F. V. Eugène Delacroix." In the exhibition catalogue AIC 1930, no. 9, it was noted that "[t]he head recalls certain drawings and water colors made in 1832 by Delacroix while in Morocco, and preserved in the albums of the Louvre and Chantilly." The attribution was retained in the catalogue of Springfield, Mass., 1939.

6. NGA 1968, 33.

7. Note in NGA curatorial files, signed by Perry M. Cott: "René Huyghe stated verbally, October 24, 1955, that this portrait is *not* by Delacroix, but by his contemporary Dehodencq. The signature is a forgery; it is typical of Delacroix' signatures of the '20's, but the style of the portrait is very much later." The picture's floridly cursive "signature," added a fairly long time after its completion, imitates—inappropriately, in view of its style—signatures found on Delacroix' early paintings. What additionally marks it as a forgery is its anomalous size and obtrusive placement in this painting of small format.

8. Note in NGA curatorial files, translation of statement made in July 1968.

9. Note in NGA curatorial files, 31 March 1971, recording statement made in 1962.

10. Letter in NGA curatorial files, August 1971.

References

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 1929 *ArtN*, 27 April: 47, repro.
 1930 *Art Digest*, 15 March: 11.
 1930 *ArtN*, 29 March: 31.
 1930 *Chicago Art Institute, Bulletin*: 24: 47.
 1942 Dale: 24, repro., as by Delacroix.
 1953 Dale: 26, repro., as by Delacroix.
 1965 NGA: 40, as by Delacroix.
 1965a Dale: 32, repro., as by Delacroix.
 1968 NGA: 33, repro., as by Delacroix.
 1972 Bartolatto, Luigina Rossi. *L'Opera pittorica completa di Delacroix*. Milan: no. 242 (1975 and 1984 French eds., same information and numbers).
 1975 NGA: 102, repro.
 1984 Georgel: 100, no. 242, repro., as by Delacroix.
 1985 NGA: 124, repro.

After Eugène Delacroix (Possibly Pierre Andrieu)

1963.10.19 (1683)

Michelangelo in His Studio

Late 19th century

Oil on mahogany panel, 24.4 × 18.7 × .5 (9⁵/₈ × 7³/₈ × 1/4)
Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a 0.5 cm thick, vertically grained mahogany panel. The presence of bevels on all four sides of the panel's reverse indicates it has not been cut down. The image has been painted over an off-white ground layer on which its main contours have been drawn with a brush in diluted blue paint. The ground layer has been allowed to show through to form the base tone of the sculpture behind Michelangelo. The execution, in thin, transparent paint, is rapid and loose, affecting the appearance of a spontaneous sketch. The painting is covered with a slightly discolored varnish. Panel and paint layers are in good condition. On the lower part of the panel's back has been placed an imitation of the wax seal of Delacroix' posthumous sale.



Fig. 1. Eugène Delacroix, *Michel-Ange dans son atelier* (*Michelangelo in His Studio*), oil on canvas, 1849–1850, Montpellier, Musée Fabre, inv. 868.1.40

Provenance: Mrs. Benjamin Thaw [1861–1931], Pittsburgh; her heirs; by whom sold through (American Art Association, New York, 18 May 1934, no. 82); purchased by Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

THE National Gallery's small painting on mahogany panel is related to Delacroix' larger canvas *Michelangelo in His Studio* (1849–1850) in the Musée Fabre, Montpellier (fig. 1),¹ as a copy, rather than a preliminary study. It reduces and distorts its model in ways that are most apparent in the clumsy articulation of the face, the flaccid modeling of the leg, and the crude simplification of the sculptures in the background. René Huyghe, in a letter written in 1968, first expressed the opinion that the copy was not by Delacroix himself.² Lee Johnson in 1971 suggested that it was probably by Pierre Andrieu (1821–1892), Delacroix' chief assistant from 1850 onward.³ The copy, presumably made without fraudulent intent, was subsequently converted into a forgery by the addition, to the back of the panel, of a wax seal imitating that of Delacroix' posthumous sale.⁴

Delacroix' *Michelangelo*, seated in the studio beneath his *Moses* and *Medici Madonna* in an attitude of meditation or lassitude, has generally been interpreted as an expression of the artist's melancholy following the euphoria of creation. In his essay on Michelangelo, written in 1828, Delacroix himself anticipated this kind of interpretation by offering an imaginary preview of the picture:

I imagine him at a late hour of the night, seized with fear at the sight of his own creations, the first to savor that secret terror which he intended to awaken in men's souls through his terrible images of destruction and retribution. I like to imagine him also at those moments when, exhausted by having failed to reach in painting the sublimity of his ideas, he tried... to call poetry to his help. His expression then would be one of a deep melancholy, or else of his agitation and fear at the thought of the life to come. Regrets for youth, dread of the obscure and frightening future.⁵

Not surprisingly, many commentators have seen in Delacroix' *Michelangelo* a form of idealized self-portrait.⁶ To this fairly prevalent view, Lee John-



After Eugène Delacroix (Possibly Pierre Andrieu), *Michelangelo in His Studio*, 1963.10.19

son reacted with skepticism. While conceding that Delacroix' writings show that he saw affinities between himself and Michelangelo and believed that he had suffered similar discouragements, Johnson concluded that "the degree to which Delacroix intended to allude to himself, a painter, in this picture of an artist shown without brushes or paintings has surely been exaggerated."⁷ But Delacroix realized that an artist who represents another artist, particularly one whom he admires, is inevitably tempted to display himself in the guise of his subject. While engaged in writing his essay on Michelangelo, he half-humorously admitted his intention of covert self-depiction to his friend Charles Rivet: "I shall lie to the public as impudently as all those who work to draw attention to themselves, far more than to their ostensible subject."⁸

Notes

1. Johnson 1981-1989, 3:126-128, no. 305, 4: pl. 126. The picture in Montpellier measures 40 × 32 cm. Robaut (1885, no. 1184) reproduced it in reverse and mistakenly gave its dimensions as 60 × 40 cm.

2. Letter, dated 15 August 1968, in NGA curatorial files: "I do not think it is by Delacroix. It is not a forgery but I think that it was done by a Delacroix student in the atelier."

3. Letter, dated 22 December 1971, in NGA curatorial files. Johnson notes that the picture did not figure in Andrieu's sale in 1892: "Andrieu is known to have copied a large number of Delacroix's works and is thought to have owned a genuine ED seal used to stamp works by Delacroix which passed in the posthumous sale of 1864. There is some reason to believe that Andrieu may have used it to stamp some of his own pictures and to pass them off as by Delacroix." In a second letter, 30 April 1972, he adds: "Unfortunately, I should judge the ED seal to be a downright forgery and not a

genuine one applied by Andrieu to one of his own works. It was probably added by a dealer in an attempt to convince a customer that the painting was by Delacroix." Concerning Andrieu's copies and pastiches of Delacroix, see also Lee Johnson, "Pierre Andrieu, le cachet E.D. et le Château de Guermantes," *GBA* 67 (1966): 99-110, and the same author's "Pierre Andrieu, un 'polisson'?" *Revue de l'art*, no. 21 (1973): 66-69.

4. The wax seals, both genuine and false, of Delacroix' posthumous studio sale are discussed and illustrated in Johnson 1981-1989, 1:xxv, repro.

5. "Michel-Ange," in Piron 1865, 181. Delacroix' essay, written in 1828, was originally published in 1830 in the *Revue de Paris*.

6. Théophile Silvestre first suggested this identification in his commentary on the catalogue of the Bruyas collection (1878), reprinted in the G. Cres edition of Théophile Silvestre, *Les Artistes français* (Paris, 1926), 2:161. More recently, Charles de Tolnay advanced this interpretation in "Michel-Ange dans son atelier," *GBA* 59 (1962): 43-52.

7. Johnson 1981-1989, 3:127.

8. Letter to Charles Rivet, 16 May 1828, in Philippe Burty, *Lettres de Eugène Delacroix* (Paris, 1878), 91: "j'ai la cruauté de faire languir M. Véron [the publisher of the *Revue de Paris* for which Delacroix was writing his essay on Michelangelo] et le public, quoiqu'il m'a paru que le public ne peut plus attendre et qu'il s'impatiente. Heureux homme! j'écris sur Michel-Ange et vous le contemplez. Je mentirai à ce même public avec la même impudeur que tous ceux qui entreprennent de l'occuper d'eux-mêmes, bien plus que du sujet qu'ils traitent."

References

- 1965a Dale: 34, repro., as by Delacroix.
- 1965 NGA: 40, as by Delacroix.
- 1968 NGA: 33, repro., as by Delacroix.
- 1975 NGA: 102, repro.
- 1984 Georgel: 120-122 (mentioned).
- 1985 NGA: 124, repro.
- 1986 Johnson: 3:126-128, no. 305, as copy after Delacroix, probably by Pierre Andrieu.

Narcisse Diaz (Virgilio Narcisso Diaz de la Peña)

1808–1876

NARCISSE DIAZ was born in Bordeaux, of Spanish parents who had fled the Peninsular Wars. After their early deaths, he grew up in foster care at Meudon. At thirteen, an infection, caused by an insect sting or snake bite, necessitated the amputation of his left leg. In 1823 he began an apprenticeship in painting on porcelain at a china factory in Paris, where he met Jules Dupré, who was to become his lifelong friend. Tired of industrial work, Diaz embarked in the late 1820s on a course of independent study, was briefly tutored by the history painter François Souchon (1787–1857), copied the masters at the Louvre, and supported himself by the sale of small pictures of his own invention. The poetry of Victor Hugo and the painting of Delacroix roused him to enthusiastic emulation. His own early work consisted of pastiches of romantic “fancy pictures”—odalisques, bathers, erotic mythologies, sentimental idylls. Gifted with an abundant, dangerously effortless facility, he supplied the art market with agreeable subjects in styles variously indebted to Correggio, Watteau, and Prud’hon, and had no difficulty in entering his paintings in the Paris Salons of the 1830s and 1840s.

From about 1833 he began to explore the forest of Fontainebleau, where he became a regular summer visitor in the following years, forming a close association with Théodore Rousseau and the other landscape painters of what came to be known as the School of Barbizon. His studies of the forest were painted with the same speed and fluency as his romantic idylls, giving him the reputation of factory-like productivity—and an income vastly larger than that of his slower-working and less accommodating fellows at Barbizon, for whose needs he generously provided financial support. Awarded a first-class medal at the Salon of 1848, he was appointed *chevalier* of the Legion of Honor in 1851. His paintings commanded higher prices than those of Corot, Rousseau, or Millet, but the critics were reserved in their judgment of his work, admiring its colorism while deploring what they considered its superficiality.¹ After 1859 Diaz ceased to exhibit at the Salon. Painters of a new generation, Claude Monet (1840–1926), Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919), and Alfred Sisley (1839–1899), encoun-

tered in the forest of Fontainebleau in 1864, received his warm encouragement. At Etretat, where he summered in 1869, he painted seascapes in the company of Gustave Courbet. During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, he sought refuge in Brussels. He died in 1876, aged sixty-eight, at the Mediterranean resort of Mentone.

Notes

1. Silvestre 1856, 227: “Diaz est assiégé par les amateurs et les marchands, obligés de s’y prendre deux ou trois ans d’avance et de le payer fort cher pour obtenir de lui le moindre tableau. Cette vogue le condamne à sacrifier à la corruption du public, à travailler continuellement . . . et ne lui laisse pas une heure de liberté pour la réflexion et l’étude. Aussi le voyez-vous produire par douzaines, avec la rapidité d’une usine, ces femmes et ces enfants aux cheveux d’or.”

Bibliography

Silvestre 1856: 221–239.

Ballu, R. “Les Artistes contemporains—Diaz.” *GBA* 40 (1877): 290ff.

Heilmann, Christoph, Michael Clarke, and John Sillevis. *Corot, Courbet, und die Maler von Barbizon: “Les Amis de la nature.”* [Exh. cat. Haus der Kunst.] Munich, 1996: 222–237, 470–471.

1949.1.4 (1036)

Forest Scene

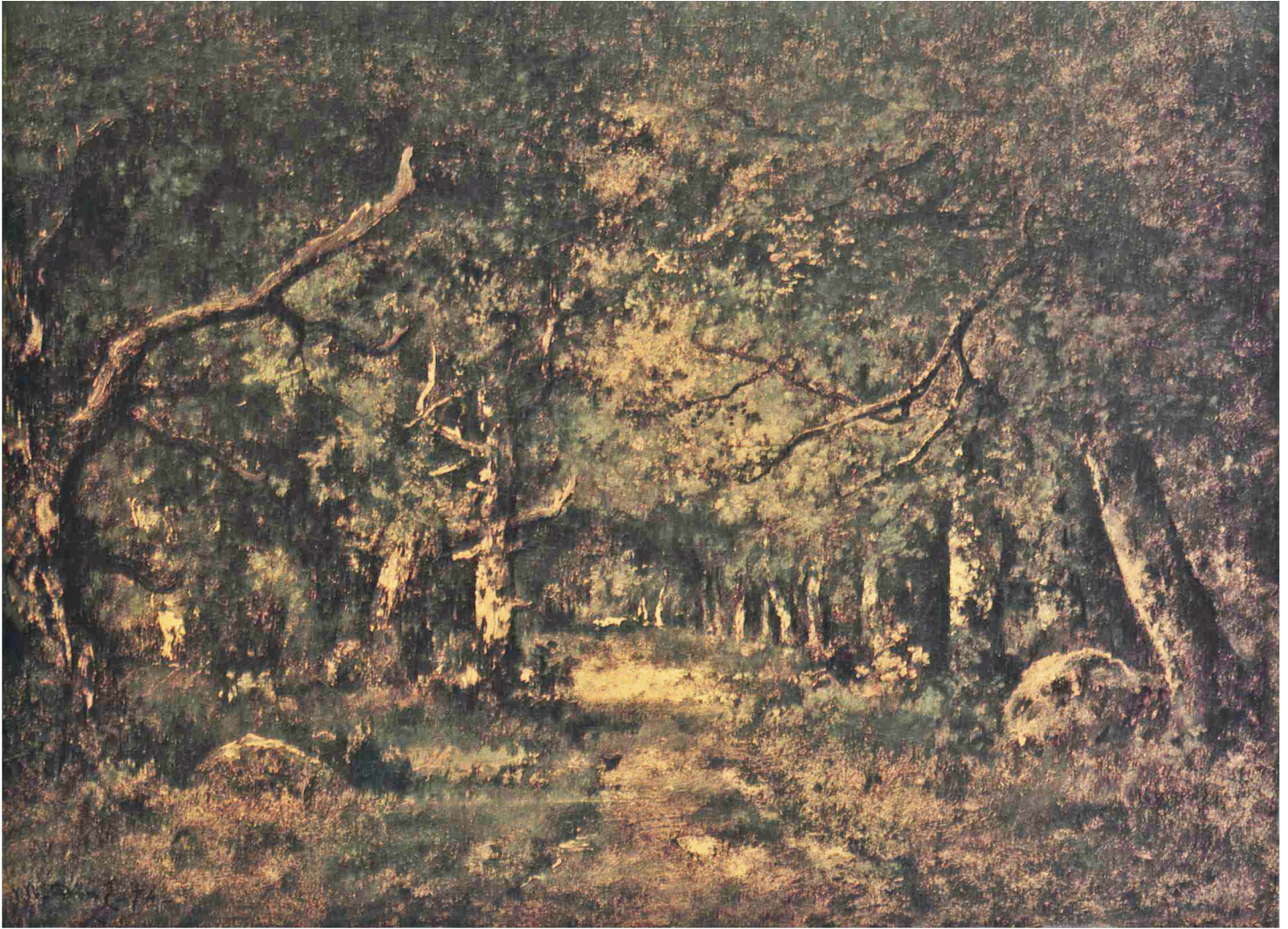
1874

Oil on mahogany panel, 32 × 44 × 1.3 (12³/₈ × 17¹/₈ × 1³/₈)
Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

Inscriptions

At lower left: *N. Diaz - 74 -*

Technical Notes: The support, a 1.3-cm thick mahogany panel with horizontal grain, beveled on the reverse, is covered with a smooth white ground, over which the paint layers have been rapidly and fluidly applied, in both wet-on-dry and wet-on-wet techniques. No underdrawing or design changes were noted during infrared and X-radiographic examination. The paint layers, whether transparent and glazed or opaque and scumbled, are for the most part very thin, allowing the ground beneath to show through and increase the luminosity of the paint. Highlights on the trees are worked into an appreciable impasto. The stippled ap-



Narcisse Diaz, *Forest Scene*, 1949.1.4

pearance of the dark browns at the lower left may be due to manipulation of the paint with a cloth or the artist's fingers. A thick and extremely yellowed varnish covering the picture's surface has distorted and obscured the areas of bright color. The paint layer is in excellent condition, with no losses or abrasion even in the sensitive dark glazes.

Provenance: Possibly James Staats Forbes [d. 1904]. Probably (Boussod, Valadon et Cie., Paris); by whom probably sold 1905 to (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); probably sold to and returned by W. Jennings in 1912;¹ (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold probably 1912 to R. Horace Gallatin [1871–1948], New York.

Exhibited: Opening exhibition and loan for display with permanent collection, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 1968–1969, no cat.

AN OVERGROWN PATH leads into the depths of the forest, between oaks whose branches form a canopy through which the sunlight filters, reflected in bright patches on the trunks of trees and on the grass below. Such forest interiors (*sous-bois*), often centered on paths or shallow pools, are the most frequently recurrent motif in Diaz' landscape painting. Particularly in such very late works as this, Diaz had come to depend on formulaic arrangements elaborated in the studio rather than on direct observation. Diaz developed a distinctive manner of treating forest interiors as dense color textures in which, on a dark ground, loosely brushed, scattered accents of light suggest mossy rock and rutted bark, while scintillations of highlights bursting from the surrounding darkness give the effect of sun-struck foliage. Among Diaz' nu-

merous late forest scenes of closely similar motif and style are the Louvre's *Route sous-bois* (c. 1865–1870)² and the *Vue de la Forêt de Fontainebleau* (1872) in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux.³

Notes

1. The painting's provenance prior to its entrance into the Gallatin collection is derived from the Getty Provenance Index, based on the records of the firm of M. Knoedler & Co. This firm sold two similarly described forest scenes by Diaz to Gallatin: one in 1910, which had been previously sold to and returned by H. C. Lytton of Chicago, and another in 1912, which had been sold to and returned by W. Jennings. The recorded measurements of the painting sold to W. Jennings in 1912 correspond more closely to those of the painting now at the NGA.

2. Oil on panel, 24.3 × 32 cm, RF 1818; see C. Sterling and H. Adhémar, *Peintures, école française, XIX siècle* (Paris, 1959), vol. 2, no. 777, pl. 274.

3. Oil on canvas, 68 × 87 cm, repro. in *The Past Rediscovered: French Painting, 1800–1900* [exh. cat. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.] (Minneapolis, 1969), no. 31. Among the many related *sous-bois* compositions are *Sous-bois*, on panel, dated 1855, Louvre, RF 1403; *Mare sous les chênes*, on panel, dated 1857, Louvre, RF 1817; *The Forest of Fontainebleau*, 1858, The Toledo Museum of Art; *Forest Interior*, 1861, Neue Galerie des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna; *Forest Interior*, c. 1867, Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis; and *Forêt de Fontainebleau (enceinte palissadée)*, dated 1868, Louvre, RF 1820. Two forest views by Diaz similar to NGA 1949.1.4 were sold at Sotheby's, New York, 17 February 1993, lots 112 and 119.

References

- | | |
|------|------------------|
| 1965 | NGA: 41. |
| 1968 | NGA: 35, repro. |
| 1975 | NGA: 106, repro. |
| 1985 | NGA: 130, repro. |

Jules Dupré

1811–1889

BORN IN NANTES, Jules Dupré spent his boyhood in L'Isle-Adam on the Oise river, near Paris. Here he had his early initiation to art, as an apprentice decorator of porcelain in his father's china works. At the age of twelve, he was sent to Paris, to work in the porcelain factory of an uncle, Arsène Gillet. His fellow workers included several young artists who would play a role in his later

life, among them Narcisse Diaz. Though during his early years in Paris, Dupré briefly studied with a painter of landscape, Jean-Michel Diebolt (b. 1779), he started on his artistic career nearly without formal training. Self-directed nature study in 1827 took him into the countryside around Limoges, where his father had meanwhile found employment. Settled in Paris from 1829, he frequented

the Louvre's galleries, receiving lasting impressions of Claude Lorrain and the Dutch landscapists.

Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps (1803–1860) and Eugène Delacroix were among the artists of a slightly earlier, romantic generation whose company he sought. A benefit exhibition held in Paris in 1830 for the wounded of the July Revolution gave him his first chance to appear before the public. In the following years, the artists who were to form the School of Barbizon, then still in their early twenties, gradually drew together. With Constant Troyon and Théodore Rousseau, soon to become a close friend, Dupré went sketching in the region around Paris and in the countrysides of Berry, Auvergne, and Normandy. Sometime between 1831 and 1834 he visited England, sketched at Southampton, and saw paintings by John Constable (1776–1837). During the 1830s he regularly exhibited at the Salons but abstained in the 1840s, perhaps in solidarity with Rousseau, who was being excluded by the juries. Introduced by Rousseau to the forest of Fontainebleau, Dupré never became one of its frequenters, preferring to paint in the sparsely wooded plains along the Oise near L'Isle-Adam. But he frequently traveled and worked with Rousseau and at times shared his studio with his friend. Their association and mutual influence, very close in 1843 and 1844 when they painted together in the plains of the Landes along the foothills of the Pyrenees, suffered a break in 1848, started by gossip about Rousseau's fiancée (the adopted daughter of George Sand) and made irreparable in 1849 by Rousseau's pique at Dupré's election to the Legion of Honor.

From 1850 onward Dupré made his home at L'Isle-Adam, in growing solitude, though still maintaining ties to Troyon, Daubigny, and Corot. The forest of Compiègne was now his favorite sketching ground. Yearly summer vacations at Cailleux-sur-Mer on the Norman coast, in 1865–1870, offered him a striking change of scene and produced a series of seascapes. Formerly accustomed to spending his winters in Paris, Dupré rarely left L'Isle-Adam in the nine years before his death.

For all his immersion in nature, he was a stylist, highly selective in his choice of motifs, less interested in the immediate, fleeting appearance of landscape in changing light and atmosphere than

in its enduring material existence, its character, and its emotional suggestion. The studies he gathered out-of-doors served him only as the beginnings in a slow process of revision, transformation, and repetition carried out in the studio. Thus landscapes first conceived in the 1840s might remain on his hands for years, to be finished in the 1860s or 1870s, having meanwhile undergone the changes of his evolving style.

Bibliography

- Claretie, J. *Jules Dupré (Les Hommes du jour)*. Paris, 1879.
Vente, Atelier Dupré. [Sale cat. Georges Petit.] Paris, 30 January 1890.
Aubrun 1974.
Jules Dupré, 1811–1889. [Exh. cat. The Dixon Gallery and Gardens.] Memphis, 1979.
Aubrun 1982.

1949.1.5 (1037)

The Old Oak

c. 1870
Oil on fabric, 32.3 × 42.1 (12⁵/₈ × 16¹/₂)
Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

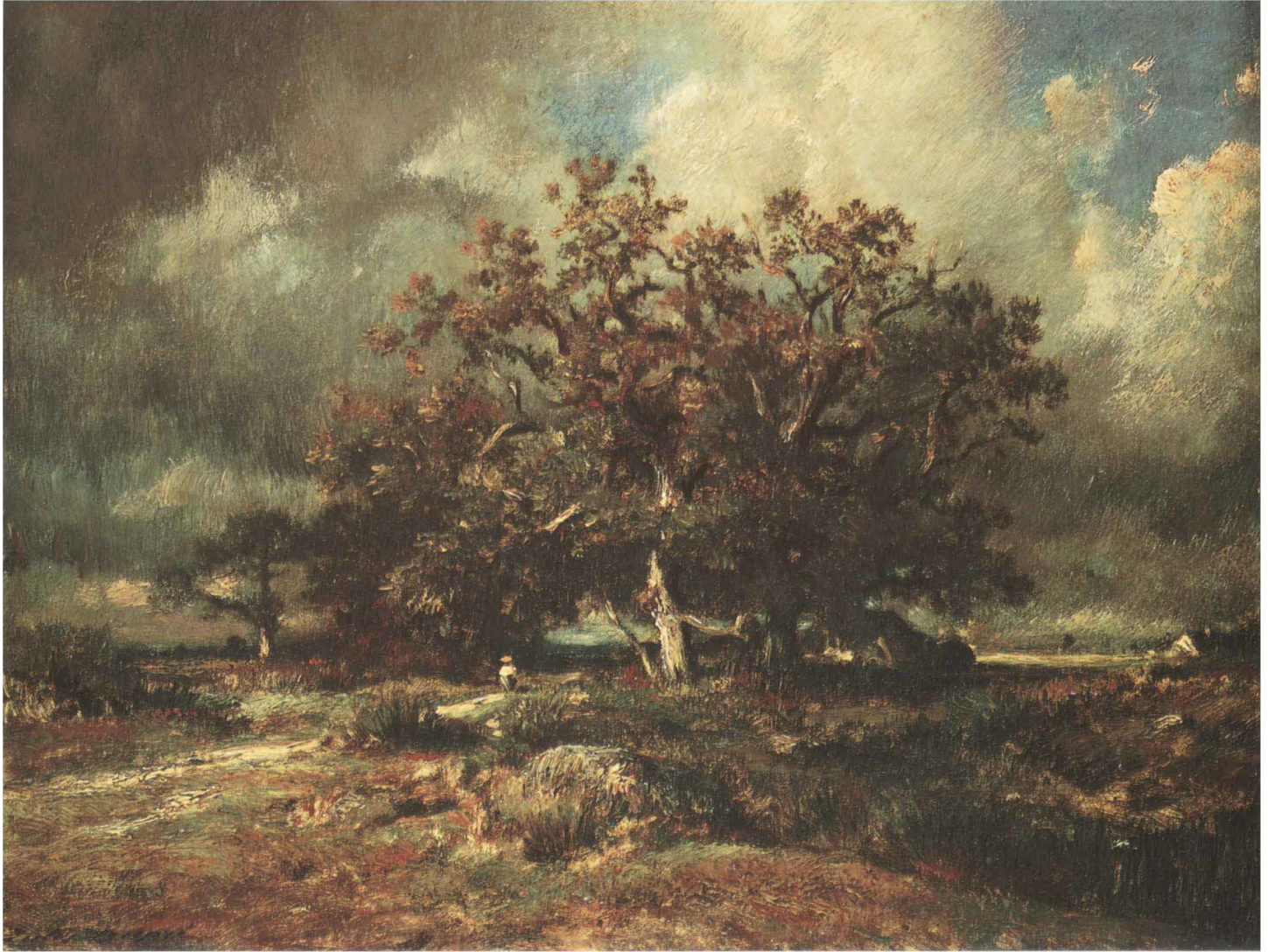
Inscriptions

At lower left: *Jules Dupré*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a finely woven, medium-weight, plain-weave, commercially primed fabric. It is fastened to its original stretcher (a keyed, butt-joined stretcher with one vertical crossbar), is unlined, and preserves its original, preprimed tacking margins. The ground is a smooth off-white layer, over which the image has been sketched in a thin brown paint. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. From this underpainting, the painting has been built in progressively more pastose layers, alternating between dark and light tones. The painting is very well preserved, with no losses or inpainting. A yellowed varnish slightly distorts the painting's tonal values.

Provenance: Thomas A. Howell, Brooklyn; (his sale, New York, 27 February 1889, no. 47); purchased by (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris). Mrs. M. M. Barger Wallach; on consignment from 1917 with (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold 1918 to R. Horace Gallatin [1871–1948], New York.

Exhibited: Memphis, The Dixon Gallery and Gardens, 1979, *Jules Dupré, 1811–1889*, no. 17, repro. Memphis, The Dixon Gallery and Gardens, 1987–1988, loan for



Jules Dupré, *The Old Oak*, 1949.1.5

display with permanent collection, in conjunction with the exhibition *From Arcadia to Barbizon: A Journey in French Landscape*.

BENEATH A SKY filled with threatening clouds, a stand of aged oaks gives shelter to a small farmhouse. An extensive plain covered with tall wind-plowed grasses stretches from the distant horizon toward the foreground, where it is traversed by a path on which the figure of a woman appears, sharply lit against the somber foliage behind her.

A powerful agitation pervades the scene, signaled by the flailing branches of the oak and reflected in the turbulent clouds above and the rough terrain below. The vehement brushwork shapes the clouds with excited sweeps of gray and raises ridges of impasto in the branches of the tree. It is the expressive energy of its execution that justifies assigning a late date to the painting, contrary to the opinion of Marie-Madeleine Aubrun who, finding in it traces of Rousseau's influence, gave it the improbably early date of "about 1837."¹

The motif of clustered, gnarled oaks silhouetted against a threatening sky is a recurrent feature of

Dupré's landscapes, often in conjunction with farm buildings, whose huddled, dwarfed forms serve to magnify the trees. The examples most closely comparable to the National Gallery's *Old Oak* in subject, style, and technique all appear to be of late date.²

Notes

1. Aubrun 1982, 43, no. S 34.
2. See Aubrun 1982: no. 534, *Mare près du moulin*, 32 × 41 cm, Louvre, "about 1870"; no. 583, *Coucher de soleil derrière une ferme*, 33 × 41 cm, Mesdag Museum, The Hague, "after 1875"; no. 593, *Paysage*, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, "1870s"; no. 654, *L'Abreuvoir*, 24.1 × 31.7 cm, location unknown, "late 1870s." Dupré very rarely put dates on his landscapes, evidently because he was reluctant to consider them as finished, preferring to rework them from time to time, often over a period of years.

References

- 1965 NGA: 45.
1968 NGA: 38, repro.
1975 NGA: 116, repro.
1982 Aubrun: 43, no. S 34, repro., 51.
1985 NGA: 140, repro.

Jean-Louis-André-Théodore Géricault

1791–1824

THÉODORE GERICAULT was born on 26 September 1791 in Rouen to parents of the property-owning middle class. The family moved to Paris in about 1796. On graduating from the Lycée Impérial in 1808, he declared his intention to become an artist. The death of his mother the same year brought him an annuity that assured his future independence. Against his father's wish, he apprenticed himself to Carle Vernet (1758–1836), the fashionable painter of equestrian subjects, who allowed him the freedom of his studio but seems not to have given him any formal training. Feeling the need for a more disciplined education, Géricault in 1810 moved to the studio of Pierre Guérin (1774–1833), a rigorous classicist and conscientious teacher, who made an effort to put him through the routines of the academic curriculum. Géricault

proved to be a resistant pupil who kept up his attendance at Guérin's studio only for eleven months. Few traces remain of his student work. After taking amicable leave of Guérin, he continued his training as his own master, setting up his easel in the galleries of the Louvre, which were filled with the art loot of Napoleon's campaigns. Reacting against Guérin's classicism, he copied paintings by the dramatic colorists of the Renaissance and the baroque, particularly Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, and Rembrandt, and intermittently continued these private studies of the masters until 1815, when the allies stripped the Louvre of Napoleon's booty.

At twenty-one, still a largely self-taught beginner, Géricault presented himself at the Salon of 1812, the last of Napoleon's reign, with his *Charg-*

ing *Chasseur* (Louvre), a dashing improvisation rapidly worked up into a picture of Salon format. Of provocative size, indebted to Antoine-Jean Gros (1771–1835) and to Géricault's recent impressions of Rubens, the *Chasseur* held its own among the Salon's grand performances and earned him a gold medal. After this precocious success, he resumed his self-training. Renouncing the magnitude and drama of the *Chasseur* for the time being, he occupied himself with small-scale studies from life, of horses observed in the stables of Versailles and brightly uniformed cavalrymen.

He witnessed the fall of the empire with seeming indifference and in the summer of 1814 enlisted in the Gray Musketeers, a royalist elite cavalry, more decorative than military. For the Salon that the Bourbon government hastily organized in the autumn of 1814, he reverted to heroic dimensions and the grand style with his *Wounded Cuirassier Leaving the Field of Battle* (Louvre), conceived as a pendant to the *Chasseur*, which was shown again on this occasion. The ponderous figure of the defeated soldier, modeled in intense, dark colors, marked his return to a style of calculated monumentality and heightened expressiveness.

On Napoleon's sudden return from Elba in March 1815, Géricault rode in the escort that covered the flight of Louis XVIII. During the Hundred Days he lay in hiding. His work to this point had belonged to the current of national modernity that was one of the two main tendencies in French art of the time. After Waterloo, he seems to have concluded that this vein, inextricably involved with Napoleon's reign, was exhausted. He made an abrupt change in his work, not only abandoning modern military subjects but also radically altering his style. With sudden determination, he turned to classical themes and, in an effort to teach himself the art of composing ideal subjects, inflicted on himself the kind of academic regimen that he had earlier refused to accept from Guérin. He rehearsed the rudiments of figure construction and composition, taking his motifs from the repertoire of classicist stock types that he had shunned in his student days. But instead of becoming a conforming classicist, he ruthlessly distorted the neoclassical idiom in the act of appropriating it. Romantic in its intensity, bearing the stamp of Michelangelo rather than David, this highly personal version of classicism lent itself—better than the fluent re-

alism of his earlier work—to resonant dramatic statements.

In March 1816 he competed for the academic Rome Prize but failed the contest and decided to undertake the voyage on his own account. His Italian stay in 1816–1817 gave him profound impressions of paintings of heroic size that further stimulated his interest in problems of style and whetted his appetite for work on the wall-filling scale. The great enterprise of his Italian year was the project of a large *Race of the Barberi Horses*, suggested by an event of the Roman carnival that he had witnessed in February 1817. He began by recording the start of the race as he had seen it in the Piazza del Popolo, then gradually suppressed its picturesquely Italian features and transformed the modern scene into a timeless frieze of athletes struggling with horses.

On returning to France in the fall of 1817, he abandoned this project but continued briefly in its direction with studies for a *Cattle Market* (Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.), conceived as a monumental battle between men and beasts. At the same time, he tried subjects of a more pointed contemporary significance, such as the murder of Fualdes, a sensational crime that he proposed to represent in the “antique” style. Meanwhile his renewed interest in modern subjects led him to take up lithography, a process recently imported to France, in which he attempted to treat scenes from the Napoleonic Wars in an elevated style, without falling into the conventions of classicism. The crowning result of these various efforts was the *Raft of the Medusa* (Louvre), completed in 1819, after an exhausting, yearlong struggle. The enormous canvas represents an episode of a recent shipwreck that had violently aroused French public opinion. The problem that Géricault set himself in composing his picture was to combine the immediacy of an eyewitness account with the permanence and stability of monumental composition. He thus sought to unite the two antithetical aspects of his art in a grand synthesis, reconciling historical realism with heroic generality: the modern shipwreck was made to echo Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. At the Salon of 1819, the *Raft of the Medusa*, misinterpreted as an attack on the government, met with a mainly hostile reception.

Disappointed and exhausted, Géricault “renounced the grand manner to return to the sta-

bles."¹ He went to England in 1820 to exhibit the *Raft*, and under English influence renewed acquaintance with that essentially anticlassical tradition of modern genre to which Carle Vernet had once introduced him. He sketched fashionable horsemen, farriers, beggars, and the caged animals in the zoological gardens in a manner that, if it lacked some of his customary force, had gained in subtlety of observation and freshness of color. A sporting picture of distinctly English inspiration, the *Epsom Down Derby* (Louvre), remained the only major painting of his year in Britain. When he returned to Paris in the winter of 1821, his health had begun to fail. Repeated riding accidents, aggravating a tubercular condition, brought on a painful and ultimately fatal illness. As death approached, his work regained much of its former compact strength while retaining its newly won refinement of color. In the industrial landscape of the *Lime Kiln* and in the series *Portraits of the Insane*, painted in 1822–1823, he achieved a style that was both realistic and in the highest degree expressive. In the final stages of his illness, he was overcome again by his old ambition to give epic grandeur to a scene from modern life and, though helplessly bedridden, projected immense compositions of such controversial themes as the African Slave Trade and the Opening of the Doors of the Spanish Inquisition. His death on 26 January 1824, at thirty-two, cut short these last efforts.

Notes

1. Géricault to Pierre-Joseph Dedreux-Dorcy, in Clément 1879, 104.

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1972.25.1 (2628)

Mounted Trumpeters of Napoleon's Imperial Guard

1813–1814

Oil on fabric, 60.4 × 49.6 (23 ¹¹/₁₆ × 19 ¹/₂)

Chester Dale Fund

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a medium-weight, open, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric and mounted on a stretcher that may be original (a keyed, butt-joined stretcher with a horizontal crossbar). The tacking margins have been cut, but cusping along all four edges indicates that the original dimensions have been preserved. Over the off-white ground an opaque bright red imprimatura has been painted. Its color, showing through the upper layers, determines their overall warm tones. Neither underdrawing nor design changes were detected during infrared and X-radiographic examination. The image is formed by layers of opaque and semiopaque paints, applied wet-on-wet, with some glazing. The horsemen at the left and in the center are executed in minute, blended touches of the pointed brush, in contrast to the horseman at the right, who is broadly sketched in washes of diluted paint. The picture is coated with a clear varnish, whose surface is uneven because it has been selectively thinned. There is slight damage at the top right corner and overpainted cracks at the other corners. The weave of the lining fabric has been impressed on the picture owing to excess pressure during lining, and the impasto has been flattened.

Provenance: Edouard Napoléon César Edmond Mortier, duc de Trévisé [1883–1946], by 1937;¹ (his sale, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 19 May 1938, no. 25, bought in); given to his relative, probably Jean, Comte Budes de Guébriant [b. 1911], Buenos Aires; sold to Francisco Gowland Llobet, Buenos Aires; on consignment 1971 to (Galerie Schmit, Paris).

Exhibited: Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, 1937, *Géricault, peintre et dessinateur*, no. 30. Paris, Universal Exposition, Palais National des Arts, 1937, *Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art français*, no. 335. Paris, Galerie Paul Rosenberg, 1938, *Les Influences*, no. 16. New York, M. Knoedler & Co., 1938, *Gros, Géricault, Delacroix*, no. 21, repro. San Francisco Museum of Art, 1939, *French Romantic Artists*, no. 15. San Francisco, Golden Gate International Exposition, 1939, *Masterworks of Five Centuries*, no. 115, repro. San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor and M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, 1940, *Seven Centuries of Painting*, no. L-121. New York World's Fair, 1940, *Masterpieces of Art, European and American Paintings, 1500–1900*, no. 240, repro. Toronto, 1940, *Exhibition of Great Paintings in Aid of the Canadian Red Cross*, no. 71. NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist. The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco,

1989, *Gericault: Romantic Paintings and Drawings*, no. 9. Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 1991, *Gericault*, no. 41, repro.

THE PAINTING, originally a composite of three separate, partially finished studies, rather than an integral composition, represents, in three different views, a trumpeter of the second regiment of the Chevaux-légers Lanciers of the Napoleonic Imperial Guard in parade uniform.² This elite cavalry, originally created in 1810 of the remnants of the disestablished guard of King Louis of Holland, and therefore sometimes called Lanciers hollandais, was re-formed in 1813, after its losses in the Russian campaign, and at that time provided with an extraordinary complement of sixty trumpeters.

The canvas is dominated by the figure at its center, the only fully finished of the three studies. A second view of the trumpeter, in rather cramped space at the left, is finely detailed down to his waist but only roughly sketched below; it has the look of a marginal addition and is not clearly related, spatially or compositionally, to the main figure. The third horseman at the right, of markedly smaller scale and merely dashed off with rapid sweeps of the brush, may have been added to give these disparate figures the semblance of a balanced group. Each of the figures was at first painted by itself on the flat red ground, portions of which are visible near the head of the left trumpeter. Gericault then covered the surrounding areas with layers of dark grayish or brownish paint, to connect the separate figures and create the effect of a continuous shadowy space from which the trumpeters seem to be emerging into the light. Still later, he further darkened some areas of what had now become a background—at the upper left, between the two horsemen, beneath the horse in the middle, and around the trumpeter at the right—with broad scumblings of bituminous black paint, which help to bring together into a plausibly coherent spatial composition what had been begun as three distinct studies.³

Trumpeters belongs to a group of studies, of small format, delicate handling, and brilliant color, that represent cavalrymen in parade uniform, displaying themselves and their mounts as if posing for their portraits. Closely related to it are three further studies of Napoleonic lancers: *The Trumpeter of the Lancers of the Guard*, Glasgow Museums, The Bur-

rell Collection (fig. 1),⁴ *Polish Lancer*, sometimes called "*Poniatowski*," in a Parisian private collection,⁵ and *Red Lancer Standing beside His Horse*, in the Elie de Rothschild collection in Paris.⁶ *Rearing White Horse*, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen,⁷ is also associated with these studies, of several of which Gericault made drawings in sketchbooks that can be dated to about 1814 (fig. 2).⁸

For what purpose Gericault painted them and what meaning they held for him are not clear; they resist classification. Neither true portraits nor genre scenes, they are too carefully executed to be taken for casual practice work, yet Gericault evidently did not regard them as self-sufficient, exhibitable pictures. None was developed further into a major composition of the kind that might have won him notice at the Salon, the only incentive likely to rouse him to a sustained effort in those years when, living in comfortable independence, he never worked on commission or for sale.⁹

After his brilliant Salon debut in 1812 with the *Charging Chasseur* (Louvre),¹⁰ the daringly monumental treatment of a contemporary subject, extraordinary for a beginner barely twenty-one years old, Gericault, distrustful of his precocious facility, cautiously resumed his self-training. Most of his work in 1813 and the greater part of 1814 consisted of studies: copies after the masters in the Louvre, intimate portraits of horses in the imperial stables at Versailles, and small pictures of soldiers handsomely mounted and uniformed. Renouncing, for the time being, the ambitious scale and dramatic élan of the *Charging Chasseur*, he indulged his personal bent for painting from life and developed his technical mastery in casual studies that suited his talent and taste without straining his powers. The glistening horses and florid guardsmen he then painted, with evident pleasure, show a keenness of eye, a liveliness of touch, and a freshness of color that he was never to surpass in his later work. "It seems that Gericault attempted no important composition at this time," according to his biographer, Charles Clément,¹¹ and it is true that he did not complete any very ambitious paintings in those months, but it is likely that he pursued this experimentation with martial imagery in the hope of finding a subject that could be developed into a major painting, perhaps a sequel to the *Charging Chasseur*.¹²

The constant warfare that overshadowed those



Fig. 1. Théodore Géricault, *The Trumpeter of the Lancers of the Guard*, oil on canvas, c. 1812–1815, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow Museums: The Burrell Collection, 35/270

months provided both the stimulus and the material for this search. Surprisingly, Géricault's military subjects of the time give no clue to his personal reaction to these events and are strikingly lacking in patriotic rhetoric, nationalist sentiment, or, for that matter, any strong emotion. Painted at a time of murderous fighting, these bright pictures avoid any hint of the harder realities of war. Dressed for the parade rather than for battle, the soldiers complacently present themselves as models of martial elegance. The fall of the empire is reflected only in changes of uniform,¹³ and it is noteworthy that throughout the series, Géricault gave his main attention to trumpeters, the showiest and least warlike members of their arms. In the minute realism of his treatment, his concern with buttons and braids, his relish for the scarlet and white of uniforms, the silken flow of tails and plumes, the glint of steel and gold, and indeed by the very suavity of his brushwork, he expressed a painterly delight in appearance and a remarkable detachment from the enormous events of which he chose to treat only the festive aspect. Like the studies of stabled horses that he painted at about the same time,¹⁴ and that resemble them in their delicacy of handling, *Trumpeters* and the related studies appear to be works expressive of a personal rel-

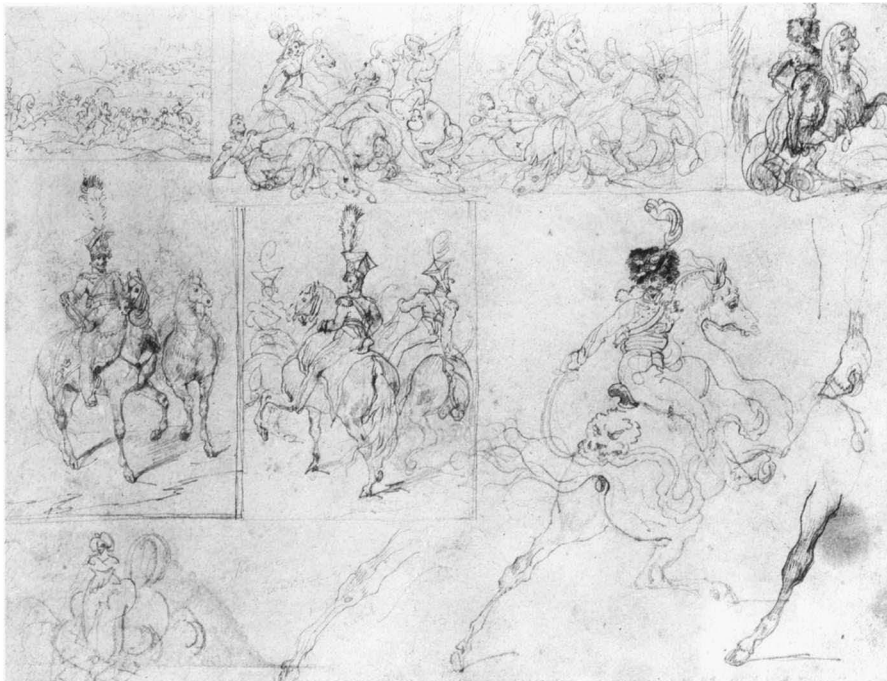


Fig. 2. Théodore Géricault, sketchbook page: *Scenes of Cavalry Battles and Mounted Soldiers*, graphite on paper, c. 1814, The Art Institute of Chicago, Tiffany and Margaret Day Blake Collection, 1947.35 (folio 57, recto)



Théodore Géricault, *Mounted Trumpeters of Napoleon's Imperial Guard*, 1972.25.1

ish, undertaken mainly for their own sake, though not without some thought of possible further use.

Gericault, who did not invent with ease, needed the spur of direct visual experience to start his imagination working. His life studies of horses and soldiers satisfied this need, but for the compositional form of his pictures, and even of his exploratory studies, he drew no less directly on sources in art. *Trumpeters* combines observations gathered around modern barracks with memories of baroque equestrian portraits of which he had recently painted copies at the Louvre: Rubens' *Maria de' Medici at Juliers* (fig. 3)¹⁵ and Van Dyck's *Francisco de Moncada, Marqués d'Aytona* (fig. 4).¹⁶ From both he took the frontal disposition of the central figure, borrowing from Rubens the horse's gait and streaming tail and from Van Dyck the posture of the rider. Although in his later work Gericault generally began compositions with conceptual drawings that he then fleshed out with the help of painted studies of the model, he went the opposite

way in his early military subjects. Studies in oil, such as *Trumpeters*, based partly on life, partly on borrowings from art, might yield motifs that, used singly, could be raised to heroic size and symbolic significance, as he had done in *Charging Chasseur* of 1812 and was to do again in *Wounded Cuirassier* of 1814, or be combined into many-figured scenes.

His sketchbooks of the period show him using both approaches. Their pages are crowded with drawings that reflect his preoccupations during the months in which the fate of the empire was decided on German and French battlefields.¹⁷ A profusion of diminutive hussars, lancers, and cuirassiers dart about these pages on rearing and prancing horses. The uniforms of Napoleon's cavalry are abruptly replaced, from one page to the next, by those of the allied invaders and the restored Bourbons. Many of these small pencil drawings have the look of fresh inventions hastily jotted down, but others, of more precise execution, are clearly the records of motifs already well explored. Among the

Fig. 3. Théodore Gericault, copy after Peter Paul Rubens, *Maria de' Medici at Juliers*, oil on canvas, 1812–1813, private collection



Fig. 4. Théodore Gericault, copy after Anthony van Dyck's *Francisco de Moncada, Marqués d'Aytona*, oil on canvas, 1813–1814, Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum/Fodor Collection, SA 4546





Fig. 5. Théodore Géricault, *Trumpeter of the Lancers*, pencil and red chalk, c. 1818, Paris, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, inv. 991 (recto)



Fig. 6. Théodore Géricault, *Trompette de lanciers*, lithograph, 1818, Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 876.9.6, D.6

drawings of the latter kind are several of subjects that Géricault had previously developed in painted studies. Tidily framed in pencil and arranged in rows, with lists of identifying inscriptions on adjacent pages, they appear to be pictorial inventories of projects begun and filed away for possible future use.¹⁸ A page from a sketchbook of about 1814 (see fig. 2) includes, among other such memoranda drawings, a precise repetition of the central horseman in *Trumpeters*, to which Géricault has added a second horse and a lightly sketched lancer, perhaps to try out ways of integrating the trumpeter into a more complex composition.¹⁹

After Napoleon's brief return from exile and final defeat at Waterloo in 1815, Géricault abandoned this along with the related subjects, and for some three years showed no further interest in

modern military scenes. But in 1818, when experimenting with the new technique of lithography, he remembered his *Trumpeters*, drew a copy of its central figure (fig. 5),²⁰ and based on it one of his early lithographic trials, the print known as *Trompette de lanciers* (fig. 6).²¹

Sometime before 1850, and perhaps still in Géricault's lifetime, an unknown artist, possibly Géricault's friend Jules-Robert Auguste (1789–1850), painted a close copy of the National Gallery's *Mounted Trumpeters* (fig. 7), which was sold at the auction of Auguste's collection with an attribution to Géricault²² but—significantly—attained only the small price of 33 francs. The picture reappeared on the Paris art market in 1975, bearing at its lower right a false signature which has since been removed. A comparison with the painting in Wash-



Fig. 7. Anonymous (possibly Jules-Robert Auguste), copy of Géricault's *Mounted Trumpeters*, oil on canvas, date unknown, Paris, private collection

ington leaves no doubt that the version formerly owned by Auguste is a fairly heavy-handed copy of this original.²³

Notes

1. The painting had its first public exhibition as no. 30 of the Géricault exhibition held at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in Paris in 1937. It was at that time owned by the duc de Trévise. The fact that it had not figured in any of the previous exhibitions to which de Trévise had lent works by Géricault from his collection, notably the *Exposition d'oeuvres de Géricault* held in 1924 at the Hôtel Jean Charpentier of which he had been the chief organizer, suggests that he acquired *Trumpeters* sometime between 1924 and 1937. Its earlier history is not known.

2. See L. Rousselot, *L'Armée française, ses uniformes, son armement* (Paris, 1961), pls. 15 and 88, with commentary; and J. Brosse and H. Lachouque, *Uniformes et costumes du Premier Empire* (Paris, 1972), 90–91.

3. Géricault occasionally connected separate, individual studies that he had painted on one canvas by filling the spaces between figures, usually horses, with dark paint to suggest a continuous shadowy background. A spectacular instance of this practice is the

large study *Twenty-four Horses in Rear View* (*Les Poitrails*) in the de Noailles collection, Paris (Clément 1879, 289, no. 51; Bazin 1987–1997, 2: no. 625; Grunchev 1991, no. 54, color pl. VIII–IX). Scumblings of bituminous dark paint are used for this purpose in a sufficient number of his studies from 1813–1814 to make it a matter of high probability that it was Géricault himself, rather than a later hand, who supplied these touches.

4. Clément 1879, 282, no. 20; see also Eitner 1983, 43, pl. 8; Bazin 1987–1997, 3:175–176, no. 798; and Grunchev 1991, 96, no. 65. Though of somewhat smaller dimensions (40.6 × 33 cm), this is the painting most closely related to *Trumpeters* in subject matter and style.

5. Clément 1879, 291, no. 57; see also Clément 1974, 450; Eitner 1983, 45, fig. 32; Grunchev 1991, 96, no. 67, repro.

6. Clément 1879, 292, no. 62; see also Bazin 1987–1997, 3:168, no. 782, repro.; and Grunchev 1991, 96, no. 64, repro.

7. Bazin 1987–1997, 3:132, no. 672, repro.; Grunchev 1991, 90, no. 35.

8. Three sketchbooks or sketchbook fragments offer a comprehensive record of Géricault's studies of military subjects during those years: 1) pages from a sketchbook he used in 1813–1814, now part of the "Chicago Album" at the Art Institute of Chicago (inv. 1947.35), in particular fols. 34v, 35r, 35v, 36v, 45r, 45v, 47r, 47v, 48r, 51r, 51v, 57r (fig. 2), 57v, and 5or (Eitner 1960, 9–17); 2) a group of eight numbered leaves from the "Military Sketchbook," dating from the latter part of 1814 and at present scattered among several private collections (partially published by Bazin 1987–1997, 3:234–238, nos. 945–955, 958); 3) the early sketches on pages 48–100 of the so-called Zoubaloff Sketchbook in the Louvre (RF 6072), which date from 1814 (catalogued, out of sequence, by Bazin 1987–1997, 2: 398–400, nos. 223–227, and 3:248–260, nos. 978–1020).

9. After the empire's fall, Géricault continued his series of military trumpeters with several paintings of soldiers wearing the Bourbon uniform: *Trumpeter of the Chasseurs* in the Niarchos collection, London (Clément 1879, 291, no. 60; Bazin 1987–1997, 3:178, no. 802, repro.; Grunchev 1991, 99, no. 79, repro.); *Trumpeter of the Hussars* at the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Mass. (Clément 1879, 426, no. 61bis; Bazin 1987–1997, 5:180, no. 1561, repro.; Grunchev 1991, 99, no. 81, repro.); and *Seated Hussar Trumpeter* at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Grunchev 1991, 99, no. 80, repro.; Bazin 1987–1997, 5:179, no. 1560, repro.).

10. Louvre, inv. 4885; Clément 1879, 45–57, 285–286, no. 40.

11. Clément 1879, 59.

12. A page from a dismembered sketchbook in a French private collection (Bazin 1987–1997, 3:237, no. 953) presents, among a series of thumbnail sketches of military subjects dating from 1813–1814, the drawing of a lancer on a ramping horse (of the type generally identified as "Poniatowski"; see note 5 above) juxtaposed to a memory sketch of the *Charging Chasseur* of 1812.

13. Géricault's expertise in the matter of uniforms probably owed much to the example of Carle Vernet with whom Géricault had studied in 1808–1810 and whom he befriended thereafter. As the official artist of the *Dépôt de Guerre*, Vernet was charged in early 1812 with the execution of detailed watercolor drawings illustrating the new regulation uniforms of the French armies that were about to invade Russia. Not published at the time, these drawings, now in the library of the *Ministère des Armées* in Paris (see R. Brunon and J. Brunon, *Carle Vernet: La Grande Armée de 1812* [Marseille, 1959]), represent officers and enlisted men of the various line regiments modeling their uniforms in active poses. They do not include soldiers of the Imperial Guard, the subjects of Géricault's studies. Géricault may have known these military fashion plates, though he was no longer Vernet's pupil at the time. His own studies resemble them in their marked emphasis on uniforms, at the expense of physiognomic or narrative features, but differ from them in their vigorous physical realism.

14. Eitner 1983, 37–39.

15. Johnson 1970, 794, 797; Eitner 1983, 24, 27, fig. 16; Bazin 1987–1997, 2:427, no. 302, repro.

16. Johnson 1970, 793–795, fig. 1; Bazin 1987–1997, 2:426, no. 300, repro.

17. See note 8 above.

18. Such pictorial inventories of projected paintings occur on fol. 41v, 48r, 57r (fig. 2), and 57v of the early sketchbook fragment in the "Chicago Album," and on pages 26 (Bazin 1987–1997, 3: no. 947), 30 (Bazin no. 945), 33 (Bazin no. 953), 34 (Bazin no. 948), 38 (not in Bazin), and two further, illegibly numbered pages (Bazin nos. 950 and 951) from the dismembered "Military Sketchbook" of 1814 (Bazin 3:233–237, nos. 944–953); see also note 8 above.

19. Fol. 57r of the "Chicago Album" (see fig. 2); Eitner 1960, fol. 57r.

20. Paris, *Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts*, inv. 991. The recto of the sheet copies the central figures of *Mounted Trumpeters*, the verso traces (and reverses) this figure (Bazin 1987–1997, 5:157, nos. 1506 and 1507).

21. Delteil 1924, no. 6. Only two impressions of this experimental lithograph are known to have been preserved, one of them in the *Musée des Beaux-Arts*, Rouen, the other in the *Cabinet des Estampes* of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris (see fig. 6).

22. *Catalogue d'une collection d'objets d'art et de curiosités composant le cabinet de feu M. Auguste* [sale cat. Rue Caumartin 9.] (Paris, 28–31 May 1850), no. 24, as *Trompette d'un regiment*.

23. Its dependence on this original is particularly apparent in such details as the trumpeter at the left, of summary but lively and spontaneous execution in the painting in Washington, clumsily brushed and of stunted shape in the copy. A similar impoverishment occurs in its imitation of the trumpeter at the right. When the central figures of the two versions are set side by side, the helpless dependence of the copyist is manifest in

deficiencies of structure and handling that confirm the priority and superiority of the painting in Washington. Its marks of nervous spontaneity, the negligences and omissions resulting from its rapid but masterly execution were ploddingly repeated, and misunderstood, by the copyist who consistently enlarged and coarsened forms that are finely articulated in the original, most conspicuously the head of the central trumpeter and that of his mount. He was particularly inept in dealing with details merely suggested in the original: the roughly brushed shadow beneath and to the right of the trumpeter's horse congealed in the imitation into a harshly contoured and meaningless shape. Of the few authors who have mentioned this copy, only Bazin (1987–1997, 3:176, no. 799) has accepted it as the original. Its rejection was argued by Philippe Grunchev (1979, 42) and by Silvain Laveissière in *Géricault* [exh. cat. *Galerie Nationales du Grand Palais*.] (Paris, 1991), 340, no. 41.

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1987–1997 Bazin: 2 (1987): no. 293; 3 (1989): 50,
177, no. 801, as attributed to Jules Auguste.
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BurlM 133: 256.
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1963.10.29 (1693)

Nude Warrior with a Spear

c. 1816
Oil on fabric, 93.6 × 75.5 (36⁷/₈ × 29³/₄)
Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: A plain-weave, medium- to heavy-weight fabric is the painting's support. The tacking margins have been cut off, and the picture has been lined onto fabric. The painting has been expanded 2 cm in each dimension by filling and inpainting the lining fabric along a 1-cm margin on all sides and mounting the painting on a larger stretcher. Although cusping is almost nonexistent along the top, right, and bottom edges, breaks at the edges of the original fabric suggest this fabric was not cut down appreciably (these breaks suggest the close proximity of the original foldover edge). A set of pinholes not related to the cusping pattern is visible along all edges of the original fabric in the X-radiograph.

A very thick artist-applied white ground with a vertically striated texture covers the original fabric. Infrared reflectography reveals an underdrawing that boldly profiles the upper torso and limbs of the figure. A layer of thin, semitransparent brown underpaint that underlies and models the body remains visible in its contours and brown shadows. A combination of opaque paint applied wet-on-wet and translucent glazes form the figure's flesh and its setting of landscape and sky. A zone of pastose paint follows the outer contour of the figure's extended left arm.

The painting has undergone several changes and repairs. Some of them, such as the strengthening of the figure's hair with thicker, darker paint and the lengthening of the forelock, are probably the result of Géricault's own transformation of a life study into a presentable composition. Others, like the extended right foot rather cursorily executed in a flat brown color, may indicate completions, probably by a later hand, of parts the artist left unfinished. A small oblique area of repair is visible in the clouds at the right, roughly at the level of the figure's raised right hand. The picture is generally abraded, most obviously in the sky and lower right foreground. While the right foreground has been heavily inpainted, the right section of the sky has been extensively reglazed but not entirely repainted. The painting is covered with a clear though somewhat uneven varnish.

Provenance: Said to have been owned by Philippe Comairas [1803–1875] and to have passed through the ownership of Dr. Foucault and his brother-in-law, M. de Cuvillon.¹ Léon Abel Gaboriaud, Paris, by 1919; (his sale, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 17 May 1950, no. 6, bought in); sold 1950 to (Julius H. Weitzner, Inc., New York), by whom sold 10 October 1950 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Hôtel Jean Charpentier, 1924, *Exposition d'oeuvres de Géricault*, no. 5. Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1924, *Géricault*, no. 5. Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, 1937, *Géricault, peintre et dessinateur*, no. 2. Paris, Universal Exposition, Palais National des Arts, 1937, *Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art français*, no. 331, repro. in separate album. Buenos Aires, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1939, *La Pintura francesa de David a nuestros dias*, no. 61. Montevideo, Salon Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1939, *La Pintura francesa de David a nuestros dias*, no. 29. Rio de Janeiro, Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, 1940, *Exposição de pintura francesa, seculos XIX e XX*, no. 44. San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, December 1940–January 1941 and November 1941–January 1942, *The Painting of France since the French Revolution*, no. 44, repro. MMA, 1941, *French Painting from David to Toulouse-Lautrec*, no. 56. AIC, 1941, *Masterpieces of French Art*, no. 68. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1941, *The Painting of France since the French Revolution*, no. 56. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist.

THE SO-CALLED *Nude Warrior* is an academic life study, an exercise in both the representation and the ideal stylization of the human body of the kind practiced in the course of regular studio training in nineteenth-century France. By the addition of suggestive accessories and backgrounds, such studies of the posing model were sometimes given the appearance of narrative or allegorical subjects, to make them presentable or saleable as complete works of art. Of a size larger than usual for ordinary *académies*, and of notably careful arrangement and execution, *Nude Warrior* marks an important moment of change and a new beginning in Géricault's career.²

As an unruly pupil in the atelier of the classicist Pierre Guérin in 1810–1811, Géricault had been a spectacular performer in model sessions, alarming his teacher and his fellow students with prodigies of color and impasto that earned him the nicknames of “pastry cook” and “cuisinier de Rubens.”³ He soon escaped the constraints of school routines and, inspired by the events of the day and the ex-

ample of Gros, threw himself into the painting of subjects from contemporary military life: beside the picturesque turbulence of drill and battlefields and the brilliance of uniforms, the nude studio model striking antique poses seemed of paltry interest. He may have paid occasional visits to his former teacher's studio in 1812–1814 to paint the nude, but it was only after the final collapse of the empire, in 1815, that he renounced military subjects and modern realism and resumed his long-interrupted formal studies, now as his own teacher.

A brief taste of military service, at the time of Napoleon's return from Elba, may have given Géricault a distaste for what had formerly so fascinated him; more likely, he may have come to realize after Waterloo that the martial strain in French art was for the time being exhausted and discredited. He resolutely turned to the only alternative at hand, the neoclassical grand style, and with characteristic energy reached out to master an idiom that he had heretofore scorned. As part of his program of self-training, he now took up life study again, noting in a schedule of intentions: "December, paint a figure at Dorcy's. In the evening draw after the antique and compose some subjects... January, go to M. Guérin to paint from nature."⁴ He had by this time decided to enter the competition for the academic Rome Prize, scheduled for March 1816. In anticipation of that ordeal he inflicted on himself the school disciplines that he had formerly refused to accept from Guérin, making a particular effort to perfect himself in the painting of the academically posed nude, one of the main requirements of the contest. Ironically, it was precisely in this part of the competition that he eventually met defeat: having passed the first qualifying test, that of the compositional sketch, he failed the second, that of the *étude académique*, and was eliminated from the final, decisive round.⁵

Nearly fifty studies of the nude were found in Géricault's studio after his death in 1824 and dispersed at auction later that year.⁶ By the time Charles Clément compiled his catalogue of all the surviving works, in 1867, he was able to locate only seven of these studies.⁷ A few more have come to light since, among them the National Gallery's *Nude Warrior with a Spear*, but the number of generally accepted life studies remains very small. Of the youthful studies that had shocked Guérin by their exuberant handling, not one has yet been

convincingly identified. The known *académies* appear to date for the most part from a fairly narrow span of time, that of his classicist self-training preceding his participation in the Rome Prize competition, from mid-1815 to early 1816.⁸ Forming a stylistically homogeneous group, they resemble other paintings datable about that time in their emphatic chiaroscuro modeling, compact brushwork, and somber tonality. At the same time, they show the mannerisms that resulted from his striving for a grandiose and expressive style and that are most fully documented in his many figural drawings of the period. The Michelangelesque athleticism, the strained poses, and the sharply drawn contours of these nudes mark them as no mere studies from life, but as exercises in heroic stylization.

Among these paintings, two stand out by their exceptional size, careful arrangement, and painstaking execution: the National Gallery's *Nude Warrior* and the closely related *Seated Nude in Back View* in the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (fig. 1).⁹ Both certainly originated in direct studies of the posing model but were then subjected to a process of purification and elevation by which these ordinary bodies and their studio poses acquired something of the aura of Michelangelo's Sistine nudes, an association that was probably in Géricault's mind.¹⁰ *Nude Warrior* is the most fully realized of all the nudes, a deeply calculated composition built of balanced contrasts—between the sculptural relief of the body and the sinuous arabesque of its contour, the long diagonals of its extended limbs and the countermovement of its bent arm and leg, the pattern of its highlit saliences and the dark foil of its shaded foreshortenings. A rapid pencil sketch in Bayonne records a rather similar pose, held by a model whose physique resembles that of the *Warrior* (fig. 2);¹¹ it may have played a role in the process that produced the painting. The elaborate wash-and-gouache drawing of a seated nude in the British Museum (fig. 3),¹² related in type, pose, and style to both the National Gallery's *Warrior* and the *Seated Nude* in Brussels, is the equivalent, in a graphic medium, of the painted life studies; it provides a link between them and a fairly large body of Géricault's drawings of the nude in a similar style, several of which are firmly datable to 1815 or 1816.

Within that brief span of time, Géricault's newly acquired classicist manner underwent a rapid change from its initial exuberance, its Michelange-



Fig. 1. Théodore Géricault, *Seated Nude in Back View*, oil on canvas, c. 1816, Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, inv. 6372

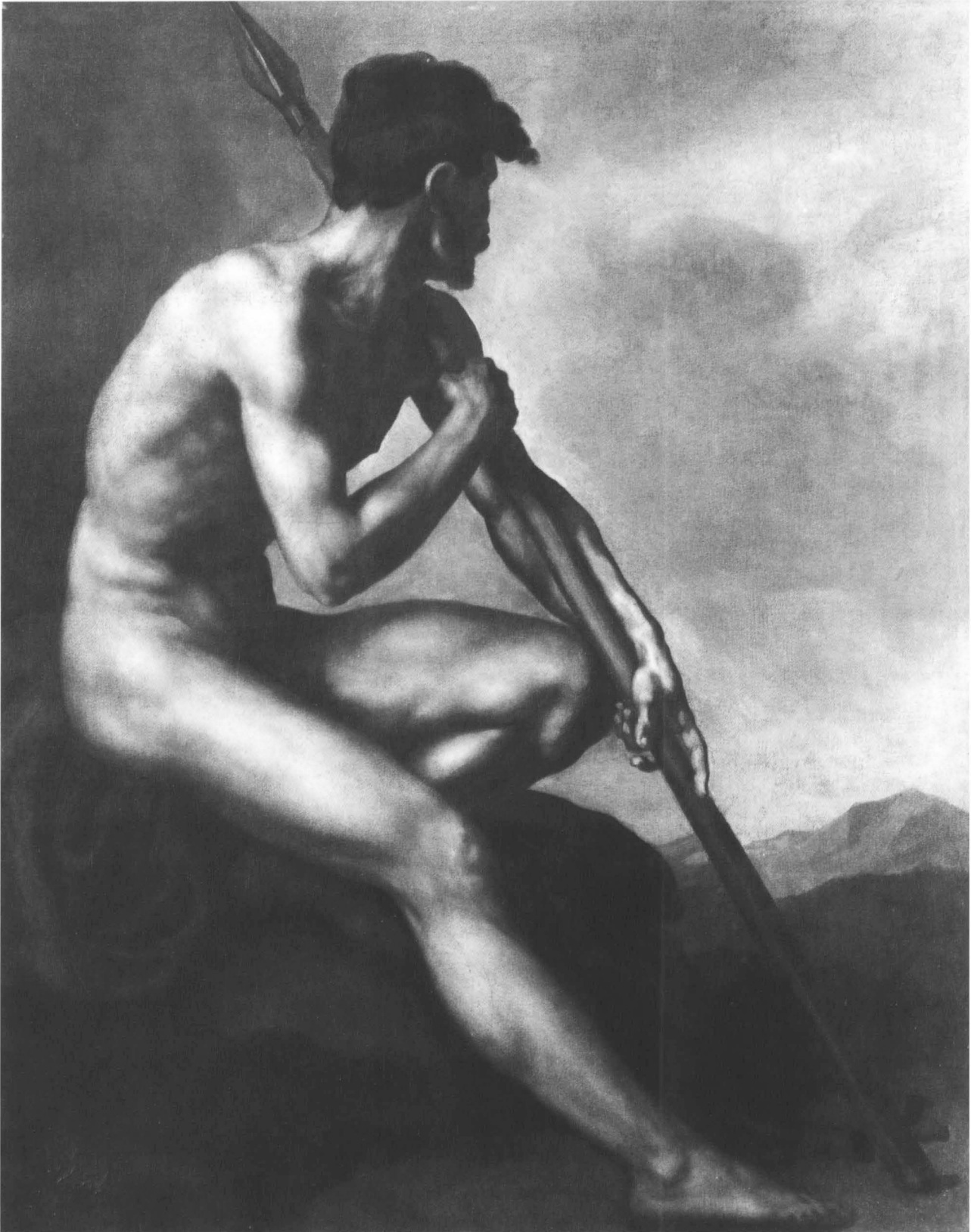


Fig. 2. Théodore Géricault, *Studies of a Nude Male*, pencil sketch, c. 1816, Bayonne, Musée Bonnat, inv. 2057, Paris, Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques et des Sites

lesque *furia*, to the serene maturity that was to grace the work of his Italian stay in 1816–1817. In that development, *Nude Warrior* falls late, probably in the weeks just before the Rome Prize contest in March 1816.¹³ Though of all his studies of the nude it approaches regular neoclassicism most closely, it is not merely a stereotype of that style. The figure looms large and very near, its face averted, against the bare setting of overcast sky and mountainous distance: as in many of Géricault's more fully developed studies of the nude, all the expression is concentrated in the wiry, sinewy body. The narrow waist widens into an athletic torso, its back and shoulders hunched forward against the supporting spear. The arms and legs, unclassically long and slender, are powerfully muscular. Taut curves circumscribe the whole figure, giving an impression of alert tension beside which the smoother, more

schematically stylized nudes of normal classicist school usage seem flaccid and lifeless. It is understandable that Géricault's treatment of the nude should have disconcerted the Rome Prize jury.

The picture's present title, *Nude Warrior with a Spear*, is a purely descriptive appellation without historical authority. In what may be its first mention in the literature, Charles Blanc in 1845 wrote of a "large academic figure study,"¹⁴ and the earliest modern reference to it, by Georges Sortais in 1919, merely described it as "seated male nude leaning on a lance before a mountainous landscape."¹⁵ Thereafter it figured in exhibitions and publications as *Berger nu*.¹⁶ Its present title was given to it only in 1939, by Léon Abel Gaboriaud, then its owner, who also ventured the entirely unsubstantiated guess that it might represent "Oedipus at the crossroad before his return to Thebes."¹⁷ The picture



Théodore Géricault, *Nude Warrior with a Spear*, 1963.10.29

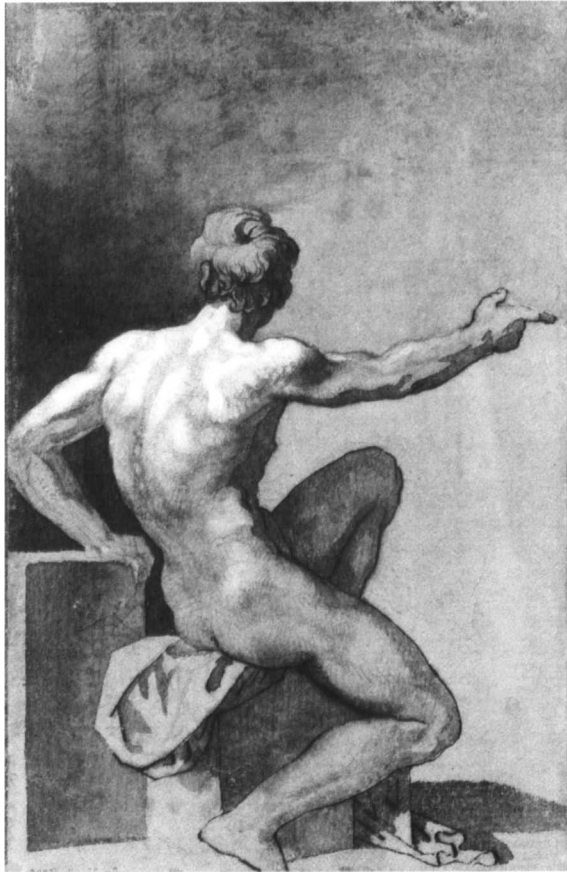


Fig. 3. Théodore Géricault, *Study of a Seated Male*, black chalk, wash, and white gouache, c. 1816, London, The British Museum, 1920.2.16.2

does not, in fact, have a subject, though in providing his academic model study with a suggestive landscape setting Géricault can be said to have given it content—a sense of place and time, and an intimation of heroic solitude. Nor was *Nude Warrior* intended to serve as preparation for some larger compositional project: it is a pure *académie* in the sense that it was painted only for its own sake.¹⁸ The pen drawing *Wounded Warrior with Attendants*, in the Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, Besançon (fig. 4),¹⁹ includes a figure with a lance in a pose rather similar to that of the National Gallery's *Warrior*, but this is itself merely a practice drawing, not connected with any larger project, and, judging by its style, of somewhat earlier date. The painting of preliminary life studies was not, at any rate, part of Géricault's regular practice. Only for his *Race of the Barberi Horses* (1817) do there exist three oil studies of the nude, of small size and rapid ex-

ecution, quite unlike the large *académies* in their relative informality and realism.²⁰ The large body of preparatory studies for the *Raft of the Medusa* surprisingly includes only a single painted study of the posing nude directly related to the composition.²¹

Unlike most of his other academic studies, which can be shown to have been painted in regular life-class sessions in which Géricault shared the model with several other artists,²² *Nude Warrior*, of conspicuously larger size, appears to be a private work for which Géricault himself chose the pose. His purpose on this occasion, aside from rehearsing for the impending competition, can only be guessed. It was hardly the usual student's aim of mastering the rudiments of anatomically correct figure painting. An experienced artist by this time, though one of irregular training, he needed the model, not mainly as an object for imitation, but as an aid in the

Fig. 4. Théodore Géricault, *Wounded Warrior with Attendants*, black chalk, pen, and wash, c. 1816, Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, D-2795, photograph Ch. Choffet, Besançon



formation of a disciplined style. The knowledge of tradition and the observation of reality, engravings after Michelangelo, and the posing model, all served as constraints on his overabundant pictorial imagination. "An artist must not give himself up to his inspiration until, through rigorous study and serious work, he has won a thorough mastery of his art," he told a friend in later years, adding that painters must "have enough assurance to dash a correct figure onto canvas, just as Michelangelo was able to cut a statue from a block of marble."²³

In the process of transforming his picture from a life study, centered on the articulation and modeling of the body, into a more formal composition with a semblance of poetic content, Géricault made some changes that have left their traces in its surface. He enlarged the head, which to begin with had a rounded top and may have been only roughly finished, by adding waves of dark hair and extending its forelock to give it a more significant profile. In improvising the cloudy sky, he appears to have covered earlier pentimenti along the contour of the warrior's left arm. The modifications that determine the expressive character of the picture were undoubtedly his own work, but it is possible that he left parts of it in a state of half-finish, as is the case with most of his larger life studies. Comparison with *Nude in Back View* in Brussels (see fig. 1), *Nude Warrior's* closest relative, gives some idea of what may have been the condition of his picture when he ceased working on it. He had a tendency to leave the outer extremities, particularly the feet, in a sketchlike state or to omit them, sometimes covering them over when finishing his study. Something of the sort may have happened in the case of *Nude Warrior*, both of whose feet, but particularly the extended right foot, are cursorily executed in a flat brown paint, suggesting that they may have been completed by a later hand.

Notes

1. *Nude Warrior* has no very solidly documented provenance. The claim that it was given by Géricault himself to the painter Philippe Comairas (1803–1875), a pupil of Ingres and a friend of Delacroix, rests on a certificate issued on 2 January 1919 by Georges Sortais, *peintre-expert* accredited to the Tribunal de la Seine. This may be confirmed by a mention in Charles Blanc's *Histoire des peintres français* (Paris, 1845), 1:442, of "Une grande figure d'atelier [by Géricault] chez M. Comairas, peintre d'histoire." After the death of Comairas, the

picture is said by Sortais to have passed into the possession of a Dr. Foucault, who gave it to his brother-in-law, M. de Cuvillon, a painter. Charles Clément, Géricault's biographer and cataloguer, evidently did not know of it. It first came to general attention when Léon Abel Gaboriaud, who had acquired it about 1919, lent it to the centennial exhibition of Géricault's work, organized by the duc de Trévise at the Hôtel Charpentier, Paris, in 1924. On that occasion, it won immediate and general acceptance. Its attribution to Géricault has never been questioned since.

2. See Eitner 1983, 87–92, figs. 73–76, for a general account of the circumstances that surrounded the painting of this and the related academic nudes.

3. Clément 1879, 24–29.

4. Léon Batissier, "Biographie de Géricault," *Revue du XIX siècle* (Paris, 1842), republished in Pierre Courthion, *Géricault raconté par lui-même et par ses amis* (Geneva, 1947), 33. Clément 1879, 29, citing this note, which had been lost by the time of his writing, believed that it dated from the time of Géricault's early studies with Guérin, i.e., from 1810–1811, but its actual date in 1814 or 1815 is indicated by a very similar list of intentions that Géricault penciled on page two of the so-called Zoubaloff Sketchbook in the Louvre among drawings datable to 1814–1815 (see Eitner 1983, 77–80).

5. Géricault's participation in the contest is documented in Archives Nationales, Paris, AJ.52.5, Procès-verbaux des assemblées générales des professeurs de l'École des Beaux-Arts, années 1811–1816; see also Eitner 1983, 87–93.

6. On the contents of Géricault's studio at his death and the subsequent sale of his works, see Lorenz Eitner, "The Sale of Géricault's Studio in 1824," *GBA*, 6th période, 53 (1959): 115–126, and Philippe Grunhec, "L'Inventaire posthume de Théodore Géricault," *BSHAF* (1976): 395–420.

7. Clément 1879, 278–279, nos. 6–12.

8. Opinions on the chronology of Géricault's studies of the nude have nevertheless differed widely, mainly because historians, mistaking the actual course of Géricault's artistic development, have generally assumed that such studio exercises must necessarily be of very early date. Clément (1879) listed seven *académies* (of which one has been lost since and another found to have been misidentified) and indiscriminately assigned all of them to the years 1810–1812. Grunhec (1978) accepted ten academic studies (not including working studies for the *Barberi Race* and the *Medusa*), assigning three to c. 1810–1812 (nos. 23–25), two to 1812–1816 (nos. 61, 62), and the remaining five (including the *NGA's Warrior*) to 1817–1820 (nos. 124–127, 162). Germain Bazin (1987–1997) has admitted eight studies of the nude to those parts of his catalogue that have appeared to date (1997) but makes the distinction that only five of them (nos. 116, 118, 126, 128, 133) are strictly speaking *académies scolaires*, i.e., student exercises. Of these he dates nos. 116, 118, and 126 to c. 1810–1811, no. 128 to 1813. (Neither no. 126 nor no. 133 is accepted by Grunhec. I believe that no. 128 is also to be rejected.)

One of the remaining studies, no. 117, Bazin qualifies as a "tableau" and dates before 1812; the two others, nos. 121 and 125 (the NGA's *Warrior*), Bazin places after the Italian voyage, presumably c. 1817–1820. These contradictory chronologies produce some curious discrepancies in the dating of particular paintings. Thus *Reclining Nude* (Clément no. 11; art market, London, 1978) is dated c. 1810 by Bazin (no. 116), while Grunhech (no. 162) thinks it to be of the time of the *Medusa*, c. 1818–1819.

It is nevertheless possible to place the relatively few acceptable academic studies in a fairly simple chronological order that is consistent with their stylistic characteristics and with the abundant evidence of contemporary drawings, and that accords furthermore with the facts of Géricault's biography (see Eitner 1983, 77–93). Briefly put, I believe that of the very early nudes painted in Guérin's studio in 1810–1811 none has as yet been recognized. Two of the preserved nudes, Clément no. 6 (Grunhech no. 23; Bazin no. 115, rejected) and Clément 10 (G. 25, B. 117), are of relatively early date, though not earlier than 1813. All the remaining academic studies—*Nude with Staff* (Clément 7, G. 24, B. 115), *Nude Pulling on a Rope* (Clément 9, G. 127, B. 118), *Nude Climbing*, formerly in the Lebel collection (not in Clément, G. 126, B. 937), the Brussels *Nude in Back View* (fig. 1; not in Clément, G. 125, B. 836), and the NGA's *Warrior* (not in Clément, G. 124, B. 125)—date from 1815–1816; the paintings in Brussels and Washington, somewhat later than the rest, probably date from 1816, the period of the Rome Prize competition and the compositional project of the *Death of Paris*, with which they have an evident connection (see Lorenz Eitner, "Géricault's *Dying Paris* and the Meaning of His Romantic Classicism," *Master Drawings* 1, no. 1 [Spring 1963], 21–34). Two further studies that have been proposed, the one in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (G. A-123, rejected; B. 126), the other formerly in the Dubaut collection, Paris (G. 62; B. 144, rejected), are in my opinion not by Géricault.

9. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, inv. 6372, oil on canvas, 88×62 cm; formerly in the H. Schleisinger collection, Brussels. Not mentioned by Clément; G. 125, B. 836. See Eitner 1953, 55–64, and Eitner 1983, 91–92.

10. See the small drawing of a nude from the Sistine ceiling, copied from an engraving, among the sketches datable c. 1814–1815 in the so-called Zoubaloff Sketchbook in the Louvre, RF 6072, 38 (see Bazin 1987–1997, 2: no. 213).

11. Musée Bonnat, inv. 2057, formerly in the collection of Léon Bonnat.

12. Inv. 1920.2.16.2, formerly in the collections of His de la Salle and Fairfax-Murray; Eitner 1983, 92.

13. Classicist motifs in Géricault's work have usually been attributed to his very beginnings in 1808–1812 or to his Italian year of 1816–1817. Since *Nude Warrior* is too accomplished for a beginner's work, it has often been dated after the Italian journey, on the assumption that its classicism must be a reflection of Géricault's

Italian impressions. Both Grunhech and Bazin place it in the period immediately after the Italian year and justify this dating in nearly identical terms: "Le modelé employé nous fait préférer la date de 1817 à celle de 1808–12 proposée habituellement, et nous incite à suggérer un rapprochement avec les travaux qui suivent immédiatement le retour d'Italie" (Grunhech 1978, no. 124); and "[Le] modelé, en force, indique d'ailleurs une époque postérieure au voyage d'Italie" (Bazin 1987–1997, 2:274). But Géricault's conversion to a form of classicism can in fact be shown to have occurred before he set foot on Italian soil. Its beginnings can be traced in the exercises of the "Zoubaloff Sketchbook" in the Louvre, which are firmly datable to 1814–1815, its further development in a large series of compositional drawings executed in a powerfully sculptural style, several of which can be shown to date from 1815 or 1816, and its early maturity in the large group of studies for the *Death of Paris* project that Géricault undertook immediately after his failure in the Rome Prize competition of 1816 (see Eitner 1963 [as in note 8]). It is to this complex, and to the academic contest which led to it, that the most fully developed studies of the nude, *Nude Warrior* in Washington and *Nude in Back View* in Brussels, are related, by both style and biographical circumstance. After early 1816, Géricault had no further occasions to paint purely academic life studies.

14. Blanc 1845, 1:442.

15. Georges Sortais, manuscript, 2 January 1919 (in NGA curatorial files), evidently written for L. A. Gaboriaud, then the painting's owner.

16. The title seems to have been devised on the occasion of the centennial exhibition in 1924. The loan receipt for that exhibition (in NGA curatorial files) identifies the picture as *Académie d'homme*; the published catalogue calls it *Berger nu, assis sur un rocher*.

17. Typewritten note, signed by Gaboriaud, 11 May 1939, on the loan form for the exhibition in Buenos Aires.

18. Grunhech 1978 and 1991, no. 124, has suggested that the figure of *Nude Warrior*, slightly modified, reappears as the small foreground figure of a bather in the large *Landscape with Aqueduct* (1818) in the MMA. But the resemblance is slight, and it is not conceivable that Géricault should have painted so elaborate a study for so minor a detail in what is, at any rate, a highly improvisational composition.

19. Inv. D-2795, formerly in the collection of Jean Gigoux; see Eitner 1983, 93.

20. See Grunhech 1978 and 1991, nos. 108–110.

21. The unfinished life study of the back of the black man waving a cloth (Louvre, RF 850; Clément 1879, no. 104; Eitner 1972 [see Biography], 35, fig. 71).

22. See Bazin 1987–1997, 2: nos. 118–123.

23. Clément 1879, 234.

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 1935 Gautier, Maximilien. *Géricault*. Paris: pl. 14.
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- 1965a Dale: 22, repro.
 1965 NGA: 56.
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 1978 Grunhech: 106, no. 124.
 1980 Eitner, Lorenz. "The Literature of Art. Review of Grunhech, *Géricault*." *BurlM* 122, no. 924 (March): 210.
 1983 Eitner: 91, 92, 334 note 131, pl. 18.
 1985 NGA: 173, repro.
 1987–1997 Bazin: 2:364, no. 125.
 1992 NGA Guide: 177, repro.

After Théodore Géricault

1984.29.2

Gray Stallion

c. 1850 or later
 Oil on fabric, 59.7 × 74.4 (23 1/2 × 28 7/8)
 Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

Inscriptions

Falsely inscribed at lower left: Géricault

Technical Notes: The original support is a fairly coarse, medium-weight, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. Although the tacking margins have been cropped, cusping along all edges indicates the painting is at or near its original size. The white ground is covered by an orange-brown imprimatura. No design changes were noted in X-radiographic examination, nor was any underdrawing evident during infrared examination. The image is formed of layers thinly and fluidly applied in the background with high impasto in the horse. Large areas of inpainting appear in the background to the left of the horse's head and above its back, apparently applied to mask abrasion in the darks. A thick, toned varnish covers the picture surface somewhat unevenly, owing to its selective removal during a previous restoration.

Provenance: Percy Moore Turner [d. c. 1951]; Henry Nugent Banks; The Honorable Mrs. Baring; (Frank Partridge and Sons, London); Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, by 1967; (their sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, Ltd., New York, 15 November 1983, no. 3, bought in).

Exhibited: Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1967–1968, *French Paintings from the Collection of Paul Mellon*, no cat.

CHARLES CLÉMENT'S basic catalogue of Géricault's work, first published in 1868, lists a *Cheval gris blanc* under number 30, described as follows: "It is shown in profile, facing to the left. Of vigorous execution, it stands out, strongly illuminated, against the background of a dark brown wall which is distinctly visible on the left side of the canvas but is lost in darkness at the right. Bought for 600 francs by M. Reiset who sold it to the Museum of Rouen for the same price. H. 59, W. 72 cm."¹ This painting is still in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen (fig. 1), which it had entered in 1850, when very few works by Géricault were as yet on public view.²

Its early accessibility seems to have made this painting the special favorite of nineteenth-century copyists intent on acquiring something of Géricault's technique. It is the most frequently copied of all his works: some fifteen early replicas, differing widely in quality, have turned up in private or public collections over the years³ and continue to appear regularly on the art market, invariably with a confident attribution to Géricault. The National Gallery's *Gray Stallion* is one of these copies, and close comparison with the picture in Rouen shows beyond doubt that this was its model. The fact that it is "signed," as Géricault's authentic studies never are, does not strengthen its claim to authenticity.

It is an ironic circumstance that the painting in Rouen, which spawned these many copies and which, since Clément gave it his sanction, has been



Fig. 1. After Théodore Géricault, *Study of "Cheval gris-blanc,"* oil on canvas, date unknown, Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 850.3.1 (Bazin 602)

generally accepted as the original work from Géricault's hand, can itself be shown to be only a smooth and embellishing copy of the true original, now in a private collection in Heerbrugg, Switzerland (fig. 2). This version,⁴ unknown to Clément, is a work of high quality and evidently spontaneous execution, which, unfinished in part, has every appearance of a study painted directly from life. A point-by-point comparison of the picture in Heerbrugg with that in Rouen shows the causal connection between them to run from the painting in Heerbrugg to that in Rouen, and not the other way: the greater richness and intricacy of the original in the Swiss collection reveals the deviations in the dependent copy in Rouen as reductions and simplifications. The copy in the National Gallery, derived from the copy in Rouen, exaggerates its weaknesses and is an even more diminished reflection of the original. On the basis of its style, Géricault's study can be dated about 1814–1815; the copy in Rouen may well have been painted by one of Géricault's more immediate followers in the 1820s, while the National Gallery's *Gray Stallion* is not likely to antedate 1850, when the copy in Rouen was put on view.



Fig. 2. Théodore Géricault, *Le Cheval gris-blanc*, oil on canvas, c. 1815, Heerbrugg, Switzerland, private collection (Bazin 603)



After Théodore Géricault, *The Gray Stallion*, 1984.29.2

Notes

1. Clément 1879, 283, no. 30.
2. Inv. 850.3.1. By 1850 the Louvre had acquired five paintings by Géricault, the *Raft of the Medusa*, bought in 1824, and four smaller works, *Four à plâtre*, *Cheval espagnol*, *Cheval turc*, and *Cinq Chevaux vus par la croupe*, all purchased in 1849.
3. For a partial selection of copies after the painting in Rouen, see Bazin 1987–1997, 3:107, nos. 603–610; the NGA's *Gray Stallion* is no. 609.
4. First noted in the reedition of Clément 1974, 448; see also Grunhech 1978, 93, no. 52-E, and Bazin 1987–

1997, 3:107–108, no. 603, neither of whom accepts the picture in Heerbrugg as the original from which that in Rouen and its copies are derived. Its earlier provenance unknown, the Heerbrugg version is said to have been in the collection of Henri Rochefort from which it entered that of Otto Ackermann, Berlin, who lent it to exhibitions in Dresden (1904), Berlin (1907), and Munich (1914).

References

- 1978 Grunhech: 93, no. 52-E.
1985 NGA: 173, repro.
1987–1997 Bazin: 3:109, no. 609.

André Giroux

1801–1879

ANDRÉ GIROUX, who had begun his studies with his father, a minor history painter, made his debut at the Salon of 1819 when only eighteen years old. His earliest exhibits were urban genre scenes, but starting in 1822 he also submitted landscape studies from nature. In 1825 his competition entry on the subject of the Hunt of Meleager was awarded the Rome Prize for Historical Landscape,¹ despite the fact that, unaffiliated with any of the leading academic teachers, Giroux had no influential backers. His fellow students at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, members of the rising romantic generation that scorned classical landscape, used the award ceremony to stage a noisy protest. The scene was witnessed by Amaury-Duval, a pupil of Ingres, who recalled in his memoirs that the Rome Prize laureate fled sobbing into his father's arms, pursued by the jeers of the audience.² During his long stay in Italy (1825–1830), Giroux became associated with a group of young landscape painters that included Edouard Bertin (1797–1871), Théodore-Caruelle d'Aligny (1798–1871), and Léon Fleury (1804–1858), and made the acquaintance of Camille Corot, to whose landscape studies painted in the environs of Rome Giroux' own open-air sketches bear some resemblance.³ Like Corot, he sent a composed Italian landscape to the Salon of 1827 but at the same time submitted his more spontaneous studies painted from nature in the Roman Cam-

pagna.⁴ His *View of Casa Prota in the Sabine Hills* won a gold medal at the Salon of 1831. Thereafter he continued as a regular exhibitor at the Salon until 1874, concentrating during the 1830s and 1840s on Italian subjects composed in the studio with the help of naturalistically observed detail studies gathered out-of-doors. In his later years, Giroux reverted to French landscapes and, having made the transition from Arcadian classicism to naturalism in Italian settings, ventured further toward modernity with paintings of industrial sites.⁵

Notes

1. Philippe Grunhech, *Le Grand Prix de peinture: Les Concours de Rome de 1797 à 1863* (Paris, 1983), 184–185, 187, 380.
2. Amaury-Duval [Eugène-Emmanuel Pineu-Duval], *L'Atelier d'Ingres, souvenirs* (Paris, 1878), 10.
3. On Giroux' Italian stay in 1825–1830, see Galassi 1991, 101, 104, pl. 121, 118, pl. 145, 242 note 17.
4. *Etudes faites d'après nature dans l'ancien Latium (Explication des ouvrages de peinture... exposés au Musée Royal des Arts* [Paris, 1827], 81, no. 460).
5. See his exhibit at the Salon of 1857, *Usine d'emouleurs dans la vallée de la Margeride, près de Thiers (Explication des ouvrages de peinture... exposés au Palais des Champs-Élysées* [Paris, 1857], 147, no. 1201).

Bibliography

André Giroux, 1801–1879. [Auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] Paris, 27 April 1870, comprising 150 paintings by Giroux.

1994.52.3

*Forest Interior with a Painter,
Civita Castellana*

1825/1830

Oil on paper, 29 × 44 (11⁷/₁₆ × 17⁵/₁₆)

Gift of Mrs. John Jay Ide in memory of Mr. and Mrs.
William Henry Donner

Inscriptions

On the reverse: Civita Castellana

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a sheet of wove paper, the top edge of which has been cut while the three other edges are deckled. Tack holes in the corners and the centers of each edge indicate that it was secured to a board while being painted. The paper was prepared with an off-white ground layer, over which the paint was applied in several layers. Neither design changes nor underdrawing was visible during infrared and X-radiographic examination. A clear varnish layer covers the surface. Conservation treatment in 1997 included placing a toned insert to fill a loss at the bottom left corner, repair of a tear at the bottom edge center, and inpainting of scratches along the bottom edge.

Provenance: Art market, France. (Galerie J. Fischer-Ch. Kiener, Paris); sold November 1991 to Mrs. John Jay Ide, San Francisco.

Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot,
Rocks by a Stream, Civita Castellana,
oil on paper mounted on canvas,
1826–1827, Ackland Art Museum,
The University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill, The William A. Whitaker
Foundation Art Fund, 72.26.1

Exhibited: NGA; The Brooklyn Museum; The Saint Louis Art Museum, 1996–1997, *In the Light of Italy: Corot and Early Open-Air Painting*, no. 107, repro.

THE VILLAGE of Civita Castellana, fifty kilometers north of Rome at the intersection of the Via Cassia and the Via Flaminia, was a favorite painting ground for landscape painters from France and Germany who, before reaching Rome, passed its cliff-bordered valley, wood, and stream. Corot painted here in May and June 1826 and again in September and October 1827, periods when Giroux was also working in the region. Corot's *Rocks by a Stream, Civita Castellana* (fig. 1),¹ painted at Civita Castellana during one of these stays, presents a site similar to that in Giroux' sketch. In both, the view of boulders and overhanging foliage is taken at close range, in keeping with the sketching practice of landscape painters who collected such details out-of-doors for future use in landscapes composed in the studio. But for all its immediacy, Giroux' *Forest Interior* is not a detached, fragmentary observation but, like Corot's contemporaneous plein-air studies, a rounded picture in which nature's irregularities are modified by an unobtrusive compositional arrangement. Giroux has centered his scene on the figure of a fellow artist who, accom-





André Giroux, *Forest Interior with a Painter*, Civita Castellana, 1994.52.3

panied by his dog, works beside a stream in the mottled sunlight of a forest clearing, bringing some genre interest into what might have been a simple nature study.² Compared with the insistent truthfulness of Corot's sketches, particularly evident in the drawings he made at Civita Castellana in 1826 and 1827³ of the twisted roots and branchings of trees along its stream (fig. 2), Giroux' treatment of the detail of foliage tended to a more mechanical, calligraphic routine.

Notes

1. 31 × 41.1 cm, Robaut 1905, 2: no. 176.
2. Note Corot's similar use of a genre motif in *The Fisher of Crayfish*, private collection, Paris (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 165; Galassi 1991, 195, fig. 247), a painting dating from 1826–1827 that presents a setting resembling the wooded cliff and stream at Civita Castellana.
3. As in the pencil drawing *Civita Castellana, sous-bois avec rochers* of about 1826, Louvre, RF 5220 (Robaut 1905, 4: no. 2505) or the pen drawing *Civita Castellana, Ruisseau* (fig. 2), dated 1827, Louvre, RF 3405 (Robaut 1905, 4: no. 2623).

1994.52.4

Forest Interior with a Waterfall, Papigno

1825/1830

Oil on paper, 29.5 × 44.5 (11⁵/₈ × 17¹/₂)

Gift of Mrs. John Jay Ide in memory of Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Donner

Inscriptions

On the reverse in pencil: *Papigno*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a sheet of wove paper with deckle edges on the left, right, and bottom edges. Pinholes at the corners and the edges indicate that the sheet was secured to a board while being painted. The paper was prepared with an opaque, off-white ground layer, over which the image was blocked in rapidly with dark brown and green oil paints. Over this, more full-bodied paints were applied, in a limited range of colors including a transparent dark brown, transparent and opaque greens, some white, and accents of dark crimson in the foliage at the lower left. Neither design changes nor underdrawing was evident during infrared and X-radiographic examination. A thin, clear, but carelessly applied varnish covers the painting's surface irregularly, leaving some areas unvarnished. Small paint losses were inpainted in 1997.



Fig. 2. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Civita Castellana, Ruisseau*, pen, 1827, Paris, Département des Arts Graphiques, Musée du Louvre, RF 3405, Photo RMN

Provenance: Art market, France. (Galerie J. Fischer–Ch. Kiener, Paris); sold November 1991 to Mrs. John Jay Ide, San Francisco.

THE VILLAGE of Papigno perched on a height overlooking the confluence of the Nera and the Velino rivers, some seventy kilometers north of Rome, is situated between the town of Terni and the point at which the Velino, in a spectacular fall, forms the cascade of Terni, long a favorite painting site for landscape painters.¹ Corot was at work here in the summer of 1826, painting the fast-flowing river above the cascade.² Giroux painted his study below the falls, where the waters of the Velino, rushing over boulders, divide into separate streams amid a sparse growth of trees. His picture exemplifies the close-view studies by which landscape painters, working from nature, provided themselves with the individual motifs of which they later built their larger, synthetic compositions.

Following the advice given by Valenciennes in his influential "Réflexions sur la peinture,"³ Giroux painted such detail studies in oil, working rapidly



André Giroux, *Forest Interior with a Waterfall, Papigno, 1994.52.4*

to capture what Valenciennes called “ton local” and “lumière du moment.”⁴ The method made for accuracy in the transcription of the more fugitive effects of light and atmosphere, but it involved the inconvenience of transporting bulky equipment to difficult sites. French painters overcame the difficulty by employing children to carry their easels and large paint boxes, much to the astonishment of their German colleagues,⁵ who continued the earlier practice of making only sketchbook drawings when working out-of-doors and translating these into color in their studios.

Not an encompassing view or balanced composition but a rough fragment, consisting of irregular, only partially visible forms, the study is nevertheless arranged with a sense of the dramatic in its juxtaposition of branch, rock, and rushing water. Its naturalism, evident in a close attention to the unpredictable irregularities encountered in actual nature, has the particular significance, in the context of its period, of a conscious avoidance of then still current conventions of neoclassical landscape, the tradition in which Giroux himself had had his start.

Notes

1. In his treatise on landscape painting, *Elémens de perspective pratique à l'usage des artistes* (Paris, 1800), of which the revised second edition, published in 1820, is the most likely to have been used by French painters visiting Italy in the 1820s, Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes (1750–1819) particularly recommended a visit to the cascade at Terni: “En quittant Rome, on doit faire une excursion dans la Sabine, et voir les antiquités de Narni et de Terni, patrie de Tacite, et surtout faire des études dans sa magnifique vallée. La cascade, la plus belle qui existe en Italie, et que plusieurs voyageurs comparent à celle du saut de Niagara en Amérique, a deux cents pieds de chute, et est fournie par la rivière entière de Vellino, qui se précipite par différens côtés dans la vallée, ce qui forme un spectacle imposant, digne d'exercer le pinceau d'un Artiste” (1820, 492).

2. *The Velino above the Cascade of Terni*, 1826, oil on paper, 22.5 × 38 cm, private collection, Paris (Robaut 1905, 2: no. 128; Galassi 1991, 103, fig. 118).

3. Valenciennes 1820, 340–342.

4. Valenciennes 1820, 336–340.

5. Ludwig Adrian Richter (1803–1884), in Rome 1823–1826, was startled to observe, while painting at Tivoli in 1823, “small doors walking on human feet down the mountainside. I then recalled amusing stories I had heard of the huge paint boxes used by some French painters. . . . It was these enormous boxes, car-

ried on the backs of boys and covering them down to their feet, that passed by me, shortly followed by their owners” (*Lebenserinnerungen eines deutschen Malers* [Leipzig, 1909], 176. Richter's memoirs, written in 1869–1881, were first published in 1885).

1997.65.1

Santa Trinità dei Monti in the Snow

1825–1830

Oil on paper mounted on fabric, 22 × 30 (8^{11/16} × 11^{13/16})
Chester Dale Fund

Inscriptions

In ink on the edge of the paper tape folded over the top stretcher bar: A. Giroux 1825 (or 1829?)

Technical Notes: The support is a sheet of paper glued onto a tightly woven canvas and mounted on a stretcher that is probably original. The paper support has been prepared with a brownish gray ground over which the design has been applied in oil with small brushstrokes, in complex layers that range from tightly worked scumbles and glazes to vigorous brushwork with moderate impasto in the highlighted passages of clouds and snow. The design has been outlined on the paper with gray-blue paint. Not a regular underdrawing, these lines remain visible in the final painted surface. A design change has affected the height and position of the closer of the two towers of the church: its top has been lowered slightly and moved farther to the left. A clear varnish covers the picture surface, which is in generally good condition, except for some slight inpainting at the top right and left corners.

Provenance: (Didier Aaron Gallery, New York).

PAINTED on a winter afternoon,¹ Giroux' sketch looks southward from the snow-covered grounds of the French Academy's Villa Medici, down the slope of the Pincian Hill to the convent of the Sacré Coeur, from behind which the roofs and towers of Santa Trinità dei Monti rise. One of the five French churches of Rome, Santa Trinità, vandalized during the disorders following the Revolution, had been restored in 1816 by the government of Louis XVIII.

Winner in 1825 of the French Academy's Rome Prize for Historical Landscape, Giroux lodged from 1825 until 1830 at the academy's Roman headquarters on the Pincian Hill.² During these years



Fig. 1. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Santa Trinità*, oil on canvas, 1826–1828, Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, no. 1876-6

he daily faced the buildings that he represented in this small, rapidly brushed sketch. It may have been the unaccustomed spectacle of Rome in the snow that prompted him to record the scene, looking down on it from a high point of vantage, probably a window on the villa's third floor or from the tower in its south wing. Though his subject was urban and centered on architectural features, Giroux chose to treat it as a landscape—a study of weather, atmosphere, and wintry light.

The close vicinity of the church of Santa Trinità to the French Academy and its dominant position in the foreground of the Roman cityscape as seen from the Pincio by the artists quartered there account for the frequency with which it was painted by successive generations of academy pensioners. Camille Corot who resided in Rome at the same time (1825–1828) as Giroux, though without benefit of an academy stipend, painted the first of his sev-

eral views of Santa Trinità about 1826–1828 from a point just outside the villa's walls, lower and slightly more distant from Santa Trinità than that chosen by Giroux (fig. 1).³ Another academy pensioner of those years, Louis Dupré (1789–1837),⁴ working, like Giroux, from a window of the Villa Medici, produced a view of the church (fig. 2)⁵ that, in larger format and sharper detail, complements Giroux' summary sketch and testifies to its accuracy.

Notes

1. The sunlight, striking at a slant from the west, casts fairly long shadows across the roofs of the buildings and the snow-covered foreground, suggesting that the sketch was painted in mid- or late afternoon.

2. Grunhech 1983 (see Biography), 184–185, 187, 344; see also Charles Gabet, *Dictionnaire des artistes de l'école française au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 1831), 314–315.

3. *Santa Trinità*, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva



Fig. 2. Louis Dupré, *Vue de la Trinité des Monts à Rome*, oil on canvas, c. 1825, private collection (illustrated in Galerie Lestranger, *Le Voyage en Italie*, St. Remy-de-Provence, 1996)



André Giroux, *Santa Trinità dei Monti in the Snow*, 1997.65.1

(inv. 1876-6), paper applied to canvas, 27.3×44.7 cm, dated by Robaut 1905, 2: no. 84, "about 1826–1828." Corot repeated the same view, with the addition of figures, in a study of the same date, now in the collection of Peter Nathan, Zurich, and in a later, more finished version in the AIC. He again painted this view, but from a somewhat higher point of vantage, probably working from memory in his Paris studio c. 1830–1834, in a larger painting, *La Trinité-des-Monts, vue prise de la villa Médicis*, Louvre (RF 2041; Robaut 83). (For a discussion of Corot's various studies of this site, see Pantazzi, Pomarède, and Tinterow 1996, 50–54, nos. 12–14.)

4. A pupil of Jacques-Louis David, Louis Dupré

was appointed in 1811 painter-in-ordinary to Napoleon's youngest brother, King Jerome of Westphalia, who awarded him a stipend that enabled him to work in Italy during the last years of the empire. Active in Naples in 1814–1816 and 1819, he worked chiefly in Rome from 1816 onward to about 1830, with extended voyages in Greece and Turkey in 1819. Having begun as a history painter, he became best known for his topographical landscapes. At the Paris Salon of 1824 his *Vue d'Athènes* was awarded a gold medal.

5. The point of view taken by Dupré, lower than that of Giroux' painting, suggests that he worked from a window on one of the lower floors of the Villa Medici.

Antoine-Jean Gros

1771–1835

THE SON of parents who were both painters of miniature portraits, Antoine-Jean Gros was born in Paris in 1771. At the age of fifteen he became one of the first pupils of Jacques-Louis David on the latter's return from Italy after his completion of the *Oath of the Horatii*. Though his excitable and sensitive personality and his relish for color and movement that attracted him to Rubens hardly fit the classicist mold, a close relationship developed between master and pupil. Distressed by scenes of violence that he had witnessed in the early days of the Revolution, Gros made an unsuccessful try for the Rome Prize in 1792. Fearing for his safety, David used his influence to secure him a study leave for Rome in 1793. When anti-French rioting made his stay there unsafe, he led a migratory life in northern Italy, painting portraits for a living. In 1797 he encountered Josephine Bonaparte in Genoa. Pleased with the handsome young artist, she took him to Milan to introduce him to her husband, then engaged in his victorious campaign against Austria. Gros became a member of the general's court and with Josephine's help persuaded Napoleon to sit for a portrait. The result, *Napoleon at the Battle of Arcola* (1797, versions at the Louvre and Versailles), satisfied Napoleon who appointed Gros Inspector of Parades and member of the commission stripping Italian churches and palaces of works of art. After his return to France, Gros continued to serve Bonaparte as official and

private portraitist. He won the competition for a picture commemorating the Battle of Nazareth fought by one of Napoleon's lieutenants in the Egyptian campaign. Caring little for the glorification of a subordinate, Napoleon stopped its execution and instead had Gros paint *Napoleon Visiting the Plague Hospital at Jaffa* (1804, Louvre). Representing Napoleon, radiant and invulnerable, as bringer of salvation to the horror of the pesthouse, the large canvas won a resounding success at the Salon of 1804. The most imaginative of the cohort of artists celebrating the empire's days of glory, Gros was constantly employed in painting battles and military portraits during the decade from 1804 to 1814. His *Battle of Aboukir* (1806, Versailles) and *Battle of Eylau* (1808, Louvre) established him as the preeminent poet of the battlefield. At the close of the Salon of 1808, Napoleon himself decorated Gros with the cross of the Legion of Honor. To Gericault, Delacroix, and others of the rising romantic generation, Gros came to be the most admired model, the modern antidote to academic classicism.

But after 1809 signs of lassitude appeared in his official work, beginning with his *Capitulation of Madrid* (1810) and *Napoleon at the Battle of the Pyramids* (1810) and sinking to the point of feebleness in *Meeting of Napoleon and Francis II of Austria* (1812). A last project, *The Burning of Moscow* (1812), was abandoned at the stage of compositional study.

Meanwhile a vast and uncongenial enterprise, the decoration of the dome of the Pantheon with figures from French dynastic history (1811–1815), took a toll on his energy. His painterly talent appeared undiminished only in his martial portraits of the time, notably in *General Fournier-Sarlovèze* (1812, Louvre).

The governments of the Restoration wooed Gros with titles and honors. Made a baron and appointed portrait painter to the king, the former chronicler of the heroic butchery of Napoleon's wars made the most of the ungrateful subjects assigned to him by the pacific Bourbons: scenes of flight, *Embarkation of the Duchess of Angoulême* (1819), and of retreat, *Louis XVIII Leaving the Tuileries on Napoleon's Return from Elba* (1817), achieving in the latter "un des plus beaux ouvrages modernes," in Delacroix' opinion.

When departing for exile in Brussels in 1816, David had entrusted Gros with his studio and his pupils and exhorted him to assume the leadership of the neoclassical school, then already in decline. The role did not suit Gros' talent or temperament. His spiritless attempts at classical history painting brought him scathing criticism. In poor health, unhappily married, despairing of his ability, he drowned himself in a shallow branch of the Seine at Meudon, on 25 June 1835.

Bibliography

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Lemonnier, Henry. *Gros (Les Grands Artistes)*. Paris, [1906].
Tripièr le Franc, J. *Histoire de la vie et de la mort du baron Gros*. Paris, 1880.

1963.10.154 (1818)

Dr. Vignardonne

1827

Oil on fabric, 81 × 64.3 (31⁷/₈ × 25³/₈)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *Gros*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a lightweight, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cropped, but cusp-

ing along all edges suggests the picture's original dimensions have not been altered. The ground layer is white. Infrared reflectography does not show any underdrawing. The image was broadly sketched in black-and-white monochrome on the primed fabric; the dark layers of this underlying sketch still appear in the shadow areas of the portrait. Over this preparation the image was formed by successive layers of transparent glazes, scumbles, and opaque applications, with some impasto, particularly in the areas of pure white, such as the sitter's collar and cravat. Painting changes, visible in infrared reflectograms, affecting the face were made in the course of execution; the nostrils, initially in a lower position, were raised, and corresponding changes made along the side of the nose and the contour of the cheek. The painting is in excellent condition, with inpainting confined to a few spots along the extreme bottom edge. The painting is covered with a somewhat yellowed varnish.

Provenance: Vignardonne family until 1936; Dr. Georges Viau [1855–1939]; (his estate sale, Paris, 24 February 1943, no. 121, 15,000 francs). (Julius H. Weitzner, London and New York); sold 1 October 1954 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: PetitPal, 1936, *Gros, ses amis et ses élèves*, no. 97. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

DR. VIGNARDONNE is shown at bust-length, wearing a black coat decorated with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor. His massive, balding head is framed by fringes of graying hair brushed over the temples. On his shirtfront, beneath a tall collar and carefully knotted white cravat, he has fastened a golden pin in the shape of a snake holding a diamond in its fangs: it is the serpent of Aesculapius, god of healing, and identifies its wearer as a physician.

Contemporary records¹ describe Jean Vignardonne (1780–1854) as a medical doctor who, from 1805 onward, was attached to the Bureau de Charité of the tenth arrondissement of Paris, served from 1811 as *médecin ordinaire* to the Dispensaire de Salubrité of the city of Paris, and in 1827 was appointed *médecin adjoint* to the prefecture of police. Gros' first biographer, Jean-Baptiste Delestre, the painter's former pupil and lifelong friend, wrote that Dr. Vignardonne was Gros' friend and personal physician.² The catalogue of the Gros exhibition of 1936 claims, without proof, that Vignardonne had been a "surgeon with the Napoleonic armies."³

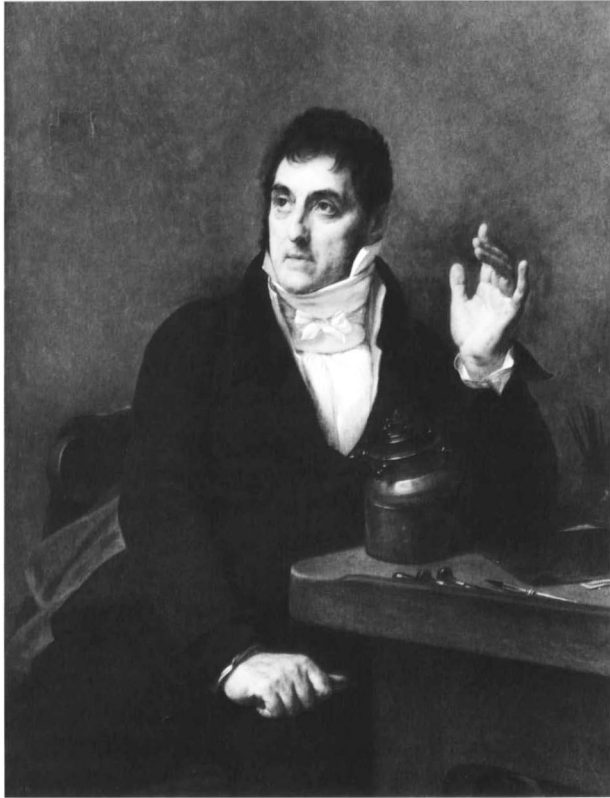


Fig. 1. Antoine-Jean Gros, *Portrait of Galle*, oil on canvas, 1822, Musée et Domaine National de Versailles et de Trianon, MV 5598, Photo RMN

The dating of the portrait to 1827, first proposed by Delestre in his monograph on Gros' life and work (1845),⁴ has since been accepted without question. It involves, however, one difficulty: the ribbon of the Legion of Honor that Vignardonne so conspicuously wears in this portrait was only awarded to him in 1831.⁵ This admits of two different possibilities—either the customary date of 1827 is wrong and the picture is to be dated after 1831, or it must be assumed that the ribbon was added in about 1831 to the otherwise completed portrait. The latter possibility seems the stronger.

By 1827 Gros had entered on the final phase of his artistic decline. The role of David's successor as leader of the neoclassical school, which he had accepted in loyalty to his exiled master, did not suit his personal temperament and talent. His spiritless attempts at grand style and noble subject matter after 1820 produced failures that depressed him, dis-

concerted his supporters, and provoked the ridicule of the rising romantic generation.⁶ What remained of his former energy and vitality mainly survived in the nonofficial portraits painted in his last decade. *Dr. Vignardonne* belongs to a series of austere likenesses of men of the middle class, begun in 1822 with the portrait of the medallist Galle (fig. 1),⁷ in which Gros' interest centered on the firmly modeled masculine physiognomies, set off by the somber plainness of costume and background. In commenting on *Dr. Vignardonne*, Delestre remarked on the care with which Gros, modifying his touch from detail to detail, expressed the solidity of the underlying bone, the elasticity of flesh, and the supple stretch of skin tissue: "It seems as if Gros had wished to show his sitter, under whose medical care he was, that the artist's brush was guided, like the surgeon's scalpel, by a knowledge of anatomy."⁸ The colorism for which Gros was famous remains restricted in this severely disciplined painting to the execution of the flesh parts, but in these Delestre recognized "the usual warmth and passion of the colorist."⁹

Notes

1. Paris, Archives Nationales, Fonds publics postérieurs à 1789, LH (Légion d'honneur) 2712/46. This includes the Procès-verbal d'individualité of Jean Vignardonne, dated 4 August 1831, indicating his appointment to the rank of *chevalier* effective 1 May 1831, to which are added a birth certificate (in the form of an extract from the registers of Beaumont in the department of the Haute Garonne, issued on 29 Brumaire An 7 [1799]), as well as *états de service* confirmed by the Paris prefecture of police and the Service de Charité, dated 4 August 1831.

2. Delestre 1845, 384.

3. Paris 1936 (see under Exhibited), 113, no. 97, which also mistakenly gives 1790 as the year of Dr. Vignardonne's birth.

4. Delestre 1845, 384–385. The second edition of Delestre's monograph, published in 1867, repeats this passage on 267 and is followed by Tripier le Franc 1880, 431.

5. See note 1 above.

6. On Gros' decline after 1820, see particularly Lemonnier, *Gros*, 1906 (see Biography), 67–88, an account by an impartial historian, hence more objective than apologias by pupils and friends such as Delestre and Tripier le Franc.

7. 126 × 98 cm; Delestre 1845, 335–338 (here erroneously dated to 1824).

8. Delestre 1845, 384.

9. Delestre 1845, 385.



Antoine-Jean Gros, *Dr. Vignardonne*, 1963.10.154

References

- 1845 Delestre: 384–385 (1867 ed.: 267, 372).
 1880 Tripier le Franc (see Biography): 431.
 1936 Escholier, Raymond. *Gros, ses amis et ses élèves*.
 Paris: 16.

- 1965a Dale: 29, repro.
 1965 NGA: 63.
 1968 NGA: 55, repro.
 1975 NGA: 164, repro.
 1984 Walker: 423, no. 604, repro.
 1985 NGA: 191, repro.

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres

1780–1867

BORN in the southern French town of Montauban, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres had early instruction from his father, an artist in the town's employ. The boy showed a precocious musical and artistic talent. Aged twelve, he was enrolled at the Academy of Toulouse, under the painter Joseph Roques, a friend of Jacques-Louis David. Still uncertain of his vocation, Ingres kept up his musical interest, supporting himself by playing the violin in the theater of Toulouse. In 1797 he left for Paris to study with David who was then at work on his *Battle of Romans and Sabines*. Disputes at the time troubled the master's teaching studio. It contained, besides docile followers, some rough bohemians (*Crassons*) at war with fellow pupils of a royalist or Catholic bent (*Muscadins*). Keeping aloof from these factions, a handful of principled dissidents aspired to an art more pure and genuinely "antique" than David's. Steeped in early literature and archaic art, in Homer, Ossian, and the Bible, they made themselves conspicuous by wearing beards and Greek costume and were known derisively as *Barbus* or *Primitifs*. Though not himself a member of this group, Ingres sympathized with them, and in his own student work affected a severe linearity that implied a reaction against his master's more moderate classicism. David nevertheless recognized his talent and used him as his assistant in the execution of the *Portrait of Madame Récamier*. Admitted to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Ingres won the Rome Prize of 1801 with *The Ambassadors of Agamemnon in the Tent of Achilles* (Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris). While a shortage of state funds delayed his departure for Italy, he lived in a community of young artists housed in a disused monastery. Medieval sculp-

tures in the Musée des Petits-Augustins, the salvage of churches pillaged during the Revolution, deepened his taste for early styles. His studies at the Louvre, where Napoleon had assembled masterworks of the early Italians and Flemings, offered him further alternatives to Davidian classicism. At the Salon of 1806 his originality as an exacting stylist was manifested in the three portraits of Philibert Rivière, Mme Rivière, and Mlle Rivière (Louvre)—intricately designed, nearly shadowless figures, formed of distinct areas of color. They were ignored by the critics, but a fourth painting, of commanding size, *Napoleon on the Imperial Throne* (Musée de l'Armée, Paris), scandalized them by its static symmetry and hard, "Gothic" artificiality.

In 1806 Ingres finally took his place among the pensioners of the French Academy in Rome. He used the four years of his stipend to immerse himself in the work of the Renaissance masters, Raphael above all, but his eyes were also open to medieval and Byzantine art. Several masterly portraits mark the early years of his Roman stay, among them those of Mme Devauçay (1807, Musée Condé, Chantilly) and of François-Marius Granet (c. 1807, Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence). Required to show proof of his progress, he submitted deeply calculated studies of the nude, finished off by the addition of narrative detail, *Oedipus and the Sphinx* and the "*Valpincón Bather*" in 1808 (both, Louvre) and *Jupiter and Thetis* in 1811 (Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence). After his stipend expired in 1810, he prolonged his stay in Rome by making portraits of its French administrators, among them that of his future patron and lifelong friend, Marcotte d'Argenteuil (1810; see pp. 279–285). He was among the painters charged with the decoration of the Quirinale Palace, chosen as

residence for Napoleon's infant son, the king of Rome. His share consisted of two large paintings, *The Dream of Ossian* (1813, Musée Ingres, Montauban), a luridly romantic subject ill-suited to his talent, and *Romulus Victorious over Acron* (1812, Louvre), executed in tempera to simulate fresco and composed as a frieze recalling works by John Flaxman (1755–1826) in its two-dimensionality. Among his Napoleonic patrons was Caroline Murat, sister of the emperor and queen of Naples, for whom he painted the *Grand Odalisque* (1814, Louvre), a woman of the harem reclining in a posture reminiscent of David's *Madame Récamier* for which Ingres had painted the accessories. The steely finish and the extravagant elongations and sinuosities of this nude troubled the reviewers of the Paris Salon, where the picture was shown in 1819. Painted for his friend Marcotte at about the same time, but in a totally different style, the National Gallery's *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* (see pp. 285–297) presents a modern scene in minute detail and with great painterly subtlety.

In 1814 the collapse of the French government in Rome deprived Ingres of patronage and reduced him to making a meager living for himself and Madeleine Chapelle, his young bride, by drawing portraits of visiting foreigners. At this juncture, the fashion for small, genrelike paintings of historical subjects came to his aid. With his gift for minute execution, he composed scenes from the lives or legends of famous men with conscientiously researched detail. His painted anecdotes—*Henry IV and the Spanish Ambassador* (1817, PetitPal), *The Death of Leonardo da Vinci* (1818, PetitPal), and others of this kind—have the bright distinctness of manuscript illuminations. To the Salon of 1819 he submitted, besides the *Odalisque* of 1814, a scene from Ariosto, *Roger Saving Angelica from the Dragon* (Louvre), which made effective use of the contrast between the golden gleam of Roger's armor and Angelica's fleshy whiteness, highlit against the lugubrious darkness of cliff and sea. The critics were hostile, but the picture was bought by the State.

In 1817 Ingres received his first major commission from the Restoration government then in the process of refurbishing churches neglected since the Revolution. It called for an altarpiece representing Christ Delivering the Keys to Saint Peter to be installed in the French church of Santa Trinita dei Monti in Rome (1820, now Musée Ingres,

Montauban) and was followed in 1820 by an even larger charge, the execution of *The Vow of Louis XIII* (completed 1824) for the cathedral of Montauban, Ingres' native city. Drawing heavily on motifs from Raphael and carried out with the help of many model studies, these projects occupied him for nearly a decade. Ingres, who had meanwhile moved to Florence, in 1824 accompanied *The Vow of Louis XIII* to Paris, where it won a resounding success at the Salon. Long accustomed to critical abuse, he now became the object of flattering attention from an art administration that, threatened by the hostility of the younger artists and the rising tide of romanticism, needed a leader strong enough to take David's place. In this emergency, Ingres seemed—despite his eccentricities—a possible defender of the traditions of great art. Awarded the Legion of Honor and elected to the academy, he was persuaded to remain in France, where he opened a teaching studio in 1825 and became David's heir as the most influential teacher of the unruly young and groomer of Rome Prize winners. He may have been unaware of the strategy that had led to his elevation and was, at any rate, ill cast in the role of academician, being of independent mind and opposed to academic routine.

Important official commissions now came his way. For a newly decorated gallery of the Louvre, he was assigned an ideologically significant subject, the Apotheosis of Homer (1827), which he conceived as an homage to classical authority and affirmation of the continuity of tradition. In two hundred drawings and more than thirty painted studies, he calculated every detail of the composition but curiously failed to consider its ultimate function as a ceiling panel. At the Salon of 1827, it appeared as the conservative counterweight to Delacroix' anarchical *Death of Sardanapalus* (Louvre). Both pictures failed to please: Ingres' work was considered a bore, Delacroix', the ravings of a lunatic.

The Revolution of 1830 found Ingres at his post as national guardsman, protecting, rifle in hand, the Italian masters at the Louvre. The liberal monarchy of Louis-Philippe gave him honors but little work. It named him president of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but the great commission that occupied him in the 1830s, the *Martyrdom of Saint Symphorian* (1826–1834) for Autun cathedral, had been given him by the previous regime. He labored over it for nearly ten years, only to find that, when

shown at the Salon of 1834, it was dismissed by the critics as outmoded in style and subject matter. Deeply angered, Ingres declared that he would never show his work in Paris again and departed for Rome to assume the directorship of the French Academy. His output during his six-year term at the Villa Medici was relatively small, culminating in two paintings, *Odalisque with Slave*, an oriental fantasy (1839, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.), and *Antiochus and Stratonice* (1840, Musée Condé, Chantilly), painted for the duc d'Orléans, the king's eldest son. A classical subject staged with minute attention to archaeological detail, this picture was shown at the Palace of the Tuileries. Its popular success enabled Ingres to make a triumphal return to France.

Much of his energy during the following decade was spent on the project of a large mural decoration on the themes of the Age of Gold and the Age of Iron for the château of the duc de Luynes at Dampierre. Begun in 1842, *Age of Gold*, which Ingres planned as an image of humanity's primeval existence in a state of ideal beauty, developed into a dreamlike congestion of nudes in an Arcadian setting. Discouraged after years of effort, he left the project unfinished in 1850 but returned to its subject in 1862, in a painting of small size (Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.). It was in several portraits of society women—*Vicomtesse d'Haussonville* (1845), *Baroness Rothschild* (1848), *Madame Moitessier* (1851; see pp. 300–310), *Princesse de Broglie* (1853), and *Madame Moitessier Seated* (1856)—that Ingres achieved the monumentality that had eluded him in work of wall-size dimensions.

His wife's death in 1849 cast him into a depression that prompted him to resign his professorship at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but his marriage in 1852, at age seventy-two, to Delphine Ramel, a relative of his friend Marcotte, revived his spirits and renewed his self-confidence. The government of Napoleon III commissioned him in 1853 to paint an *Apotheosis of Napoleon I* for a ceiling at the Hôtel de Ville (destroyed in 1871) and honored him with a grand retrospective exhibition at the Universal Exposition of 1855.

Like David, who in his old age had turned to erotic subjects, the aged Ingres showed a renewed interest in the female nude, causing him to revisit motifs from his own earlier work: *Venus Anadyomene* (1848, Musée Condé, Chantilly) completed a

composition begun in 1808; *La Source* (1856, Louvre), a boldly frontal nude, was the reworking of a canvas begun in 1820; *Turkish Bath* (Louvre), finished in 1862 after changes of format and details, comprised in its crowded composition a repertoire of his earlier nudes.

Ingres was eighty-two years old when he signed this picture. In the same year he was appointed to the French Senate. He died, after a brief illness in January 1867, aged eighty-seven and still in vigorous mental and physical health. Having all his life shown a dislike of the academy and an aversion to the Salon, he was adopted by the establishment in the latter part of his career and perversely miscast in the role of archconservative. As such he has long figured in the history of art, though his work proclaims him to have been a stylist of daring individuality, whose single-minded dedication to an ideal of beauty based on difficult harmonies of line and color, on the music of relationships, and the mathematics of form, assures him a place apart.

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1952.2.24 (1107)

Marcotte d'Argenteuil

1810

Oil on fabric, 93.7 × 69.4 (36⁷/₈ × 27¹/₄)

Samuel H. Kress Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: Ingres. pinx. Rom. 1810¹



Fig. 1. Photomicrograph of 1952.2.24, showing possible inscription change

Technical Notes: The portrait is painted on a moderate-weight fine-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cut off, but cusping along all edges indicates the painting retains its original dimensions. The support was prepared with a smooth white ground. Infrared examination revealed only a few lines of underdrawing in the chin of the sitter. The rich, semifluid paint has been brushed on smoothly, in thin, even layers, with what appear to be overlying glazes in the face and hand. Pentimenti are apparent in the contours of the hand and in the ends of the tall, stiff collar of the sitter, which at first reached higher and were of wider spread. There are two areas of repaired damage: a 5-cm complex tear affecting the sitter's left shoulder and the upper part of the lapel of his coat; and another on the lower part of that lapel, in the area of the rosette, which have been mended and inpainted. The extreme edges have also been inpainted. The paint layer is well preserved except for the darks in the hair and coat, which are abraded. The painting is covered with a varnish that has grayed slightly, diminishing the sense of depth.²

Provenance: Charles-Marie-Jean-Baptiste Marcotte d'Argenteuil [1773–1864]; his son Joseph Marcotte d'Argenteuil [1831–1893]; his wife, née Paule Aguilhon [d. 1922], by 1911;³ her daughter, Mme Elizabeth Pougin de la Maisonneuve [d. 1939]. Private collection, London. (Wildenstein & Co., New York);⁴ sold 1949 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Musée Royal des Arts, Salon of 1814, no. 535. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1867, *Catalogue des tableaux, études peintes, dessins et croquis de J.-A.-D. Ingres*, no. 440. Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, 1911, *Ingres*, no. 14. New York, Wildenstein & Co., 1951, *Wildenstein Jubilee Loan Exhibition 1901–1951: Masterpieces from Museums and Private Collections*, no. 31, repro. Louisville, J. B. Speed Art Museum; Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum, 1983–1984, *In Pursuit of Perfection: The Art of J.-A.-D. Ingres*, no. 63. Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art; Houston, Museum of Fine Arts; Seattle Art Museum; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1994–1995, *A Gift to America: Masterpieces of European Painting from the Samuel H. Kress Collection*, no. 56, repro. London, National Gallery; NGA; MMA, 1999, *Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch*, no. 26, repro.

CHARLES-Marie-Jean-Baptiste Marcotte d'Argenteuil (1773–1864), the close friend and influential patron of Ingres, is shown standing before a featureless, gray-green background, leaning with his left elbow on a table covered with a red cloth. He is dressed in a heavy blue overcoat, with cape and black velvet collar, beneath which he wears a dark brown jacket. The crimson rosette of a *commandeur* of the Legion of Honor, squashed into oval shape as if from having been forced into its buttonhole—a touch of realism—was added to the finished painting, presumably by Ingres himself, after Marcotte received that decoration in 1836.⁵ The top of a bright yellow vest frames Marcotte's white shirt, black cravat, and stiffly starched collar. His hair is ruffled, as if by a gust of wind. A bicorne with golden tassel lies on the table beside him; his little finger is adorned with a single narrow ring;⁶ from beneath his jacket hang a golden watch fob and key.

Marcotte's bust, slightly larger than life and enshrouded in heavy garments, forms a wide and massive base for the head which, placed high on the canvas, contemplates the viewer from above, contributing to the portrait's air of formality and distance. The left arm in its voluminous sleeve and that arm's fleshy, somewhat listless hand are thrust forward, creating a foreground space behind which the bust rises, emerging from its successive envelopes of overcoat, jacket, vest, and cravat to reveal at last the naked face, cradled in a collar of starched linen. Its features are given sharp relief by the light that, falling from the left, casts strong shadows along the nose and cheek. The large, wide-open eyes glance



Fig. 2. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Marcotte d'Argenteuil*, pencil, 1811, private collection



Fig. 3. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Marcotte d'Argenteuil*, pencil, 1811, Montauban, Musée Ingres, Cliché Roumagnac

rightward and seem unfocused, as if in uneasy thought. The slightly contracted brow suggests the beginning of a frown. A very small mouth beneath slightly flared nostrils, its lips turned down at the corners, gives the face an expression that commentators on the portrait have read as morose. Two pencil drawings by Ingres, dated 1811,⁷ which show the same features in different views (figs. 2 and 3), confirm by their close correspondence to the painting the severe objectivity with which Ingres regarded the strikingly individual and not conventionally attractive physiognomy of his friend. Henry Lapauze found in Ingres' interpretation of Marcotte's features the signs of a "fraternal tenderness" and something akin to self-portraiture: "The face, no doubt about it, lacks a smile. But when Ingres painted himself at the age of twenty-four he also did not show himself as smiling. There is something in the dark eyes of M. Marcotte, in the touch of sulk-

iness about his lips, in the energy of his features and in their wilful concentration that recalls the fierce young man [in Ingres' *Self-Portrait*] of Chantilly."⁸

Appointed inspector-general of forestry services for the French-occupied Italian states in 1807, Marcotte had set up administrative offices in Genoa, Parma, and Tuscany before going to Rome in 1810.⁹ He wished to have his portrait painted there, intending it as a gift for his mother, and had considered giving the commission to the history painter Merry-Joseph Blondel (1781–1853), Rome Prize laureate of 1803 and in 1810 a resident at the French Academy. But he was persuaded by another academy pensioner, Jacques-Edouard Gatteaux, a sculptor and engraver of portrait medals, who happened to be a friend of Ingres, to choose the latter instead.¹⁰ The painting of Marcotte's portrait, which seems to have been accomplished within a short time during 1810, marked the beginning of a lifelong friendship and



Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Marcotte d'Argenteuil*, 1824.2.24

26	A	1	1	1	2.48	3.
27	A	1	1	1	1.13	4.
28	A	1	1	1		

Fig. 4. Detail of page from the *Enregistrement des ouvrages, Salon de 1814*, showing Ingres' submission of *Marcotte d'Argenteuil* and *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel*, Paris, Archives des Musées Nationaux

earned Ingres his most loyal supporter.¹¹ Marcotte's patronage had a prompt effect. His recommendation of Ingres to professional colleagues and to his own relatives soon brought the elite of Rome's French society to Ingres' studio. In rapid succession, Ingres was commissioned to paint the portraits of Marcotte's brother-in-law, Edmé Bochet (1811),¹² of Bochet's sister, Mme Panckoucke (1811),¹³ and of four high officials of the French occupation government, Joseph-Antoine Moltedo (c. 1811),¹⁴ Charles-Joseph-Laurent Cordier (1811),¹⁵ Hippolyte-François Devillers (1811),¹⁶ baron de Norvins (c. 1811).¹⁷ Marcotte himself posed for two pencil portraits in 1811, and in 1812 he commissioned *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* (1814), which, by a fortunate coincidence, has also found its way into the National Gallery.

Of the several portraits painted by Ingres at this time, that of Marcotte is the most severely "Roman" in its grand simplicity. The wide sweep of the somber, weighty garments, the plainness of the background, and the imposing reserve of the sitter, armored in his many-layered costume, noticeably distinguish Marcotte from his more accessible and modish colleagues. Commenting on the portrait, Colin Eisler has drawn attention to the fact that Ingres, at the time he painted it, was preoccupied with subjects taken from the life of Raphael (1483–1520) and expressed the opinion that it is "imbued with Raphaellesque references."¹⁸ But it was rather to Bronzino (1503–1572) that Ingres seems to have looked as he searched for an attitude and sentiment appropriate to his friend's individuality.¹⁹

In commenting on Ingres' management of colors in the Marcotte portrait, Lapauze observed that the picture

is of an admirable color, despite the severe or neutral tones of its masculine costume set against a plain and somber background. The accents of white in the linen next to the face and on the edge of the cuff above the pendent hand "sing" most amazingly in harmony with the dark-toned ensemble that, to continue the musical analogy, one might characterize as the composition's *basso profundo*. The ample folds of the green [sic] overcoat covering the maroon costume with its black velvet collar and the yellow vest unite in a warm and grave harmony. There is a perfect accord between the black accent of the high cravat in the opening of the undervest and the red accent of the table cover on which lies the black *bicorn* hat with its gray-brown braid. Ingres here shows himself to be as great a colorist as in his most spectacular female portraits.²⁰

Lapauze, writing from memory, evidently misremembered the color of Marcotte's overcoat, which is unlikely to have changed from an original green into its present, decidedly blue color,²¹ and he mistakenly saw the black velvet collar as part of Marcotte's brown jacket, rather than of the overcoat to which it is in fact attached. But his observation of what Robert Rosenblum has called the picture's "vibrant pictorial richness"²² is just. It is from the subdued opulence of its colors, no less than from its tensely controlled design, that the portrait derives its peculiar expressive force. Daniel Ternois has uncovered indications in two unpublished letters sent by Ingres from Rome to Marcotte in Paris that the latter had requested permission to have a change made in the color of the costume.²³ In the first letter, written on 26 May 1814, Ingres consented to having the proposed change carried out and asked that it "follow the same folds, though

in a different color.”²⁴ In the second, dated 7 July 1814, he specified the area affected by the change—the bit of Marcotte’s trousers visible beneath his coat and between the folds of his overcoat—and suggests that “someone be asked to glaze the breeches [*culotte*] and to repaint them along the same folds.”²⁵ Examination of this small area has revealed that this glazing and repainting was in fact carried out in compliance with the wishes of Ingres’ finical patron.²⁶

In his letters to Marcotte, Ingres also gave permission to have the portrait exhibited at the forthcoming Salon.²⁷ The catalogue of the Salon of 1814 mentions,²⁸ under number 535, “Plusieurs portraits” by Ingres, without naming their subjects. But from contemporary reviews it is apparent that only one portrait was actually shown. Its mentions by the two sole critics who bothered to notice it are singularly misleading. The anonymous reviewer who signed himself “M.” (Edme Miel) spoke of it as “white, dry, and raw, in keeping with the artist’s usual system,”²⁹ while the critic Jean-Baptiste Boutard crossly advised the artist to desist from his archaizing affectations.³⁰ The identity of the exhibited portrait therefore remained in doubt until Daniel Ternois, on checking the register of Salon submissions for 1814 at the Archives du Louvre (fig. 4), found positive proof that it was that of M. Marcotte d’Argenteuil.³¹

Notes

1. Members of the NGA Painting Conservation department believe that the photomicrograph (fig. 1) shows an earlier date of “1809” under the “1810” date. Eitner has pointed out that such a reading conflicts with the known historical evidence. See NGA curatorial files for further information.

2. The rosette on the lapel was added at a later date no earlier than 1836. For more information on the rosette, see note 5 below.

3. Lapauze 1911, 95.

4. Wildenstein & Co. letter, dated 12 January 1961, in NGA curatorial files.

5. The rosette identifies the wearer as holding the superior rank of *officier* of the Legion of Honor, whereas the ribbon is the mark of the lower rank, that of *chevalier*. It is not certain that Marcotte had been received into the Legion by 1810. The two pencil portraits of 1811 (see note 7 below) show him with neither ribbon nor rosette. In a third portrait, dated 1828 (Mme Laporte collection, Paris), he wears the ribbon of a *chevalier*, and it is in this rank that he is still list-

ed in Charles Gabet’s *Dictionnaire des artistes de l’école française* (Paris, 1831, 364). Marcotte’s obituary notice, published in the *Revue des eaux et forêts* (1864: 103), mentions that he was only awarded the cross of *commandeur* by King Louis-Philippe in 1836, on the occasion of his retirement from the administration of forestry services. It thus appears that the rosette was added to the portrait no earlier than 1836. Such later insertions were evidently not unusual in Ingres’ portrait practice. His *Portrait of Cordier* (Louvre), painted in 1811, shows the sitter wearing the ribbon of the Legion that was awarded to him only in 1841 (Hélène Toussaint, *Les Portraits d’Ingres, peintures des musées nationaux* [Paris, 1985], 50).

6. Eisler 1977, 365, describes this as a “mourning ring.”

7. A tracing, by Ingres, of one of these drawings is in the Musée Ingres, Montauban (Naef 1958, 339, fig. 12).

8. Lapauze 1911, 107–108.

9. Marcotte’s life and career are described by M. Vicaire in his funeral oration, delivered at Marcotte’s grave in the cemetery of Père Lachaise in 1864 and published as “Obsèques de M. Marcotte, ancien directeur général de l’administration des forêts,” in *Revue des eaux et forêts* (1867): 100–105 (for excerpts from this text, see Naef 1958, 340–342).

10. Ingres himself catalogued this painting among his Roman works in the manuscript lists contained in two notebooks, Cahier IX, at the Musée de Montauban, and Cahier X, Wildenstein collection, New York (see Lapauze 1901, 235ff., and Vigne 1995, 327 and 331). The story of the commission is told, with minor variations, by Blanc 1870, 33–34; Delaborde 1870, 254–255; and Lapauze 1911, 106.

11. Marcotte subsequently commissioned Ingres’ *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* (1814; see pp. 285–296), a watercolor of the Borghese Chapel (1824, location unknown), and *Odalisque with Slave* (1839, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.). On the long relationship between Ingres, Marcotte, and Marcotte’s extended family, documented by a series of pencil portraits, see Naef 1958, 336–345.

12. Louvre, RF 194; Wildenstein 1956, no. 76, repro.

13. Louvre, RF 1942-25; Wildenstein 1956, no. 77, repro.

14. MMA, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, 29.100.23; Wildenstein 1956, no. 71, repro.

15. Louvre, RF 477; Wildenstein 1956, no. 78, repro.

16. Emil Bührle collection, Zurich; Wildenstein 1956, no. 79, repro.

17. National Gallery, London, 3291; Wildenstein 1956, no. 81.

18. Eisler 1977, 365–366: “His model’s physiognomy recalls that of Ingres’ copy of the Raphael *Self-Portrait* (Florence, Uffizi) and even slightly that of Ingres himself. Marcotte’s expression and the relationship between figure and space bring to mind Raphael’s portraits such as *The Cardinal* (Madrid, Prado). The treatment of Marcotte’s hand recalls those of the Renaissance master’s *Angelo Doni* (Florence, Palazzo Pit-

ti) and *Tommaso Inghirami* (Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum)."

19. Among the paintings by Bronzino that were accessible to Ingres in Rome was *Portrait of a Young Man*, MMA. Owned by Lucien Bonaparte who was among Ingres' Roman patrons, the picture was formerly attributed to Sebastiano del Piombo. A reproductive engraving, included in Fontana's *Choix de gravures... d'après les peintures... de la galerie de Lucien Bonaparte* (London, [1812]), attests to its visibility and high reputation at the time. Ingres later used the pose of Bronzino's *Young Man* for his *Portrait of Lorenzo Bartolini* of 1820 (Louvre, RF 1942-24; Wildenstein 1956, no. 142; see also Toussaint 1985, 62).

20. Lapauze 1911, 106-107.

21. It is possible that yellowed varnishes at the time did make Marcotte's blue coat appear to be green.

22. Rosenblum 1967, 82.

23. Professor Daniel Ternois generously communicated his discoveries to the NGA in letters of 15 November 1995 and 26 February 1996 (in NGA curatorial files).

24. The text of Ingres' letter, brought to my attention by the kindness of Daniel Ternois, refers to Marcotte's wish to enter the portrait in the forthcoming Salon of 1814 and to his request to be allowed to have a change made in a part of the sitter's costume: "Vous voulés y mettre votre portrait, tant mieux. Je vous autorise bien à y faire le changement progetté, il n'y a qu'à suivre les mêmes plis, mais d'une autre couleur." (The original letter is preserved at the Fondation Custodia, Paris, inv. 1984-A. 3; Ternois 1999, 60).

25. "Vous y mettrés votre portrait, et priés quelqu'un de glacer la culotte et de la repeindre sur les mêmes plis" (Fondation Custodia, Paris, inv. 1984-A. 4; Ternois 1999, 62-64).

26. An examination of the area in the painting affected by the change authorized by Ingres, undertaken by the NGA's Painting Conservation Department (Geraldine van Heemstra), revealed that the original color of the visible portion of Marcotte's breeches was a light warm brown. Over this, a dark brown glaze was applied, presumably in the course of the color change requested by Marcotte. Age cracks corresponding to those of the original painting surface run through this glaze, indicating its early date. But abrasions in this old glaze apparently prompted a further overpainting with dark brown paint as part of a more recent restoration treatment. (Report dated 20 March 1996 in NGA curatorial files.)

27. See notes 24 and 25 above.

28. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure des artistes vivans exposés au Musée Royal des Arts* (Paris, 1814), 52, no. 535.

29. Miel 1815.

30. Boutard 1814.

31. Letter, 26 February 1996, in NGA curatorial files. The "Registre d'inscription des productions des artistes vivants présentées à l'Exposition, Salon 1814," in the Archives du Musée du Louvre, notes Marcotte's submission of the portrait under number 27 (of 660

submissions) as "1 tableau Portrait de Mr. Marcott [*sic*]" (fig. 4).

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1952.2.23 (1106)

Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel

1814

Oil on fabric, 74.5 × 92.7 (29³/₈ × 36¹/₂)

Samuel H. Kress Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: Ingres 1810 Rom (the last digit of the date, which originally read 1814, was erased and falsely restored sometime before 1921 as 1810).¹

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a single piece of fine, plain-weave fabric backed by a lining fabric. It shows some damage: two small holes near the bottom of the copy of the *Last Judgment* in the background, two somewhat larger holes at the painting's bottom right corner, and two long vertical tears at the upper left. All tacking margins have been trimmed, but cusping along the top and bottom edges indicates that the vertical dimensions of the original fabric have been preserved. The ground appears to be white, overlaid with a yellow imprimatura on which the design has been drawn with pencil. Visible in infrared reflectography, the underdrawing of the figural composition consists of freely sketched contours, toned with ink washes, while details of the architectural setting have been drawn with the aid of a straight edge. The paint is applied thinly, raising no perceptible impasto. Some position changes are evident in the double row of figures that flanks the papal throne. Thus among the dark-robed train bearers who stand in front of the cardinals at the painting's left, the head of the third (counting from the left), shown in the finished painting in three-quarter view facing leftward, in the underdrawing appears in pure profile turned to the right.² The painting is covered with a slightly yellowed varnish.

Extensive reworking, carried out after the initial completion of the composition, has drastically altered

the painting's entire lower portion.³ In the course of this reworking, the artist painted the thirteen figures that now fill the immediate foreground over the previously finished partition behind them. At the same time he added the green cloth that now covers this partition, originally shown as a paneled wooden structure, and painted the red pattern over the originally green carpet on the steps of the throne. X-radiography reveals changes in the figure groups near the altar at the picture's lower right, where the officiating priest and acolytes were painted over the already completed altar base behind them. The area at the painting's lower right corner, which contains the signature and date, was extensively restored at some later period, obliterating whatever inscriptions it may have contained earlier. The present date inscription, which has been variously read as 1810 or 1819, is spurious,⁴ the product of a faulty restoration in 1921.⁵

Provenance: Charles-Marie-Jean-Baptiste Marcotte d'Argenteuil [1773–1864]; his daughter, Mme Alexandre Legentil, née Marie Marcotte [1828–1920]; her niece, Mme Marcel Pougin de la Maisonneuve, née Marcotte [d. 1939]. (Wildenstein & Co., New York), 1940–1949; sold 1949 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Musée Royal des Arts, Salon of 1814, no. 534. Paris, Galerie des Beaux-Arts, boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, 1846, *Exposition au profit de l'Association des Artistes*, no. 43. Paris, Palais des Beaux-Arts, 1855, Universal Exposition, no. 3341. Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1867, *Tableaux, études peintes, dessins et croquis de J.-A.-D. Ingres*, no. 73. Paris, Association Franco-Américaine, 1921, *Exposition Ingres*, no. 19, repro. New York, Wildenstein & Co., 1951, *Wildenstein Jubilee Loan Exhibition 1901–1951: Masterpieces from Museums and Private Collections*, no. 30, repro.

POPE PIUS VII (Chiaromonti, 1742–1823) is shown standing in prayer at his throne in the Sistine Chapel during the celebration of a Mass on the morning of Holy Thursday.⁶ The view opens on the northwestern corner of the chapel. On the wall at the left, above the canopy of the papal throne, appear three of the frescoes of the Moses cycle (from left to right): Cosimo Roselli's *Crossing of the Red Sea*, Botticelli's *Scenes from the Early Life of Moses*, and *Moses with Zipporah in Egypt* by Perugino and Pinturicchio; farther to the right, at the side of the altar, a portion of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* comes into view. The morning sun, falling on the scene from above, bathes the papal throne in its warm light. Pius VII, attired in a

white, gold-embroidered cope, is attended by his court of cardinals. The Cardinals Doria and Albani stand at his left, flanking a prelate who holds the pontiff's miter; on the pope's right stand the secretary of state, Cardinal Consalvi, and, on a step below, the Roman senator Rezzonico wearing a black satin robe. Seven cardinals, in red copes with white fur capes, stand along the wall to the left of the papal throne. The *cameriere apostolico*, Cardinal Valentino Mastrozzi, stands nearest the throne, followed by the Cardinals Mattei, Vincenti, Gabrielli, di Pietro, Pacca, and del Porto.⁷ Their train bearers (*caudatores*) stand before them, dressed in violet robes; in the fourth (counting from the throne) Ingres has represented himself.⁸ Below them, a latecoming cardinal genuflects toward the altar. Along the wall on the farther side of the pope stand bishops and other dignitaries of the Holy See. Near the altar, the pope's golden cross staff leans against the wall. Monsignor Mattei,

wearing a violet cope, officiates at the altar on the right. Below the altar, facing into the chapel, appear the heads of several of the prelates of the papal judiciary, the Rota. Confronting the pope, at the far right, sit two additional cardinals.⁹ A partition covered in green baize forms an enclosure around all these figures. On its near side, in the immediate foreground, thirteen figures are shown in half-length. They include a Swiss guard with halberd and two ushers who admit members of various monastic orders—among them two Franciscans, a Carmelite, and a Dominican—to the corridor formed by the partition and the chapel's south wall opposite the papal throne.

Ingres had witnessed the ceremonies of Holy Week in the Sistine Chapel shortly after his arrival in Rome in 1807 and described his emotions in a letter to the family of his betrothed in France:

The chapel is embellished by the *Last Judgment*, Michelangelo's sublime masterpiece; he also painted the ceiling. The rest of the chapel is covered with beautiful paintings by Perugino and other great masters of the Renaissance. There is nothing more impressive than all the ceremonies presided over by the pope, that good and venerable man, and all the cardinals. I cannot begin to tell you how beautiful it is, simple and rich at the same time.¹⁰

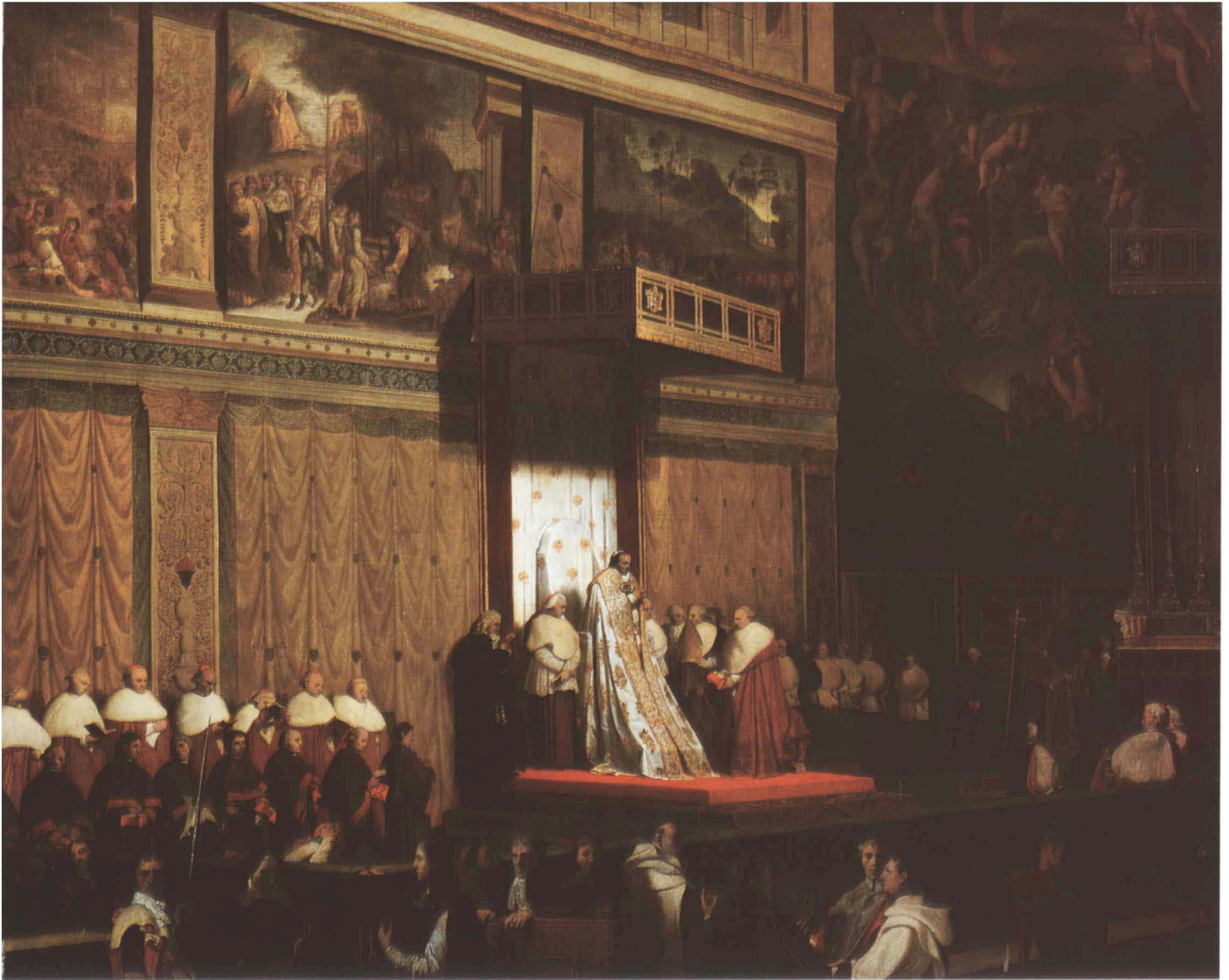
Nothing as yet suggests that Ingres was then planning to paint the scene in the Sistine Chapel that had so deeply moved him. But a year later, in 1808, he painted a watercolor (now lost) of the pope, seen in back view, praying at the altar in Saint Peter's,¹¹ and in 1809 he painted another, now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, Besançon (fig. 1), showing the pope at prayer before the throne in the Sistine Chapel, flanked by two cardinals and guarded by a halberdier, in an arrangement that anticipates the main group in the National Gallery's painting.¹²

Sometime prior to his friend Charles Marcotte's departure from Rome, in 1812, Ingres made a finished drawing of the interior of the Sistine Chapel (now lost).¹³ It was this drawing that prompted Marcotte to commission him to paint a view of the chapel in its most solemn function, a Mass assisted by the pope.

At about this time Ingres drew yet another watercolor (fig. 2),¹⁴ now in a private collection, which offers a larger view of the chapel and includes the canopied papal throne. This careful

Fig. 1. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Pope Pius at Prayer in the Sistine Chapel*, watercolor and pencil, 1809, Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, D 3322, photograph Ch. Choffet, Besançon





Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel*, 1818

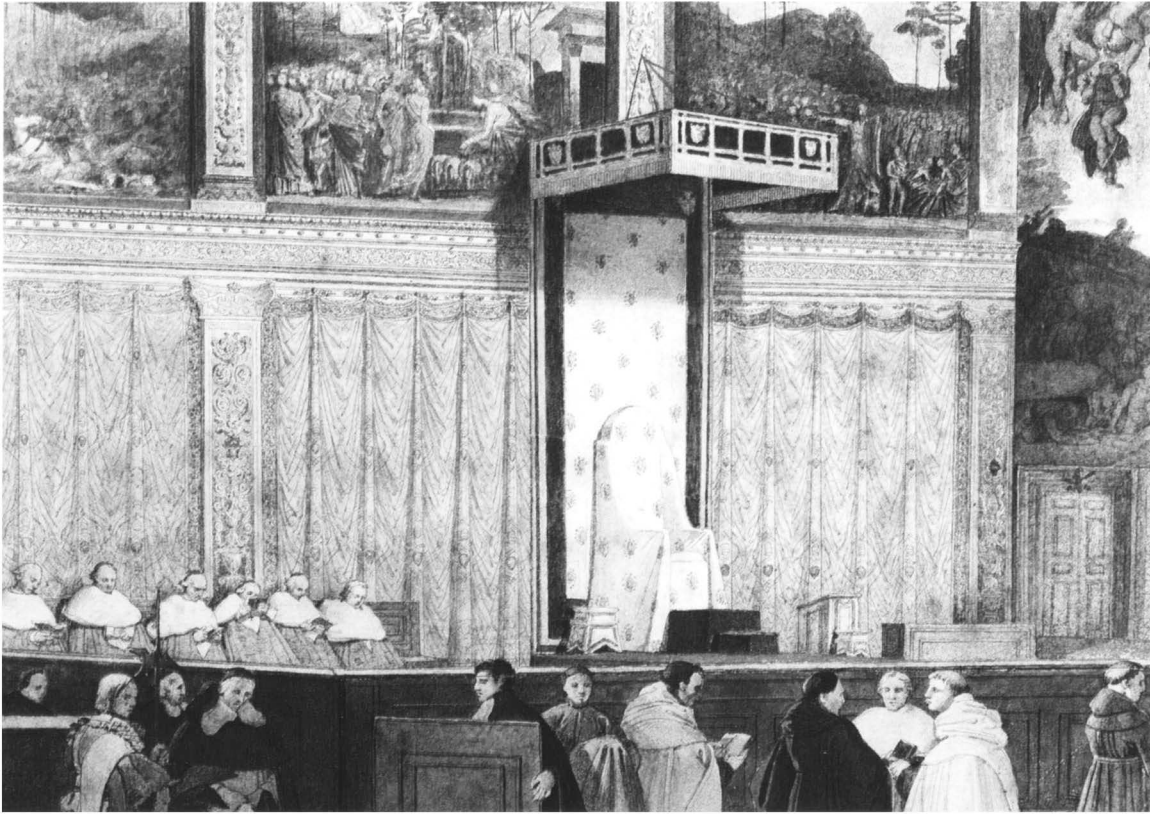


Fig. 2. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel*, watercolor over graphite pencil, 1812–1813, private collection

preparatory study establishes the setting of his projected painting. The frescoes above and to the right of the throne are rendered in minute detail, as are the painted decorations of the wall before which the throne stands. At the left, the cardinals, seated in a row, rather than standing, are otherwise shown much as they appear in the painting. But the throne is empty, the figures that attend the pope are missing, and so are all those that occupy the far right side of the composition in the finished painting, perhaps reflecting Ingres' initial uncertainty about the proper treatment of a subject that was of some political delicacy at the time. Equally unresolved is the spatial composition of the scene. The point of view, much lower than it was to be in the final painting, causes the middle distance to appear drastically foreshortened. The barrier that closes off the foreground conceals the area below the throne and allows no room for the train bearers and other figures that Ingres brought into visibility in the painting by raising its point of vantage. The watercolor's suppression of the mid-distance causes the figure groups in its immediate foreground to assume a perhaps dispro-

portionate prominence, which may have been the reason why Ingres initially did not include them in his painting.

On 20 December 1812 he wrote to Marcotte, who was then in Germany, to tell him that he planned to draw the outline of his composition on the canvas within the fortnight.¹⁵ But he was not yet sure of how to show the chief personage of his picture. Three years earlier, in July 1809, Pius had been brutally taken from Rome by the French occupation forces, because he had opposed Napoleon's annexation of the Papal States. When Ingres planned his painting, the pope was a prisoner in Fontainebleau. To represent this victim of Napoleonic aggression in a picture destined for a high official of the empire was to touch on a painfully sensitive issue. Ingres left the decision of how the pope was to be shown to Marcotte, and suggested that, if difficulties should arise on this score, he could represent the chanting of the *Miserere*, during which the pope lies prostrate before the altar, his face invisible.¹⁶ "It is apparent," Marcotte later wrote, "that Ingres hesitated to put [Pius VII] into the picture, for fear of offending

the emperor; but I had no such hesitation, and I did well.”¹⁷

Ingres was at work on the canvas throughout 1813, interrupted temporarily by a serious illness.¹⁸ Payments received from Marcotte’s agent, Devil-liers, and from Marcotte himself supported him during this time. At a fairly late stage in the execution, he decided to narrow the width of the composition by trimming a strip of fabric, some ten centimeters wide, from the left side of the canvas (fig. 3).¹⁹ The picture was completed and sent to Paris sometime before 26 May 1814, on which day Ingres wrote to Marcotte, now back in Paris, of his wishes concerning its exhibition at the forthcoming Salon.²⁰

Momentous events had meanwhile occurred, overturning the political order of Europe and, incidentally, changing the significance of Ingres’ painting. The collapse of the empire and Napoleon’s abdication, on 11 April, were shortly followed by the pope’s return to Rome on 24 May. In his confident assumption that a regular Salon would nevertheless be held later in the year, Ingres showed himself to be naïvely oblivious of the unsettled state of France. Allied armies occupied Paris. The throne of the restored Bourbons stood shakily on the ruins of the empire, and the regular functions of government, including those affecting the arts, remained in a state of suspense. Amid the general disorder, no provisions were made for a Salon, and it was generally taken for granted that no exhibition would be held. But in a belated effort to demonstrate a return to normalcy, the royal government surprised the public in mid-September with the announcement that the exhibition would proceed as in times of peace.²¹ At the Salon that opened on 1 November 1814, Ingres’ picture figured as number 534: *Le pape Pie VII tenant chapelle. La scène se passe dans la chapelle Sixtine à Rome.*²² Its subject, which would have attracted the attention of the censors in Napoleon’s reign, had turned unexpectedly into an ideological asset in the churchly climate of the Restoration. Ingres on this occasion met with a mixed reception from the Salon reviewers, one of whom rated him, with fatuous condescension, as an artist “capable of developing into an agreeable genre painter.”²³

But Ingres saw himself as a history painter and wanted his picture—which he hoped would “cause some noise at the Salon”²⁴—to demonstrate to “messieurs les genristes” that a history painter

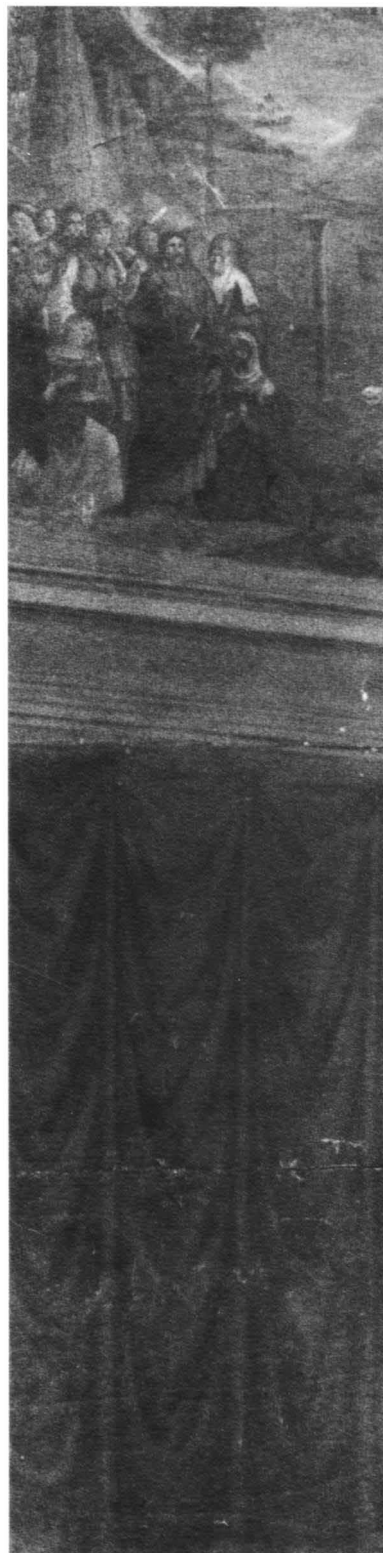


Fig. 3. Detached fragment of canvas from Ingres’ *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel*, oil on fabric, c. 1813–1814, Montauban, Musée Ingres, photograph by Roumagnac



Fig. 4. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study of Cardinal Valentino Mastrozzi*, pencil on paper, c. 1809, Montauban, Musée Ingres, MI 867.1299, photograph by Roumagnac

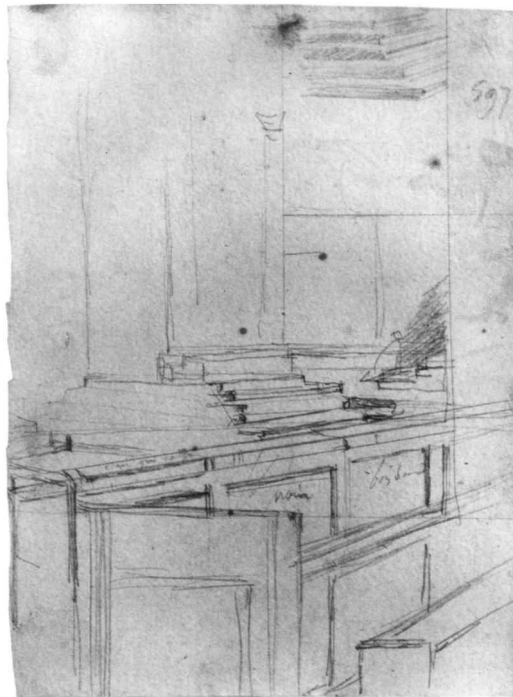


Fig. 5. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study of the Dais in the Sistine Chapel*, pencil on paper, c. 1813–1814, Montauban, Musée Ingres, MI 867.1274, photograph by Roumagnac

could surpass them in their own field. Despite its moderate size and lack of a specific narrative, *Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* is, in fact, a modern history painting in the lineage of David's *Coronation of Josephine* (Louvre).²⁵ As a subject taken from modern reality it has an exceptional place in Ingres' work. Théophile Gautier admired it as a "history painting of the highest style,"²⁶ while other critics, down to the present, have emphasized what seemed to them its eyewitness truth,²⁷ some going so far as to compare its visual immediacy with the effect of impressionist painting.²⁸ It is important to remember, however, that the scene in the Sistine Chapel was taken from memory: when Ingres composed it, the pope had been absent from Rome for nearly four years, some of the cardinals were in exile, others had died. Ingres himself insisted on the reminiscent character of the picture and did not wish to have it seen as the literal record of a particular event.²⁹ Anxious not to raise false expectations, he asked that it be exhibited at the Salon under the rather general title of *Vue intérieure de la Chapelle Sixtine. Le pape Pie VII y tient chapelle*.³⁰ A passionate factuality nevertheless informs his observation of the ceremonial, precise in every detail

of ecclesiastical costume and ritual, down to the nuances of bearing and gesture that differentiate the various ranks of the papal court: it is a realism that reaches beyond the purely visual appearance to the significance of things.

When shown at the Salon of 1814, the picture still lacked the groups of figures that now fill its foreground. Ingres added them to the completed painting only some thirteen or fourteen years later. The addition was first described in an article that appeared in 1834 to mark the publication of a full-scale lithographic copy of the painting, the work of Jean-Pierre Sudre (1783–1866): "M. Ingres, some months ago, added these figures to his painting in order to fill the empty space below the dais.... He composed these new groups for M. Sudre's lithograph."³¹ Finished in 1833, the lithograph, according to Sudre, had occupied him for five years, which suggests that he had begun his work in 1828 and that Ingres had completed his alterations shortly before. His addition of the foreground figures was thereafter often commented on by critics.³²

Instead of inventing new figure groups for this revision, Ingres reverted to the watercolor (see fig.

2) that he had drawn, and rejected, before starting the painting in 1813–1814. The frieze of figures that he now introduced into the space in front of the barrier beneath the papal throne substantially corresponds to the composition of the watercolor, while increasing the number of the figures from eleven to thirteen and varying their positions and gestures.

The painting as it now exists thus resulted from a process that occupied about twenty years, reason enough not to regard it as a work of immediate visual realism. The beginnings of this lengthy gestation are documented by some fifty separate pencil studies, taken from the small, hand-held sketchbooks that Ingres used when attending ceremonies in the chapel. They record his study of the faces and postures of individual prelates (fig. 4) and ex-

plore the chapel's interior from the angle of view that he chose for his picture (fig. 5).³³ Some of these sketches can be shown to date from as early as 1809.³⁴ Not all of them were used for the painting in the National Gallery; a good many served for a later variant of the subject (fig. 6), painted in 1819–1820 and now in the Louvre;³⁵ a few left no trace in either version. It was with the help of a multitude of visual documents such as these that Ingres put together his composition in the studio,³⁶ supplying from memory the striking effect of morning light and the sense of atmospheric interior space³⁷ that give his picture its vivid suggestion of experienced reality.

These qualities, ignored by the critics who saw the picture in 1814, may have been better appreciated at its second public showing in 1846 at the

Fig. 6.
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres,
Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel,
oil on canvas, 1820, Paris,
Musée du Louvre, RF 360,
Photo RMN



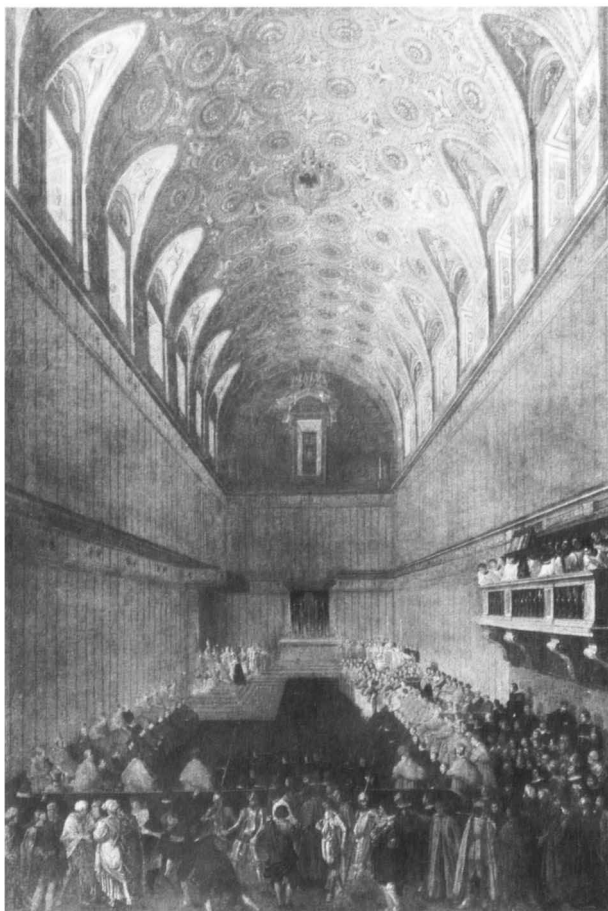


Fig. 7. Agostino Tassi, *Investiture of Taddeo Barberini as Prefect of Rome by Urban VIII in the Cappella Paolina of the Quirinale*, oil on canvas, 1631–1633, Rome, Museo di Roma e Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna

boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle³⁸ but were fully recognized only when it was included in the large retrospective of Ingres' work at the Universal Exposition of 1855, where both versions of *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* were on view.³⁹ Théophile Gautier marveled at "the power of illusion that this great artist has achieved in these two canvases: it seems nature itself, its form and color," but added, by way of slight retraction, "plus the style and that certain something a great master puts, like an indelible signature, on the things he copies."⁴⁰ Maxime du Camp also stressed the exceptional realism of the paintings and expressed the belief that, for once, Ingres had realized a purely personal vision: "When M. Ingres composed and painted these two pictures, he did not have in mind the faded grays of the Vatican frescoes, nor did he

think of the *Madonna of Foligno*; putting aside his memories of the Renaissance, he painted with conviction, free from retrospective concern, what he actually saw."⁴¹

But Ingres in fact also drew on traditional sources in composing his picture, as Daniel Ter-nois has pointed out.⁴² Agostino Tassi's *Investiture of Taddeo Barberini as Prefect of Rome by Pope Urban VIII in the Cappella Paolina of the Quirinale* (fig. 7), painted in 1631–1633,⁴³ certainly had a direct influence on his arrangement of the scene. Ingres proved his interest in this picture by making a full-scale tracing of it that is preserved in the Musée Ingres in Montauban.⁴⁴ The setting of Tassi's *Investiture of Taddeo Barberini* is the interior of the Pauline Chapel in the Quirinale Palace, which closely resembles the Vatican's Sistine Chapel. His view of the lofty interior, taken from the entrance, leads in deep perspectival recession, along its central axis, toward the altar in the distance. The pope's canopied throne, flanked by a line of cardinals, is set against the wall on the left. A partition separates the rows of seated prelates from the animated figures in the immediate foreground. Ingres included nearly all these features in his picture, but he took his stand much closer to the papal throne and directed his view obliquely toward the corner formed by the convergence of the altar wall and the wall behind the throne. Within this limited and fairly shallow space, his figures are proportionately larger, nearer, and fewer than those in Tassi's crowded panorama: his presentation of the scene, more intimate and, in its oblique view, more "natural," has the focused concentration of a group portrait. Other influences have occasionally been suggested, most frequently that of the Venetian colorists, and specifically of Titian.⁴⁵ Colin Eisler has suggested that Ingres may have "utilized the perspectival treatment found in manuscripts by [the fifteenth-century French painter] Jean Fouquet," a possibility that seems fairly remote.⁴⁶

In attempting to interpret the meaning of *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* it is important to remember the circumstances under which it was painted. In 1812 its subject would necessarily have been understood as a scene from the past, before Napoleon's destruction of the Papal States and the expulsion and imprisonment of the pope. There was no assurance at that time, and perhaps little expectation, that a pope would ever again officiate

in the Sistine Chapel. Thus it would be wrong to think of the painting as merely a picturesque subject from modern religious life: when Ingres began it, encouraged by Marcotte, it held poignant meanings that are forgotten today. By the time it was exhibited to the Parisian public, after Napoleon's fall, its significance had already changed; the pope was back in Rome and the chapel had returned to its normal function. It is evident from the exchange of letters between Ingres and Marcotte in 1812 that both were aware of the picture's larger implications,⁴⁷ and one may wonder what motivated Marcotte, a prominent agent of the French government, when he asked Ingres to carry out a project that was bound to offend the authorities. It is not impossible that he disapproved of the emperor's policy with regard to the Church.⁴⁸ Ingres himself, who called Pius VII "that good and venerable man," may not have been indifferent in the matter, as his subsequent record as a painter of religious pictures and holder of important ecclesiastical commissions suggests. That in this painting he surrounded the papal ceremony with reminders of the glories of Renaissance art that earlier pontiffs had sponsored, including, significantly, the *Last Judgment*, may indicate his partisanship, and perhaps a judgment of Napoleon as despoiler of the temple, a latter-day Heliodorus.

Notes

1. According to Brière 1921, 214, the half-erased last digit of the date was "restored" in 1921 to make the date inscription read 1810, in keeping with the (erroneous) description of the picture in the catalogue of the Ingres exhibition at the Paris Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1867 (no. 73). Jamot 1922, 192–195, pointed out the error of the dating, and hence of the altered inscription.

2. Examination report, 1 May 1991, by Catherine A. Metzger, Painting Conservation Department, in NGA curatorial files.

3. Catherine A. Metzger, in letter dated 22 April 1997, in NGA curatorial files.

4. Catherine A. Metzger, in letter dated 22 April 1997, in NGA curatorial files.

5. See note 1 above.

6. Holy Thursday is the day specified in the detailed description of the painting, edited by Ingres himself, that was published in 1834 as a prospectus for its lithographic reproduction by Jean-Pierre Sudre; see Lapauze 1911, 134.

7. The initial identification of the principal figures in the picture is contained in a letter of 26 May 1814 from Ingres to Marcotte, who had by this time received

the picture in Paris and had evidently sought the expert advice of a canon concerning the ceremony represented (Delaborde 1870, 186–188). Ingres' letter is in answer to questions put to him by Marcotte. It is apparent that his recollection of the names of particular cardinals was incomplete and in some cases wrong. He listed the cardinals on the near side of the pope, from right to left, as 1) "Valenti, mort" (an error, as Arikha 1986, 31, has pointed out; the correct name is Valentino Mastrozzi), 2) Mattei, 3) and 4) their names not recalled, 5) di Pietro, 6) Pacca (who had in 1809 replaced Consalvi as papal secretary of state and would thereafter have been seated immediately next to the pope; the fact that he is not shown in that position in this painting of 1814 indicates that it must represent a scene remembered from 1809 or earlier), 7) "del Porto, mort." The cardinals on the papal dais are identified as Consalvi (left) and Doria. Of the latter, Ingres had made no sketch, for which reason he may have half-hidden him behind the pope's throne. The cardinal "assisting the pope"—evidently the figure that stands facing the pontiff, book in hand—was, he thought, possibly an Albani. But since the pope had recently returned to Rome, Ingres believed that he would be able to send Marcotte more complete information in time. This he had evidently done by the time Sudre's lithograph was published in 1834 (see note 6 above). In the description that accompanied the prospectus for this print (Lapauze 1911, 134–138), additional names were supplied, among them that of Senator Rezzonico, who stands on the steps of the papal throne, and those of the third and fourth cardinals to the left of the pope—Vicenti and Gabrielli. The name of the first cardinal in that line was still wrongly given as "Valenti Gonzalgue" and that of the seventh omitted. The two cardinals seated opposite the throne were identified as Erskine and Albani, and the priest officiating at the altar as Monsignor Mattei.

8. In his letter to Marcotte of 26 May 1814 Ingres wrote: "Pour les caudataires [i.e., train bearers], je n'y reconnais que moi. A la vérité, je ne me suis pas regardé à la glace, mais vous m'avez reconnu, c'est bien assez" (Delaborde 1870, 187).

9. Identified in the Sudre prospectus as Erskine and Albani (see note 7 above).

10. The whole of this letter, addressed to the father of Ingres' fiancée, Julie Forestier, is published by Lapauze 1910, 142.

11. Delaborde 1870, 282, no. 219.

12. 18.1 × 22.5 cm, inv. D. 3322, given by Ingres to the former interim director of the French Academy in Rome, Pierre Adrien Paris. (M. L. Cornillot, *Inventaire général des dessins des Musées de France, Collection Pierre-Adrien Paris, Besançon I* [Paris, 1957], no. 91; and Eisler 1977, 367, text fig. 119.)

13. Reported by Lapauze 1911, 128.

14. 18.2 × 25.4 cm.

15. Ingres' letter was published, with the wrong date ("20 December 1814") and in a partly defective transcription, by Delaborde 1870, 186; Lapauze 1911, 128

and 130, gives the correct date and a corrected version of parts of the text.

16. Letter to Marcotte, 20 December 1812; see Delaborde 1870, 186, and Lapauze 1911, 130.

17. Delaborde 1870, 186 note 1.

18. According to Delaborde 1870, 185, the work was begun "in the first days of 1813." Lapauze 1911, 130–132, mentions Ingres' serious illness of that year.

19. Preserved at the Musée Ingres, Montauban, among other remains from Ingres' studio, the severed fragment, a strip about 44 cm long, includes, at the top, most of the left half of Cosimo Roselli's *Crossing of the Red Sea* and, below, three panes of the frescoed feigned draperies from the lower portion of the wall behind the papal throne. The fragment's right edge fits the corresponding part of the painting's upper left edge. It is cut, at the bottom, just above the level of the heads of the cardinals standing beside the throne (Georges Vigne, "150 Ans plus tard: Un Fonds constant, le fonds inédit d'Ingres," *Actes du Colloque International*, 1–3 Octobre 1993, Musée Ingres [Montauban, 1993], 67, fig. 7).

The register of paintings submitted to the Salon of 1814 (see p. 282, fig. 4) gives the dimensions of "Le Pape sur son trône dans la chapelle Sixtine" as "hauteur 1.19" and "largeur 1," presumably including the frame, which would suggest a vertical format unlike the present horizontal one of 72 × 92.7 cm. It is known that Ingres altered the composition of the picture after its exhibition at the Salon by adding the row of figures that now fills its foreground. But this compositional enlargement, made in about 1828, can hardly have transformed an originally vertical canvas into the present horizontal one. The only (fairly slight) change of dimensions the canvas is known to have undergone, either before or after its exhibition in 1814, was Ingres' trimming of a strip some 5 cm wide from its left edge (see fig. 3), which, however, did not radically alter its shape. It is possible that the register of Ingres' submissions mis-measured the *Chapelle Sixtine*, and it may be significant that the day's further entries, by Ingres and other painters, are listed in the "Enregistrement" without measurements.

20. Delaborde 1870, 186–187. Ingres in this letter mentions that he has not received a letter from Girodet in which the latter evidently spoke of his painting. He also expresses the wish that Gérard see the picture, since he highly values his opinion. He does not want David to be notified—it will be sufficient if he sees the picture at the exhibition. "The main thing is that you are satisfied. After that, we'll see what sort of crowd there will be at the Salon." In another letter, without date, published by Delaborde 1870, 188, Ingres wrote to Marcotte sometime before the opening of the Salon: "I always have great pleasure working for you, in preference to all others. I am charmed that our *Chapel* is holding its own and continues to please you: I confess that if it were to please at the Salon, I should be perfectly happy." As early as 18 July 1813 Ingres had written to Marcotte of his intention of sending no fewer than six paintings, including *Pius VII*, to the forth-

coming Salon, then still under imperial auspices (Delaborde 1870, 333–334).

21. At the suggestion of the director of the Louvre (formerly Musée Napoléon, then Musée Royal des Arts), Vivant Denon, the duc de Blacas, Minister of the Royal Household, authorized Denon on 9 July 1814 to proceed with preparations for a Salon. The public announcement that a Salon would be held was made only on 16 September, through a notice in the official *Moniteur universel*, 1042.

22. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, et gravure des artistes vivans. Exposées au Musée Royal des Arts le 1^{er} Novembre 1814* (Paris, 1814), 52, no. 534.

23. Apparently pleased by what he considered the success of his picture at the Salon, where he had always been badly treated in the past, Ingres spoke of it as his "première petite bonne fortune" (Delaborde 1870, 189). Delaborde (185) believed that it was one of the paintings that had "contributed most to the popularity of Ingres' name and reputation." But those few Salon reviewers who discussed the painting in 1814 treated it with considerable severity and even ridicule. Delpech 1814, 210, found its composition "bizarre" and its execution lacking in refinement. Durand 1814, 83–84, criticized the monotonous alignment of its figures, which reminded him of "ninepins." Others (Boutard and "N. B. F.") disliked what they regarded as its archaisms, its imitation of the Flemish and Florentine "primitives." A brief account of the picture's critical reception at the Salon of 1814 is given by Eisler 1977, 369. At the time of its second public exhibition in 1846, the tone of the press was still critical (Thoré 1846, 52–53), but it finally turned into a choir of praise at the Universal Exposition of 1855 (Gautier 1855, 161–162; du Camp 1855, 79–81), and it may have been his memory of that ultimate success that later caused Ingres to regard the exhibition of *Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* in retrospect as his "première petite bonne fortune." Lacroix 1855, 212, reported that the marquis of Hertford had offered Marcotte the high price of 40,000 francs for the picture.

24. Letter to Marcotte, 20 December 1812; Delaborde 1870, 186.

25. As noted by, among others, Alazard 1950, 56.

26. Gautier 1855, 161.

27. For his "eyewitness account" of a papal ceremony in the Sistine Chapel (in *Promenades dans Rome*, 2 vols. [Paris, 1850], 2:309–310), Stendhal evidently drew on one of Ingres' two paintings of Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel, either the one owned by Marcotte or its later variant, then in the collection of the comte de Forbin and now in the Louvre (see note 35 below). Dated 25 December 1828, this entirely fictional account was in fact written in Paris, where Stendhal claims to have seen one of the paintings in 1827. Many of the early commentators particularly stressed the extreme verisimilitude of Ingres' *Sistine Chapel*. Singling out the partial copy of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in its background, Gautier 1855, 162, called it the only true copy of that colossal work ever painted: "l'impression est la même que si l'on était dans la chapelle Sixtine." Similar praise of the pic-

ture's realism pervades the discussions of Blanc 1870, 34–35; Chesneau 1883, 303; and Lapauze 1911, 139.

28. Lapauze 1911, 138: "Here Ingres shows himself not merely as a colorist, but—to use a very modern term—as, in the highest degree, an impressionist." See also the earlier, eloquent appreciation of the colorism of *Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* by Blanc 1867, 50–60.

29. In his letter of 26 May 1814, Ingres advised Marcotte not to include in the *livret* of the forthcoming Salon any sort of "historical catalogue of the portraits" in the picture, arguing that while his figures are likenesses, they were not painted from life: to claim too much for them would only provoke criticism (Delaborde 1870, 188).

30. Delaborde 1870, 188. It is interesting to note that—evidently to stress the historical over the topographical character of the picture—the entry in the Salon catalogue as published changed the sequence of the two phrases in the title desired by Ingres from *Vue intérieure de la Chapelle Sixtine. Le pape Pie VII y tient chapelle* to *Le pape Pie VII tenant chapelle. Le scène se passe dans la chapelle Sixtine à Rome*.

31. "S. C." 1834, 3. At a later date (c. 1847–1850), Ingres himself included mentions of his "retouches" and "augmentations" of the picture in the lists of his works that he entered into two notebooks now at the Musée Ingres, Montauban: noting in the one (Cahier IX, fol. 124): "Retouché la Chapelle Sixtine," and in the other (Cahier X, fol. 24): "Augmenté le tableau de la Chapelle Sixtine" (Vigne 1995, 325 and 328).

32. *Les Beaux-Arts* 1844, 298: "Ces figures du premier plan n'existaient pas dans la composition primitive qu'on s'accorda à trouver un peu nue, et c'est alors que M. Ingres ajouta un cordon d'une douzaine de personnages." Thoré 1846, 52–53: "La Chapelle-Sixtine fut exposé en 1814, quoiqu'elle soit datée 1820" (a confusion with the composition's second version, at the Louvre; see note 35 below). "C'est sans doute à cette dernière époque que l'auteur compléta sa composition en ajoutant la rangée de figures, au bas à gauche." In a spirited diatribe against Ingres, Silvestre 1855, 32, remarked that, true to his habit of adding, effacing, and changing his compositions, sometimes as much as ten years after their completion, Ingres had "sewn a whole row of figures on to his *Sistine Chapel*."

33. Lapauze 1911, 135, illustrated without comment the sixteen small sketches mounted on a single sheet in the Musée Ingres, Montauban; Eisler 1977, 367, enumerates and illustrates further examples from that museum: 1) a small portrait sketch of Cardinal Consalvi, 2) the sixteen sketches mounted on a single sheet already published by Lapauze, 3) a portrait sketch of Cardinals Erskine, Albani, and Consalvi seated together (inscribed "Jour de Pacques Capella Sistina"), see Eisler's text figs. 117, 118, 120; Arikha 1986, 31–34 published three further sketches from the group in the Musée Ingres: his nos. 4, a sketch of Cardinal Valentino Mastrozzi, inscribed "Cardinal Valenti" (fig. 4); 5, a study of the view of the papal dais from behind the partition (fig. 5); and 7, the study of a prostrate monk.

All of these have the appearance of rapid sketches taken on the spot.

34. The subject of one of these life studies, Cardinal Valentino Mastrozzi, whom Ingres calls "Valenti," died in 1809. Cardinal Consalvi, represented in several of the sketches, resigned as papal secretary of state in 1807 and was absent from Rome after 1809.

35. Oil on canvas, 69.5 × 55.4 cm, signed "J. Ingres, Rome 1820." Of vertical format, this second version, which shows Pius VII seated on his throne bestowing his blessing on a Franciscan monk who kisses his feet, revises the original composition by sharply reducing its horizontal extent but follows it by leaving the foreground vacant. Several of the figures among the sixteen sketches mounted on a single sheet in the Musée Ingres, Montauban, as well as the study of a prostrate monk in the same museum (Arikha 1986, 34, no. 7), reappear only in this variant of the composition.

36. One of Ingres' notebooks contains an undated entry, first published by Delaborde 1870, 185–186, in which the artist critically reviews either some preliminary design or the finished painting itself: "My picture of the *Sistine Chapel*.—More definiteness in the colors, more subtlety in the tones. The train bearers: more irregularity in their poses; they are too uniform [elles sont trop comptées]. The gold lighter and softer in the shadows. In general, less symmetry." (Concerning these notes, see also Momméja 1896, 550.)

37. Friedländer 1930, 93 (also English ed. 1952, 83).

38. Paris 1846 (see under Exhibited), no. 43. The exhibition was dominated by the works of David (ten paintings) and Ingres (eleven paintings). The press reviews—by Thoré, Mantz, Delécluze, Amaury-Duval, and Lenormant—published on this occasion were, on the whole, quite friendly and particularly noted the picture's "chaude couleur vénitienne" (Amaury-Duval). For an extensive republication of these reviews, see Ambille 1995, 191–281.

39. Paris 1855 (see under Exhibited), no. 3341 (the *NGA's* version).

40. Gautier 1855, 162.

41. du Camp 1855, 81.

42. Daniel Ternois, "Un Tableau d'Ingres peu connu: *L'Investiture de Taddeo Barberini par Urbain VIII*," *Bulletin du Musée Ingres* 7 (July 1960): 15–22. Earlier authors had generally assumed the influence of Titian (Langenevais 1846, 530–531). Edmond and Jules de Goncourt (1855, 192) wrongly believed that Ingres had been influenced by a painting of the Council of Trent (Louvre) that was then attributed to Titian.

43. Teresa Pugliatti, *Agostino Tassi* (Rome, 1977), 102, pl. 152.

44. Daniel Ternois, *Ingres et son temps, Musée Ingres, Montauban*, Inventaire des collections publiques françaises, no. 11 (Paris, 1965), no. 159. The tracing (executed in black pencil, touched up with oil paint, on tracing paper mounted on canvas, 132 × 163 cm) includes only the lower central portion of Tassi's painting. It is possible that it originally included the whole image but was cut down at the top and along the sides.

In his testament, Ingres bequeathed this tracing to his pupil Raymond Balze, mentioning that he had drawn it himself. Another painting, attributed to the studio of Ingres, in the Musée Ingres, Montauban, repeats the background of *Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* and superimposes on it an adaptation of Tassi's *Urban VIII*. This picture was given to the museum by Ingres in 1851 and, according to its records, had been painted in 1848 by pupils working under Ingres' direction.

45. See note 42 above.

46. Eisler 1977, 370–371; see also Rosenblum 1967, 110, fig. 102.

47. In a curious, slightly ambiguous letter to Marcotte, dated 18 July 1813 (Ternois 1999, 55), Ingres listed the paintings that he was then planning to submit to the Salon of 1814: a large history painting (that, as it happened, was never executed), a repetition of his *Virgil Reading from the Aeneid*, a portrait of a lady, *Raphael and the Fornarina*, the portrait of M. de Norvins, director of the French police in Rome, and “our picture,” that is, *Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel*. He added: “heureux qu’il y aye alors aucun empêchement politique qui en empêche l’exposition” (happily there won’t be any political obstacle then to bar its exhibition), which seems to express an awareness of the political sensitivity of his chosen subject and may possibly hint at some expectation of support from the powerful police director.

48. That there may have been a tendency toward political Catholicism in the Marcotte family is suggested by the fact that two of Charles Marcotte’s daughters married two of the most prominent Catholic laymen in France, Alexandre Legentil and Hubert Rohault de Fleury, who were chiefly responsible for the building of the church of Sacré-Coeur in Paris; see Naef 1958.

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1963.10.34 (1698)

Ulysses

1827
Oil on fabric, mounted on a plywood panel, 25.1 × 19.2
(9³/₄ × 7¹/₄)
Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions
Probably falsely inscribed at lower right, in black paint:
Ingres

Technical Notes: The support consists of three pieces of fabric of which the largest, of fairly coarse plain weave, measuring 23.6 × 15.2 cm, contains nearly all of the image. A vertical strip of much finer weave, 23.8 × 3.3 cm, has been added to its left side, and a horizontal finely woven strip, 1 × 18.6 cm, to its top. These three pieces, neatly joined, are mounted on a wooden panel that bears on its back the stamp of Tachet, a nineteenth-century Parisian supplier of artist's materials. The entire fabric area is covered with a thin white ground. In the main piece, but not the added strips, a streaky brown imprimatura has been applied over the ground. The absence of this imprimatura layer from the added strips accounts for their markedly lighter color. Some underdrawing, in the figure's hand, beard, nose, and eye, is visible during infrared examination. There is evidence of changes in the contours of the nose, the right eye, and the brim of the helmet. The paint has been applied fluidly, in thin layers, with the sky executed in washes that contour the figure's profile. Pronounced

cupping along the top and right edges and its absence along the bottom and left edge suggest that the painting was cut from a larger, stretched canvas, apparently from an area near its top right corner. This entire stretching was probably done so that a ground layer could be applied to a large piece of fabric, which was then cut up and restretched onto supports as needed. The painting is covered with a discolored varnish, beneath which scattered inpainting is visible.

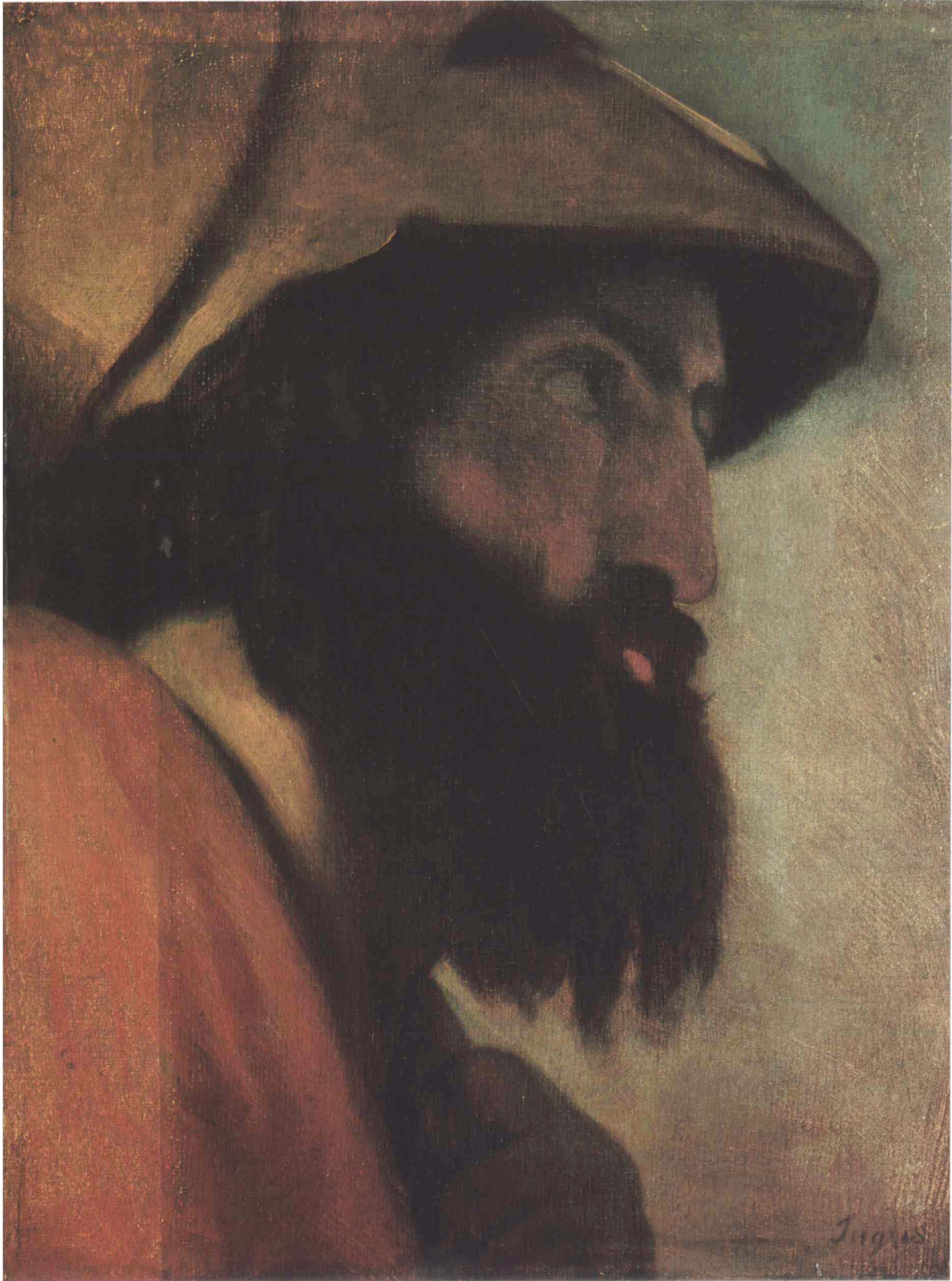
Provenance: Sold by Ingres to Etienne-François Haro, 13 October 1866; (Ingres sale, Hôtel Drouot, 6–7 May 1867, no. 32; bought in by Haro). Etienne-François Haro [1827–1897] and his sons, Jules [1855–1892] and Henri [1855–1911], Paris; (their sale, Galerie Sedelmeyer, Paris, 30–31 May 1892, no. 113). (Galerie Georges Bernheim, Paris); sold 1 June 1925 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1867, *Tableaux, études peintes, dessins et croquis de J.-A.-D. Ingres*, no. 74. MusFrA, 1928, *100 Years of French Portraits from the Chester Dale Collection*, no. 2. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

SEEN FROM BELOW against the blue sky, the bearded face of Ulysses is deeply shaded by the Attic helmet of yellow metal that covers his head. His left hand holds a fold of his red tunic against his chest. The execution of this study, presumably based on a posing model, is broadly painterly.

The identification of the figure as “Ulysse” has the authority of Ingres himself, who signed the bill of the painting's sale in which it bears this title.¹ By its subject matter, style, and format, it belongs among the many detail studies² that served Ingres in the composition of his monumental *Apotheosis of Homer* (1827, Louvre). But he did not use it for one of the figures that stand beside the enthroned Homer in the painting's upper left, the position for which it seems to have been intended, and instead replaced it with another, helmeted but beardless, figure.

No fewer than twenty studies for the *Apotheosis of Homer* were included in the bulk sale of thirty-one paintings and forty-seven drawings concluded by Ingres on 13 October 1866,³ three months before his death, with Etienne-François Haro, who had once been one of his studio assistants and was now a substantial dealer.⁴ In the document drawn up at the time, *Ulysses* was listed, under number 10, among the many studies for the *Apotheosis*.⁵ At the official memorial exhibition of Ingres' work which



Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Ulysses*, 1963.10.34

opened at the Paris Ecole des Beaux-Arts on 11 April 1867,⁶ the study was shown, as number 74, together with other head studies lent by Haro.⁷ A month later (6–7 May), Haro included it, under number 32, in a sale of painted studies and drawings by Ingres, all of which appear to have been his own property.⁸ Reported to have been sold for the (low) price of five hundred francs on this occasion,⁹ the painting was in fact bought in and remained with the firm of Haro until 1892.¹⁰

Ingres was in the habit of painting preparatory, full-size studies of individual heads, hands, and feet when developing many-figured compositions, usually compiling several such details in a single canvas.¹¹ Purely private works, these composite studies remained in his studio until his last years, when he or his dealers made them saleable by cutting them up into smaller, individually complete pictures. In the process, these canvas fragments were mounted on wooden panels and given regular shapes by the addition, where necessary, of strips of fabric.¹² Nearly all of the studies purchased by Haro in 1866, *Ulysses* among them, received this treatment.¹³ It is not likely that Ingres himself undertook this work, for which Haro, a painter and experienced framer, was particularly well equipped. It was probably he or his shop assistants who laid down and skillfully connected the individual pieces of canvas that now constitute *Ulysses* and filled in the vacant areas between the additions. And it is not impossible that Haro may have supplied the signature that this study, like all the other fragments once owned and treated by him, conspicuously bears.¹⁴

Notes

1. The text of the sales agreement, *Designation des tableaux, dessins, et études, vendus à M. Haro*, is given in Lapauze 1911, 552–553.

2. See Wildenstein 1956, 198–204, nos. 169–201.

3. Identified under numbers 2–6, 8–14, 19–23, 25, 27, and 31 in the sales agreement of 13 October 1866 (see Lapauze 1911, 552–553).

4. Etienne-François Haro had at one time been an assistant in the studios of Ingres and Delacroix. His services to Delacroix as a color merchant, restorer, and framer during 1850–1858 are frequently mentioned in Delacroix' *Journals*. Named restorer of paintings to the Ministry of Public Works and the Palace of the Tuileries, he was awarded the Legion of Honor in 1867. Though he had entertained artistic ambitions of his own and exhibited paintings at the Salons of 1866 and

1879, he gradually found his true vocation as a successful dealer in paintings. Two sons, Henri and Jules, assisted him in his business. It was the death of the latter, in 1892, that prompted the sale that year of works from the collection of Haro, "père et fils," in which *Ulysses* figured as no. 113.

5. Lapauze 1911, 552.

6. The memorial exhibition of Ingres' works that opened at the Ecole Impériale des Beaux-Arts on 11 April 1867 was originally planned to be continued to the end of that month (*La Chronique des arts*, no. 179 [7 April 1867]: 109), but in fact remained open until 15 June, increased by a number of new exhibits (*La Chronique des arts*, no. 187 [2 June 1867]: 174) possibly to replace the studies belonging to Haro that were sold at auction on 6–7 May while the exhibition was still in progress (see note 8 below).

7. Les Galeries du Palais de l'Ecole Impériale des Beaux-Arts, *Catalogue des tableaux, études peintes, dessins et croquis de J.-A.-D. Ingres* (Paris, 1867), 16, nos. 74, 76, 77, 78.

8. The sale, first advertised in *La Chronique des arts*, no. 181 (21 April 1867), as "Vente de quatre-vingt-dix tableaux-dessins," was held on 6–7 May at the Hôtel Drouot under the direction of Charles Pillet, acting as *commissaire-priseur*, assisted by "M. Haro, Expert." It was accompanied by a *Catalogue des tableaux, dessins, aquarelles et études peints par M. J.D.A.* [*sic*] Ingres, which gives the dimensions of the various studies and describes them as being on "canvas, mounted on panel." Rather than a general sale of the contents of Ingres' studio, this auction in fact included only the selection of studies and drawings that Ingres had consigned to Haro the year before. Its organizers emphasized that it was Ingres himself who had designated these particular works for public sale: "tous ces tableaux, études et dessins, signés et datés, ont été choisis par M. Ingres pour être mis en vente publique" (*La Chronique des arts*, no. 182 [28 April 1867]).

9. *La Chronique des arts*, no. 184 (12 May 1867): 146.

10. *Vente par suite de décès des collections de MM. Haro, père et fils, Tableaux anciens et modernes de premier ordre* [sale cat. Galerie Sedelmeyer.] (Paris, 30–31 May 1892), no. 113. This sale, occasioned by the death that year of Jules Haro, included beside *Ulysses* several other studies for the *Apotheosis of Homer* that had failed to sell in 1867, viz. nos. 12, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 25, 26, 28, 30, and 32 of that auction. Their number suggests that the demand for them had been slight.

11. For illustrations of such canvases filled with multiple studies, see Wildenstein 1956, nos. 170, 192, 195, 196, and 198.

12. See Technical Notes above.

13. The studies purchased by Haro on 13 October 1866 had been adjusted to their present dimensions and uniformly mounted on wooden panels by the time of their exhibition on 11 April 1867.

14. It is probable that the studies were signed, either by Ingres himself or by Haro, after being trimmed and mounted on wood, presumably at Haro's shop.

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1965a Dale: 30, repro.
1965 NGA: 70.
1968 NGA: 61, repro.
1968 Camesasca: 105, no. 120kk.
1975 NGA: 180, repro.
1984 Walker: 423, no. 602, repro.
1985 NGA: 209, repro.

1946.7.18 (882)

Madame Moitessier

1851

Oil on fabric, 147 × 100 (57³/₄ × 39³/₈)

Samuel H. Kress Collection

Inscriptions

On the wall, at upper right: *M.^E INES MOITESSIER/NÉE DE FOUCAULD*. Signed at lower center left: *I.A.D. INGRES P.^{XIT} AN^O 1851*

Technical Notes: The support is formed by four pieces of fabric. To the central, finely plain-woven piece, containing the entire figure and measuring c. 136.2 × 90.8 cm, three strips of fabric have been added: 1) a strip 5.5 cm wide along the left edge, 2) another, 3.7 cm wide, along the right, 3) and a third, 10.5 cm wide, along the bottom. Technical examination indicates that of these additions, only the strip along the left edge is contemporary with the central piece of fabric. The other two, consisting of heavier, more loosely woven material, were added subsequently. X-radiography reveals these strips are from another (unidentified) painting. Two lining fabrics support this structure. The tacking margins of the original fabric have been cropped. The fabric was prepared with a white, thick, very smooth ground that has a high lead content (the ground layers over the two later strips contain less lead). Infrared reflectography reveals faint traces of an underdrawing in the face and hands. A double imprimatura consisting of a lower light gray and an upper dark gray layer covers the ground of the main fabric and the strip added along its left edge (the later additions at right and bottom have a yellow-ocher-toned imprimatura layer). The image is built with paint that has been even-

ly and fluidly applied, wet-on-wet, with low impasto, creating a surface of porcelain-like smoothness. A repaired complex tear in the original fabric about 20.5 cm long runs vertically through the sitter's hair and down her proper left cheek. This tear has three horizontal branches, the longest of which traverses the sitter's face above the tip of her nose. The painting underwent conservation treatment in 1998, during which the old, discolored varnish and repaints were removed and restored. A clear varnish covers the painting's surface.

Curatorial Note: When the painting was cleaned and restored at the Gallery by David Bull in 1998, he was of the opinion that the additions of a coarser canvas at the left edge and bottom were made at a later undetermined date, after the portrait left Ingres' studio, and were painted by another hand. Bull was of the same opinion about the strip added at right. The discolored paint that covered this right-hand addition, including the damask wall covering and the unusually (in a finished portrait by Ingres) broadly painted console or mantelpiece, constituted certainly later restorations, if not additions, to Ingres' design; these passages were restored in 1998. However, it should be noted that sometimes Ingres did enlarge his drawings by adding strips of paper to accommodate compositional revisions or extensions, and he did this also on rare occasions to his paintings, such as in the National Gallery's *Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel* (see p. 289). In the opinion of Philip Conisbee, Eitner is correct to propose that all the additions were made in Ingres' studio during the execution of the painting, and that the additions at right and below were made subsequent to the initial composition. See also Gary Tinterow's arguments in favor of the present format of the portrait as photographed in Ingres' studio in 1852; in *Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch* [exh. cat. MMA; London, National Gallery; NGA.] (Washington, 1999), 438. The additions to the tasseled chair at lower left are entirely consistent with compositional devices in other late portraits by Ingres, such as the contemporaneous *Princesse de Broglie* (MMA), and were surely of his devising. However, Georges Vigne has recently made a strong case for Ingres' employment of studio assistants in the secondary areas of certain paintings, especially in the busy later years of his career (see Vigne 1990 and Vigne 1999). We cannot rule out the possibility that the right and lower extensions to *Madame Moitessier* were painted by one of Ingres' assistants, if we take into account the later discoloration of the right-hand strip and the fact that a slight change of color is perceptible in the black of the added lower portion of the sitter's dress.

Provenance: The sitter, Marie-Clothilde-Inès, née de Foucauld [1821–1897], and her husband, Paul Sigisbert Moitessier [1799–1889]; their elder daughter, Clothilde-Marie-Catherine, comtesse de Flavigny [1843–1914], by 1911; her sister, Françoise-Camille-Marie, Vicomtesse Taillepied de Bondy [1850–1934], by 1921; probably her

son, François, Comte Taillepié de Bondy [b. 1875]; sold 1935 to (Paul Rosenberg & Co., London, New York, and Paris); sold 1945 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Palais des Beaux-Arts, 1855, Universal Exposition, no. 3366. Paris, Association Franco-Américaine, Chambre Syndicale de la Curiosité et des Beaux-Arts, 1921, *Exhibition Ingres*, no. 44, repro. London, New Burlington Galleries, Anglo-French Art and Travel Society, 1936, *Exhibition of Masters of French XIX Century Painting*, no. 2. Paris, Palais National des Arts, Exposition Internationale, 1937, *Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art français*, no. 351. Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, 1938, *Honderd Jaar Fransche Kunst*, no. 137, repro. Belgrade, Museum of Prince Paul, 1939, *La Peinture française au XIX siècle*, no. 67, repro. Buenos Aires, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1939, *La Pintura Francesa de David a nuestros días*, no. 76. Montevideo, Salon Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1939, *La Pintura Francesa de David a nuestros días*, no. 13, repro. Rio de Janeiro, Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, 1940, *Exposição de Pintura Francesa, seculos XIX e XX*, no. 56. San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, December 1940–January 1941, November 1941–January 1942, *The Painting of France since the French Revolution*, no. 59, pl. 61. San Diego, The Fine Arts Gallery, 1941, *Loan Exhibition of French Painting Presenting a Survey of the Development of Modern Art*, no. 1. AIC, 1941, *Masterpieces of French Art*, no. 85. The Art Gallery of Toronto, 1944, *Loan Exhibition of Great Paintings in Aid of Allied Merchant Seamen*, no. 36, repro. NGA, 1946, *Recent Additions to the Kress Collection*, no. 882. London, National Gallery; NGA; MMA, 1999, *Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch*, no. 133, repro.

THE SUBJECT of this portrait, Inès Moitessier (1821–1897), the wife of Sigisbert Moitessier, a financier and jurist, was the daughter of Charles-Edouard-Armand de Foucauld, who had been an official in the department of forestry services under Charles Marcotte, Ingres' good friend and patron. In the 1840s the aging Ingres undertook to paint a series of exceptionally large portraits of fashionably dressed young women, protesting, not altogether convincingly, that he did so with reluctance.¹ When Marcotte suggested that he paint the portrait of Mme Moitessier, recently married and considered a great beauty, Ingres at first refused. But on meeting her at the house of his friend, he fell under the spell of her "terrible et belle tête" and agreed to undertake the commission.²

The sittings began in 1844. Ingres' first intention was to show Mme Moitessier seated on a sofa with her small daughter, Catherine, at her knee. The child proved troublesome, and Ingres, grown im-

patient, resolved to paint Mme Moitessier seated alone.³ The work progressed languidly for several years. In June 1847 Théophile Gautier saw an unfinished version of the seated portrait in Ingres' studio and was inspired to write a rapturous description of its head: "Never did beauty more regal, more splendid, more superb, more Juno-like offer her proud lineaments to an artist's tremulous pencils."⁴ The picture nevertheless remained unfinished. In June 1851 Ingres reported to Marcotte that Mme Moitessier had gently reminded him that seven years had passed since she had begun to pose for the portrait. Her prompting appears to have roused Ingres to a fresh start.⁵ Putting aside his uncompleted canvas, he now asked Mme Moitessier to pose again, but for a portrait that would show her standing, rather than seated. He chose to present her turned to the viewer, as if pausing momentarily in the act of departure, dressed in a formal ball gown of the latest fashion, her fur wrap and gloves ready on the chair beside her.

At the time he made this second start, Ingres—aged seventy-one—was emerging from a prolonged state of depression into which he had been thrown by the death of his wife in 1849. His willingness to resume work on the long-neglected commission indicated a return of confidence and energy, after a deep trauma which had made him feel that his career had come to an end. Seeing him helpless and lonely, friends had found him a second wife in the person of Delphine Ramel, a relative of his friend Marcotte. The prospect of that new marriage, which was to be concluded in 1852, appears to have renewed his vitality and self-confidence.

The work on the portrait now in the National Gallery of Art progressed with unaccustomed speed. In several letters written by Ingres in 1851, it is possible to follow the successive steps that led to its completion.⁶ Having determined the general composition in a series of drawings, Ingres began by painting the dress, then went on, in early summer, to paint the arms and hands,⁷ but "it was not until he was satisfied with this *ensemble* that he attached the beautiful head to the bare shoulders."⁸ By the beginning of October, after Mme Moitessier's return from her summer vacation,⁹ he had decided to substitute flowers for ribbons in the coiffure and to place a bracelet on her right arm—

“everything else is finished.” But much, in fact, remained to be done, and during October and November¹⁰ he continued to make additions and changes in the accessories, the jewelry, and particularly in the elaborate evening coiffure that he had planned, but progressively simplified, fearing that it might impair the visual effect of the head.¹¹ Intent on minute realism and authenticity in the representation of the fashionable bywork that seemed to him an essential aspect of Mme Moitessier’s personality, he insisted on painting every detail from the life. The preserved letters are filled with his requests for particular brooches, chains, necklaces, rings, and fur wraps,¹² objects that called for a form of minutely descriptive still-life painting that he found congenial. In conjuring the glint of precious metal, the sheen of damask, and the various textures of fur, lace, and satin, he indulged in an opulent materialism, with an evident relish tempered by stylistic discipline. By contrast, he seems to have felt a kind of dread in approaching the

human challenge of Mme Moitessier’s beautiful head, anxiously drawing out his preparations, and—fervently imploring God’s help—putting his hope in still more sittings, long after he had announced the portrait’s imminent completion.¹³ Pressed by the curiosity of Mme Moitessier’s husband and family who were growing impatient to see the picture, he hurried to finish the head, aiming to come to an end in two long sessions scheduled for the latter part of November.¹⁴

Sometime in late December,¹⁵ Ingres signed and dated the canvas and in a letter of 7 January 1852 spoke of it as having been recently completed and submitted to the sitter and her family for approval.¹⁶ On 31 January 1852 he invited comte de Nieuwerkerke, director of fine arts, to view the finished picture.¹⁷ To a private correspondent, Ingres confided at the time that he was not entirely satisfied with his work,¹⁸ and there are indications that Mme Moitessier and her family also had some reservations about it.¹⁹ This was probably why, shortly after its completion, Ingres began a second, very different portrait of Mme Moitessier (fig. 1) in which he reverted to the compositional scheme with which he had begun in 1844. Now in the National Gallery in London,²⁰ his final tribute to the modern Juno shows her seated and wearing a white, brightly flowered dress. Ingres labored over this second picture for four years, delivering it at last in 1856, twelve years after the patient Mme Moitessier had first posed for her portrait.

The grounds of Ingres’ own dissatisfaction with the picture’s first version are unknown. Mme Moitessier’s complaint can be inferred from a letter written by Marcotte, on her behalf, to Ingres’ friend Edouard Gatteaux in 1855.²¹ According to Marcotte, Mme Moitessier was pleased with the second version of the portrait, then in progress, considering it a better likeness than the first, since Ingres had “diminished the space between the eyes.” But she was still anxious that her arms, “too heavy in the first portrait, be reduced in the second.”

Seven drawings illustrate the compositional development of the portrait and document the successive changes of position Ingres contemplated before putting brush to canvas. The earliest of the extant drawings (fig. 2) shows Mme Moitessier turned toward the left in what amounts to a nearly three-quarters view, her right arm bent horizontally at the elbow, as if resting on the back of

Fig. 1. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Madame Moitessier*, oil on canvas, 1856, London, The National Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Trustees, NG 4821





Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Madame Moitessier*, 1846.7.18



Fig. 2. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for Madame Moitessier*, pencil on paper, 1851, private collection



Fig. 3. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for Madame Moitessier*, graphite on wove paper, 1851, Washington, National Gallery of Art, Gift of Paul Rosenberg, 1951.14.1

a chair.²² A subsequent pencil study, now in the National Gallery of Art's collection (fig. 3), turns the figure into a more nearly frontal pose, the head full-face and the bust turned slightly to the left, as in the painting. The left arm hangs vertically, the right is shown in three different positions, with its hand raised to the chest, held against the hip, and hanging limp.²³ In a further drawing (fig. 4), both arms, bent at the elbow, are extended across the body, the right hand placed on the left forearm in a pose reminiscent of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*.²⁴ The attitude finally adopted appears in two further drawings (figs. 5 and 6) in which the positions of arms and hands are resolved, but their ultimate functions—grasping the strand of pearls, holding the fan, and raising the end of the lace shawl—are still not clearly defined.²⁵ A separate pencil study on tracing paper searches for the precise contours of the pendent left arm and hand,²⁶ and a large, elaborately shaded drawing of the head,²⁷ evident-

Fig. 4. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for Madame Moitessier*, pencil on paper, 1851, Paris, Collection of Jacques Dupont





Fig. 5. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for Madame Moitessier*, pencil on paper, 1851, New London, Connecticut, Lyman Allyn Art Museum



Fig. 6. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study of Madame Moitessier*, graphite and white chalk, 1851, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum

Fig. 7. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for Madame Moitessier*, pencil on paper, 1851, photograph courtesy of Christie's Images, London

ly made at a late stage in the process, supplies the features of the “terrible et belle tête,” left blank or only cursorily indicated in the compositional studies for the portrait (fig. 7).

The most striking expressive qualities of the painting, Mme Moitessier’s imperious stance, the severe symmetry and frontality of her pose, and her imposing height, emerged somewhat hesitantly in the sequence of the drawings and achieved their full realization only in the final execution in oil. It was by the orchestration of his colors, austere in their restricted range and dramatic in their sharp contrasts, that Ingres established the character of the portrait. The ivory of Mme Moitessier’s skin, amply displayed in her bare shoulders and



arms, is set off by the deep magenta of the damask tapestry behind her and by the black velvet of her dress. The lace bertha that covers her shoulders and embroiders the pale flesh of her arm with its black pattern and the vapory shawl of Chantilly lace that envelops her waist soften the contrasts between these light and dark passages by their transparency. Only the muted pink of the silk roses in her hair, the gold of her bracelets, and the still life of a lace handkerchief and yellow glove on the embroidered chair at her side contribute some further, discreet accents of color.

Mme Moitessier's statuesque frontality has been compared with the "superb aloofness and imperturbability of a classical goddess or a Byzantine Madonna."²⁸ It is subtly countered by a slight leftward turn of her body, a play of contrasting curvatures in her shoulders, her neckline, and the strand of pearls, and, more conspicuously, by the contrary directions of her arms, all of which hint at an inward tension and imminent departure from the serene frontal symmetry maintained by her head. Silhouetted against the flat, tapestried wall, her figure seems itself flattened, particularly in her strongly front-lit face and shoulders, but achieves a sudden, unexpected salience in the powerful fleshiness of her arms and hands.²⁹ This seeming inconsistency not only irritated Mme Moitessier, who protested it to Ingres' friend Marcotte;³⁰ it also struck Baudelaire, who, in his review of the Universal Exposition of 1855, attributed it to Ingres' compulsive imitation of Raphael: "A sensitive face and shoulders of simple elegance [here are] associated with arms too robust, too full of Raphaellesque opulence. But Raphael loved stout arms, and the important thing was to obey the master."³¹ Degas saw the portrait in 1898, when it was owned by Mme Moitessier's daughter, who complained to him about the "bras bien gros"; he defended them to her: "I tried to convince her that they looked good this way."³²

The stylization to which Ingres has subjected Mme Moitessier's face combines classical norms with features more specifically borrowed from Raphael:³³ it is a classicizing revision of a Raphaellesque type that Ingres had used earlier in religious paintings—in the Madonna of the *Vow of Louis XIII*, for instance, and in his various Madonnas of the 1840s and 1850s³⁴—but had never imposed quite so literally on his portraits. In adapt-

ing Mme Moitessier's individual features to this type, he widened the oval of her face while narrowing its expressive parts. Within the masklike frontal symmetry of the head, the classically straight nose with its narrow nostrils and the very small, trim mouth seem diminished by the encroaching, smooth fleshiness of the cheeks and chin. The coiffure with its halo of flowers further widens and flattens the head and increases its physical mass, somewhat at the expense of its inward animation. The curiously unfocused gaze of Mme Moitessier's wide-spaced eyes contributes to the emotional remoteness of the portrait; but her wandering right eye also upsets the frontal immobility of her pose. It may have been these expansions and shifts, prompted by unforeseen impulsions in mid-course of execution, that caused Ingres to widen the format of the portrait by the addition of strips of canvas to its left and right sides, and to compensate for this lateral expansion by adding a strip to its bottom.³⁵ The purpose of these enlargements was to allow more space for the increasing gravity and stature that he gave his Junoesque sitter, to whom he wrote, fairly late in the progress of the work: "vos bras sont faits comme je le voulais; vous êtes plus grande, et cela fait très bien."³⁶

The contrast between the timeless ideality of Mme Moitessier's features and the physical realism of her modern accessories—the fashionable head-dress, lace bertha, evening dress, shawl, and jewelry with which Ingres surrounded and rather overwhelmed these classical features—was noted by contemporary critics and has occupied much space in the more recent literature.³⁷ Some critics have expressed the opinion that the realism in the contemporary details gives credibility and substance to the quasi-divinity, the "antique majesty"³⁸ with which Ingres has endowed his subject. Henry Lapauze, likening Mme Moitessier to Juno and Minerva, went so far as to argue that the "modern Parisian dress... enhances the nobility of the ancient goddess."³⁹ Baudelaire, on the other hand, saw in the mingling of the "antique ideal with the oddities and trivialities of modern art" a failure of Ingres' imagination.⁴⁰ Kenneth Clark, stressing Ingres' profound expertise in the matter of costume, believed that the artist, finding that Mme Moitessier's face could not surmount the elaborate splendor of her costume and accessories, "decided to make [her] head an ideal portrait in the style that had been at-

tempted in Rome in the 1520s. . . . She is no longer a character with whom we can have human relations. Impassive in her finery, she reminds us of some sacred figure, carried in a procession."⁴¹ But it is also possible to conclude that in its eclectic mixture of modernity and classicism, its combination of idealization and physical realism, this portrait of a woman of the enriched Parisian middle class with her stout arms and profuse jewelry recalls neither ancient goddesses nor Renaissance Madonnas so much as the society of Louis-Philippe's reign and in many ways foreshadows the style of the Second Empire, of which the elderly Ingres can be considered a prophet. It is not surprising that one of the most worldly and successful society portraitists of that era, Alexandre Cabanel (1823–1889), should have imitated, or plagiarized, the older master's still unexhausted modernity (fig. 8).⁴²

Fig. 8. Alexandre Cabanel, *Portrait of Madame Paton-Pacini*, oil on canvas, c. 1852–1853, location unknown (illustrated in Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, *Exposition retrospective de Portraits de Femmes [1870 à 1900]*, Paris, 1907: no. 33)



Notes

1. The group comprises the portraits of the comtesse d'Haussonville, 1845 (The Frick Collection, New York), Baronne James Rothschild, 1848 (private collection, Paris), Mme Moitessier, 1851 (NGA), princesse de Broglie, 1853 (MMA), and the final seated version of Mme Moitessier, 1856 (National Gallery, London). Blanc 1868, 536, notes that Ingres "professait une aversion constante pour ce genre d'ouvrages," but Lapauze 1911, 440, adds that, though society portrait commissions were a "nightmare" to Ingres, he would not gladly have renounced them "car c'eût été se priver de cette douceur spéciale, à laquelle il était fort sensible, que lui apportait la simple présence d'une jolie femme dans son atelier."

2. Delaborde 1870, 255, quoting a marginal note by Marcotte on a letter by Ingres: "M. Ingres...avait d'abord refusé de faire le portrait de Madame Moitessier. Il la vit ensuite chez moi un soir, et, frappé de sa beauté, il désira la peindre." The expression "terrible et belle tête" occurs in a letter by Ingres to Marcotte, written in June 1851, in which he describes his anxious start on the portrait's second version, the painting now in Washington. See Blanc 1868, 537, and Delaborde 1870, 256.

3. Lapauze 1911, 441–442.

4. *La Presse*, 27 June 1847, quoted by Lapauze 1911, 441.

5. In a letter to Marcotte, first published by Blanc 1868, 536–537, Ingres mentioned that Mme Moitessier was about to arrive for a *first* session for her portrait, for which, as she had pointedly hinted, she has been waiting for seven years. This would date Ingres' letter to 1851, seven years after his first start on the project in 1844. Its text implies that he had decided to begin a new and different version of the portrait for which Mme Moitessier was shortly to pose for the first time. Delaborde 1870, 256, quotes nearly the same text, but divides it into two separate letters, of which he dates the first—the one mentioning Mme Moitessier's remonstrance—to "June 1851" and refers to the second—announcing Mme Moitessier's impending visit to pose—as having been written "a few days later." Of the two versions of the letter or letters, that published by Blanc seems to be the more accurate. It is not known on what evidence Delaborde based his dating of the letter or letters to June 1851, a matter of some importance, since it would seem to fix the actual start of the work on the portrait now at the NGA.

6. The relevant texts, variously quoted by Blanc 1868, 537; Delaborde 1870, 256; Lapauze 1911, 440–446, 456–459; and Naef 1969, 149, have been brought together, in English translation and in approximately chronological order, by Eisler 1977, 377–379. Though the precise dates of several of these documents are in doubt, none can be shown to be earlier than 1851. Lapauze 1911, 440–446, first combined them in a reconstruction of Ingres' working process in developing and completing the NGA's portrait of Mme Moitessier. While Lapauze (440) left open the possibility that the idea for a portrait showing Mme Moitessier standing

may go back to 1844 (there is no evidence for that in the documents), Davies 1936, 257, has convincingly argued that Ingres started this portrait only in June 1851. All the earlier documents mentioning a portrait of Mme Moitessier in fact refer to his struggles with the picture's initial version, the version showing her seated, which he began in 1844, abandoned about 1847, took up again in 1852, after the completion of the portrait in Washington, and at last finished in 1856 (fig. 1).

7. In an undated letter (Lapauze 1911, 443), Ingres informs Mme Moitessier that he is at work on her gown, and has already done the arms "as I wanted them." He has also made her taller, with good effect ("vous êtes plus grande, et cela fait très bien"). The passage is difficult to interpret and does not fit easily into Lapauze's chronology of the picture's execution, according to which the gown was completed before the arms; it is possible that Ingres is referring to a reworking of the gown and the arms. Eisler (1977, 378, N) dates this letter to October 1851, without stating his reasons. A relatively late date would seem to be indicated by Ingres' remark to the effect that he has made Mme Moitessier taller, a probable reference to his enlargement of the canvas in midcourse of completion.

8. Lapauze 1911, 442.

9. A letter by Ingres, dated 1 October 1851 (Lapauze 1911, 444-446; Eisler 1977, 378, J) greets Mme Moitessier on her return, tanned by the summer sun (possibly a matter of concern to her portraitist), and fixes the date of the next sitting on 9 October. That date is also mentioned in a letter to Magimel (Lapauze 1911, 440), in which Ingres announces that he has canceled a trip to Berlin to honor his appointment with Mme Moitessier. In a letter of 16 October to Marcotte (Delaborde 1870, 256; Eisler 1977, 378, K), he complains about "those wretched portraits" and informs his friend that he is about to "have our beautiful and good lady for a last sitting." Only some of her jewelry and accessories remain to be painted before he can put the finishing touches to the picture.

10. An undated letter in which Ingres describes in detail changes that he intends to make in Mme Moitessier's coiffure and jewelry (Lapauze 1911, 444) appears to have been written *after* October, since Ingres mentions his hope that by Saint Catherine's Day—25 November—two further sessions will have advanced the work to the point at which the "justly curious," presumably Mme Moitessier's family, can be allowed to inspect it. Eisler 1977, 377-378, omitting the letter's postscript, with its significant reference to Saint Catherine's Day, dates the letter "probably September 1851." The family's impatience to view the picture is also mentioned in a letter to Magimel (Lapauze 1911, 446; Eisler 1977, 378, N) in which Ingres states that "the head is fine now" and announces that he would like to complete the portrait by the end of the month (presumably November), in time for the husband's birthday.

11. Lapauze 1911, 444; Eisler 1977, 377, I.

12. See Ingres' letter to Marcotte of 16 October 1851 (Delaborde 1870, 256; Eisler 1977, 378, K) and the un-

dated letter to Mme Moitessier (Lapauze 1911, 444; Eisler 1977, 377, I), probably written sometime in November; see note 10 above.

13. In a letter probably written in October (Lapauze 1911, 442; Eisler 1977, 378, M), Ingres requests a session for the coming Wednesday, "so that I can finish your beautiful head," adding: "et qu'en cela Dieu m'a même bien en aide." In the postscript to a further, undated letter (Lapauze 1911, 444; omitted by Eisler), evidently written considerably later, he predicts the completion of the portrait during the following week, "car enfin, dans la semaine, les portes de fer s'ouvriront, *Dio me la mande buona*, avec encore l'aide de deux grosses séances."

14. See Lapauze 1911, 444, quoting from the undated letter by Ingres cited in note 13 above: "Retenons les justement curieux, dans leur intérêt même et dans le mien, jusqu'à Catherine" (i.e., 25 November).

15. In a letter dated 15 December 1851 (Lapauze 1911, 456; Eisler 1977, 378, P), Ingres informs his correspondent, Mme Gonse, that he expects to finish the portrait during the following week.

16. Lapauze 1911, 457; Eisler 1977, 379, Q.

17. Lapauze 1911, 446; Eisler 1977, 379, R.

18. Letter of 7 January 1852 to Mme Gonse (Lapauze 1911, 457; Eisler 1977, 379, Q).

19. Naef 1969, 149-150 note 2; Eisler 1977, 379, S.

20. Prior to its purchase of *Madame Moitessier* (seated) in 1936, the National Gallery in London had seriously considered acquiring the portrait now in Washington, which was then with Paul Rosenberg & Co. in London; see Kenneth Clark, *Another Part of the Wood* (London, 1974), 240.

21. See note 19 above.

22. Pencil on paper, squared, 18.7 × 13.8 cm, formerly in the collections of Henry Lapauze (sale, Paris, 21 June 1929, no. 39) and Georges Wildenstein, Paris; more recently with Galerie Kornfeld, Bern, Auktion 173, 18-21 June 1980, no. 573.

23. Pencil on paper, 20 × 15 cm, formerly in the collections of Henry Lapauze (sale, Paris, 21 June 1929, no. 37); van Roelil; Paul Rosenberg, New York (Eisler 1977, 374, no. 2, text fig. 125).

24. Pencil on paper, dimensions not known, formerly in the collection of Charles Saunier, more recently in that of Jacques Dupont, Paris (Lapauze 1911, 438, repro.; Eisler 1977, 374, no. 1, text fig. 126).

25. One of these drawings (fig. 5) was formerly in the collections of Fernand Guille, M. S. Sylvias, Pierre Geismar, and Jerome Stoneborough (Eisler 1977, 374, no. 3, fig. 129). The second (fig. 6), formerly in the de Madraza y Garreta, de Behague, and Villiers David collections, is a tracing derived, with variations in the hands, from the drawing in New London. It is noteworthy that the elaborate jewel on Mme Moitessier's chest in this tracing is an addition to the simple chate-laine she wears in the New London drawing (fig. 5) and reflects changes mentioned by Ingres in a letter probably written in November 1851 (Lapauze 1911, 444; Eisler 1977, 374, no. 4, fig. 124).

26. Musée Ingres, Montauban, pencil on tracing paper, 48 × 36.7 cm (Lapauze 1911, 437, repro.; Eisler 1977, 374, no. 4, text fig. 124).

27. Fig. 7 was formerly in the collection of d'Aygesvives (descendants of the sitter); Edgar Degas (sale 26–27 March 1918, no. 210); H. Schmidt, Geneva; A. McMillan, New York; and recently (1988) on the London art market.

28. Rosenblum 1967, 156.

29. Rosenblum 1967, 156, notes that the spaceless silhouetting of Mme Moitessier's figure against the wall behind her conflicts with the "marmoreal modelling of her shoulders" and her "pudgy, beringed fingers" in a way that "half denies her corporeality." Another kind of spatial distortion is claimed by Wollheim 1987, 272, according to whom "no uniform account can be given of the dado that runs along the bottom part of the picture: the moulding appears in discrepant ways on either side of the sitter," an observation not borne out by the painting.

30. In a letter written on 24 February 1855, while Ingres was at work on the London portrait, Marcotte asks Gatteaux, on behalf of the Moitessier family, to persuade Ingres to make Mme Moitessier's arms, too heavy in the first portrait, slimmer in the second. The fact that her arms are rather large is reason enough not to enlarge them further. Marcotte also reminds Gatteaux that Mme Moitessier was eight (actually eleven) years younger and less plump when the portrait sessions began (Naef 1969, 149–150; Eisler 1977, 379, S). The voluminous arms that Ingres gave Mme Moitessier seem to express a consistent, perhaps slightly fetishistic tendency that is evident in many of his other portraits of women.

31. Baudelaire 1855, 965. Though he does not name the *Portrait of Madame Moitessier* in his review of Ingres' works at the Universal Exposition, there can be no doubt that this passage refers to this picture, exhibited as no. 3366.

32. Diary notation by Degas, June 1898, published in Jean Sutherland Boggs et al., *Degas* [exh. cat. Grand Palais, Paris; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; MMA.] (New York, 1988), 493.

33. Several classical prototypes have been suggested as sources for the NGA's portrait of Mme Moitessier, among them the figure of Arcadia in the Telephos fresco from Herculaneum (Museo Nazionale, Naples), which certainly did influence the portrait in London (King 1942, 82). Eisler 1977, 376–377, mentions the statue of Melpomene in the Uffizi as a possible model for the pose and believes that Ingres may also have studied the so-called *Muse of Cortona* (Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca, Cortona). As early as 1852 critics invoked Raphael and Leonardo to account for the portrait's nobility of pose (Galimard 1852, 49–50), and as recently as 1977 the "Leonardesque element" in the Washington and the London portraits has again been stressed (Keith Roberts, "London and Birmingham," *BurlM* 119, no. 888 [March 1977]: 209). Ingres' gradual approach to the pose finally adopted for the portrait in Washington,

documented by the series of preparatory drawings, suggests rather that he developed his composition independently, though memories of familiar works of art no doubt entered into this process.

34. For the *Vow of Louis XIII*, 1824, cathedral of Notre Dame, Montauban, see Ternois 1980, 99, no. 169. The type of Ingres' Raphaellesque Madonnas first appears in his *Vierge au voile bleu* (1827, São Paulo [Brazil], Museu Nacional de Belas Artes; Ternois, no. 179) and later recurs frequently in the several versions of *Vierge à la Hostie*, including that of 1841 (Pushkin Museum, Moscow; Ternois, no. 249) and those of 1854 (Louvre; Ternois, no. 251) and 1866 (Musée Bonnat, Bayonne; Ternois, no. 254).

35. The strip added to the left edge of the canvas, measuring about 5.5–6 cm in width, seems to be of the same period as the central piece. The strip along the right edge, about 3.7 cm wide, and the strip of roughly 10.5–11 cm along the bottom edge are of coarser fabric and may have been added at a slightly later date, though certainly by Ingres himself, who painted what looks like the corner of a console in the lower right of the picture, to balance the chair on the other side and to lessen the visibility of the vertical seam that runs along the right edge of the canvas.

36. Lapauze 1911, 443; Eisler 1977, 378, N.

37. Baudelaire 1855, 964: "un idéal qui mêle dans un adulateur açaçant la solidité calme de Raphael avec les recherches de la petite-maitresse." See also Evans 1959, 14; Seymour 1961, 195; Clark 1971, 361; Eisler 1977, 377.

38. Galimard 1852, 49.

39. Lapauze 1911, 446.

40. Baudelaire 1855, 964–965.

41. Clark 1971, 364.

42. Location unknown. The portrait was shown in 1907 at the Palais du Domaine de Bagatelle, in the exhibition *Portraits de Femmes (1870–1900)*. In 1852–1853 Cabanel made portrait drawings of several members of the Paton family (PetitPal), which makes it seem probable that the painted *Portrait of Madame Paton-Pacini* dates from that time, in significantly close chronological proximity to Ingres' *Madame Moitessier*.

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Hugues Merle

1823-1881

BORN AT Saint-Marcellin (Isère), Hugues Merle studied in Paris with the history painter Léon Cogniet (1794-1880) and devoted himself to a wide range of subjects, from religious themes and historical anecdotes to incidents from contemporary life, particularly of the urban and rural poor. His greatest popular successes, however, were won by scenes of maternal affection and childhood innocence that he sought to imbue with impish sweetness and sentimentality. A fre-

quent exhibitor at the Paris Salons from 1847 until 1880, rarely noticed by the more serious critics but cherished all the more by the broad public, he enjoyed the favor of the imperial government, which made him *chevalier* of the Legion of Honor in 1866, at the relatively young age of forty-three. His work, greatly appreciated by American audiences, was strongly represented in American collections during the last decades of the nineteenth century.



Hugues Merle, *Children Playing in a Park*, 1970.17.101

1970.17.101 (2473)

Children Playing in a Park

c. 1860

Oil on fabric, 32.6 × 40.9 (12⁷/₈ × 16¹/₈)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left, with monogram: *HM*

Technical Notes: The support is a fine, plain-weave fabric that has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cut off, but pronounced cusping along all edges indicates the painting retains its original dimensions. On the white ground, a brush and ink drawing containing many robed and bearded figures not related to the final image was initially sketched. Infrared reflectographs are not clear enough to allow an identification of its subject. Over this, a transparent layer of brown paint was applied. This was used for the

darker shadows in the final composition. The picture is covered with a slightly discolored varnish.

Provenance: (Harry McNeil Bland Galleries, New York); sold to Ailsa Mellon Bruce [1901–1969], New York.

THREE GIRLS and three boys are shown frolicking in a parkland clearing illuminated by a patch of bright sunlight. Dancing a variant of Ring around the Rosy, two of the children with raised arms form an arch through which others duck. The girls wear short smocks over pantalettes, the boys short jackets and trousers, children's fashions datable to the 1860s.

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Jean-François Millet

1814–1875

JEAN-FRANÇOIS MILLET was born in the Norman village of Gruchy, the eldest child in a large, closely knit family of farmers living in modest prosperity on their own land. His parents, religious and patriarchal, saw to it that he received a good education, which gave him a knowledge of Latin and a lifelong interest in literature. Having shown early signs of talent, the youth was sent to Cherbourg in 1833 to work with a local portrait painter, Bon Dumouchel (1807–1846). Two years later, he entered the studio of Lucien-Théophile Langlois (1803–1845), a former pupil of Antoine-Jean Gros. In 1837, provided with a stipend by the city of Cherbourg, Millet went to Paris, to enroll at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts as the pupil of the history painter Paul Delaroche (1797–1856), then at the height of his celebrity. After two unhappy years of study, Millet competed unsuccessfully for the Rome Prize, left his teacher, and lost his stipend. Back in Cherbourg, he set himself up as a portrait painter. One of his portraits was accepted for the Paris Salon of 1840, but another, commissioned by the city of Cherbourg, was returned to him as a poor likeness. Discouraged, Millet decided to seek

better luck in Paris, where he established himself with his wife, the frail Pauline-Virginie Ono, barely twenty years old. His portraits of that time, modeled in hard contrasts of light and shadow (*Portrait of Mademoiselle Ono*, c. 1841, Musée Thomas-Henry, Cherbourg), are indebted to the Spanish painters whose work he was able to study in the Galerie Espagnole at the Louvre. While he struggled for a livelihood, his wife contracted tuberculosis and died. Millet returned to Cherbourg in 1844 and here took as his companion a servant girl of eighteen, Catherine Lemaire. To reach a wider audience, he produced ingratiating bucolic idylls, using a technique of flecked touches of light color, his *manière fleurie*, a concession to a popular revival of rococo style to which his friend Narcisse Diaz may have introduced him. Sensing the disapproval of his Cherbourg relations, he moved with his mistress to Le Havre and thence to Paris (1846), where he continued to woo the public with mildly erotic compositions. But in his drawings for them he already gave proof of greater energy and seriousness than was called for by these slight inventions (*The Lovers*, c. 1848, AIC).

Millet took no active part in the Revolution of 1848. At the unjuried Salon of that year, he exhibited *The Grain Sifter* (1847–1848, National Gallery, London), one of his earliest scenes of farm labor, which met with a favorable critical reaction. He now became acquainted with several of the artists who were to form what came to be known as the School of Barbizon, Théodore Rousseau, Charles-Emile Jacque (1813–1894), and the sculptor Antoine-Louis Barye (1795–1875). He also met Honoré Daumier about this time, when both artists competed unsuccessfully in the contest for an allegorical painting of the Republic.

An outbreak of cholera in Paris prompted Millet in 1849 to join his new friends at Barbizon. From this time on, he devoted himself mainly to subjects from rural life. At the Salon of 1850–1851, his *Sower* (MFA) attracted both praise and ridicule by its novelty in endowing farm labor with symbolic nobility. Popularized by countless reproductions, it came in time to signify Creative Man. In the following years, Millet continued to treat scenes of rural work in an elevated style. *Harvesters Resting* (1853, MFA) cast its subject as a modern version of the story of Ruth and Boaz. At the Salon of 1857, *The Gleaners* (Louvre), a composition of grand dignity, nevertheless came under attack because some saw a subversive intent in its image of rural poverty. While the picture was on view, Millet received a commission from the American painter Thomas Appleton (1812–1884) for what was to become in later years his most famous painting, *The Angelus* (1859, Louvre). During the 1860s his work began to attract the attention of a widening circle of critics and collectors, not a few of them Americans. At the Salon of 1863 his *Man with a Hoe* (c. 1862, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles) caused a controversy between indignant journalists who denounced this portrayal of an exhausted laborer as subhuman and cretinous and admirers who saw in it a tribute to stoic endurance of unrewarded toil.

Millet and his family lived as frugally as their neighbors. In 1863 Catherine gave birth to their ninth child. His breakthrough to success came at the Salon of 1864, where the youth and near prettiness of his *Shepherdess Guarding Her Flock* (Louvre) won the hearts of the public who concluded that he had at last overcome his addiction to scenes of misery and discovered charm. He was awarded

a first-class medal. Landscape, which had played a minor role in his work, now came to dominate it. Unlike his fellow painters at Barbizon, he did not respond to the forests and rocky deserts of Fontainebleau, preferring man-made agricultural landscapes that perhaps reminded him of his childhood in Normandy. The area around Barbizon furnished him with a sparse repertoire of motifs which he enriched by recollections of Normandy and by studies gathered in the more varied, hilly countrysides of the Auvergne, where he made several stays in the 1860s for the sake of his wife's health. In some of his later landscapes there appears an undercurrent of emotional tension that disturbs their formal structure and foreshadows the turbulent late landscapes of Vincent van Gogh, an admirer of his work.

In his rural seclusion at Barbizon, Millet still maintained lively intellectual contacts with literary and artistic friends, read the classics, advised his friend and later biographer Alfred Sensier on questions of art, and formed a collection of engravings, medals, and ceramics. At the Paris Universal Exposition of 1867 he was impressively represented by nine paintings, among them *The Gleaners* and *The Angelus*, which had earned him the cross of the Legion of Honor in 1865. When war with Prussia broke out in 1870, he found refuge in his native Normandy, waiting out the siege of Paris and the civil war that followed. He refused association with the Commune and its Federation of Artists. Late in 1871 he returned to Barbizon. Through his dealer Durand-Ruel, who had immigrated to London, he sent paintings abroad for exhibition and sale in Europe and America. Their success signaled his acceptance by the international public.

Childhood memories, refreshed by impressions of his wartime stay in Normandy, furnished him material for many of the landscapes that he completed after his return to Barbizon (*The Church of Gréville*, 1871–1874, Louvre). Among his projects of the postwar years was the completion of a landscape cycle, begun in 1868, representing the seasons of the year in their natural and agricultural aspects (*Spring*, 1868–1873, Louvre). One of his last finished works, *The Bird Nesters* (1874, PMA), was a nocturnal vision of torch-lit, violent action that contrasted strangely with the stillness of his earlier paintings of rural life. Ailing in 1875, he married his common-law wife in accordance with the rites

of the church (a civil wedding had been performed in 1853). He died on 20 January and was buried in the churchyard at Barbizon, beside Théodore Rousseau.

Because it dwells on an aspect of social reality, the lives of peasants, Millet's work is usually assigned to the current of nineteenth-century realism. But in its treatment of that reality it is neither strictly modern nor visually objective. Guided by memories of art, Millet idealized the condition and appearance of the French peasantry. Like Daumier, he had an eye for statuesque corporeality and for the telling gesture, but while Daumier's stylizations accentuated the individual, Millet limited himself to the typical. His modernity and originality lay, not in his choice of subjects, nor even in the depth of feeling he brought to them, but in his formal qualities, the power of his drawing and the boldness of his pictorial invention.

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1963.10.42 (1706)

Leconte de Lisle

c. 1840–1841

Oil on fabric, 117 × 81 (46 1/16 × 31 7/8)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

On the balustrade at lower right, in feigned glyptic capitals: F. MILLET.

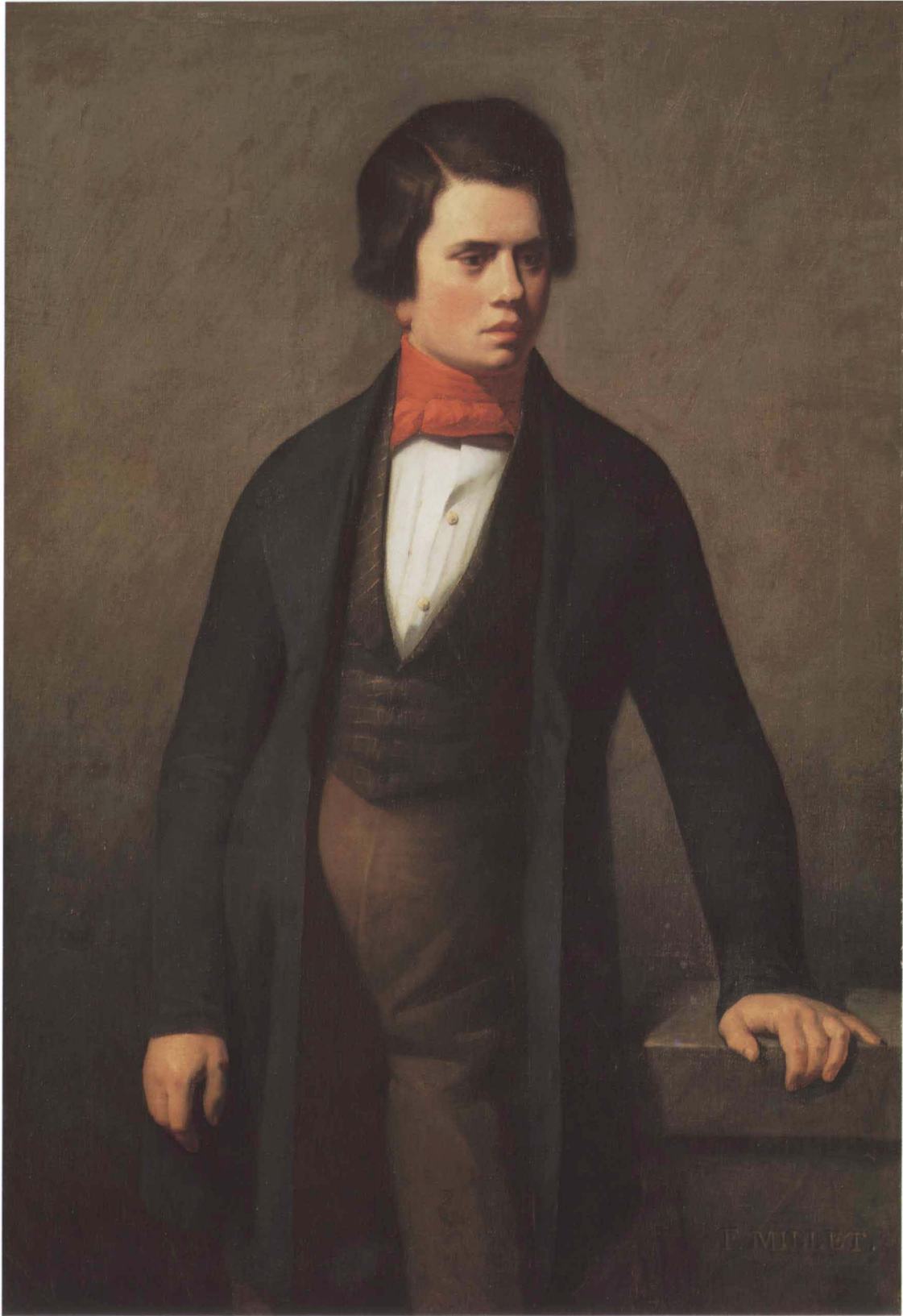
Technical Notes: The picture's support is a moderate-weight, plain-weave fabric lined onto fabric. Its original tacking margins have been removed, but cusping evident on all edges suggests the painting has not been cut down. The portrait is painted on a thick white ground. Infrared reflectography shows no underdrawing. The paint is applied broadly and smoothly, with little impasto. Its layer structure is simple and straightforward, with little tonal or chromatic nuance. The original support shows considerable damage, with many long tears, holes, and abrasions, particularly on the right side of the support. These losses, which occur mainly in the background and the coat, do not seriously affect the sitter's face. The inpainting, exceeding the areas of actual damage, has darkened. A heavy, milkily opaque, and discolored varnish covers the image. Impasto has been flattened and the weave pattern of the lining canvas imprinted on the painting during a former lining.

Provenance: Henri Rouart [1833–1912], Paris; by inheritance to his son, Ernest Rouart [1874–1942], Paris; (Galerie André Weil, Paris); by whom sold March 1950 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist. NGA, 1979, *French Romanticism*, unnumbered checklist.

FORMALLY ATTIRED in a black frock coat and embroidered vest, the young man stands at a low parapet on which the name of Millet is inscribed in lapidary capitals.¹ An abundant shock of wavy black hair, parted at the left, crowns his head; a bright red neckcloth is wound around his throat above a starched white shirtfront. Leaning with his left hand on the stone ledge beside him, he assumes an assertive stance, as if about to address an audience.

The painting's somber colors, its hardness of contour, and sharp tonal contrasts are characteristic of the portraits by which the young Millet, having recently lost his stipend at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, struggled to earn a living in Cherbourg and Paris during the years 1840–1842. Among his oth-



Jean-François Millet, *Leconte de Lisle*, 1963.10.42

er paintings of the time, the one that comes closest to this in conception, format, and painterly execution is *Portrait of Monsieur Lefranc* (fig. 1) in the collection of Herman Shickman, New York.² Of roughly the same, exceptionally large dimensions as the picture at the National Gallery, it presents its sitter with the same stiff formality and gives a similarly heavy-handed emphasis to costume and accessories. The fact that this picture was exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1840³ proves its very early position in the chronology of Millet's portraiture and strongly suggests that its close relative, the National Gallery's *Leconte de Lisle*, should also be dated to about 1840, rather than to 1842 as has sometimes been supposed. Together with several other portraits from the early 1840s,⁴ most of which are of smaller dimensions and of less formal presentation but show a similar energy of handling and blunt physicality in the treatment of head and body, they exemplify Millet's first distinctive, personal style and at the same time reflect something

Fig. 1. Jean-François Millet, *Portrait of Monsieur Lefranc*, oil on canvas, 1840, New York, Herman Shickman Gallery



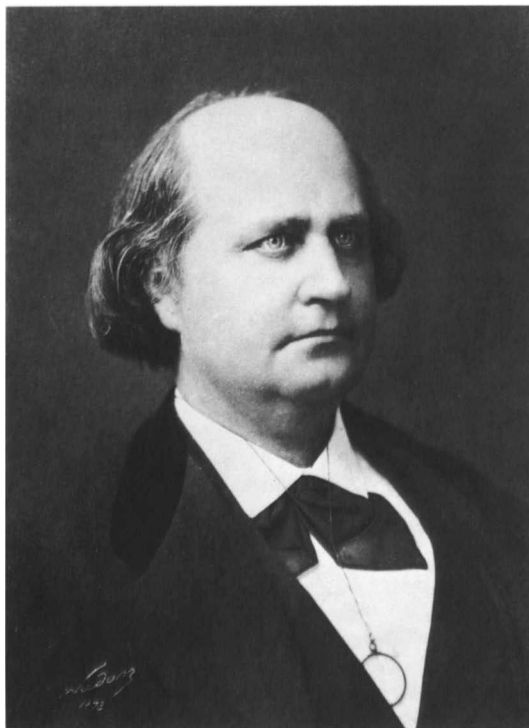
Fig. 2. J.-A. Coraboeuf after Félix Jobbé-Duval, *Leconte de Lisle*, engraving, 1850s, photograph courtesy of Firestone Library, Princeton University

of the provincialism of his early clientele, the urban middle class of Normandy, with which he became briefly associated in 1841–1844 through his marriage to Pauline-Virginie Ono, the daughter of a well-connected family of Cherbourg.

The identification of the portrait's subject as the poet Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle (1818–1894) in his student days is not entirely secure. It rests on information from early owners of the picture, the family of Henri Rouart (1833–1912), an important collector of Millet's work, from whose descendants it was acquired by Chester Dale in 1950.⁵ No portraits of Leconte de Lisle dating to the early 1840s are known with which this could be compared. A pen drawing by Félix Jobbé-Duval from the 1850s (fig. 2)⁶ and photographs by Nadar taken at a still later date (fig. 3)⁷ show a face that, allowing for differences in age, is not unlike the face in the painting in features and expression.

If it is accepted as a likeness of Leconte de Lisle, the portrait at the National Gallery, datable by its style to about 1840–1841, would show him at the age of twenty-two, which in fact agrees with the look of the young man in the picture. Born in 1818, on the island of La Réunion, a French possession off the east coast of Madagascar, Leconte had gone to Brittany in 1837, in the care of his uncle, Louis Leconte, deputy mayor of Dinan, to prepare himself for the study of law at the University of Rennes.⁸ After completing a baccalaureate in 1838, the preliminary requirement for admission to the university, he was expected to begin his actual law studies. Instead, he gave most of his time and energy to his readings in classical literature, helped to start a short-lived literary journal, and neglected his legal preparations. In January 1841 Leconte tardily and without distinction passed his first-year examination, which gave him the status of a *bachelier en droit*, but he refused to present himself for the second-year examination, and in the summer of 1842 definitely abandoned his legal studies. After another ill-starred attempt at journalism, short of

Fig. 3. Félix Tournachon [Nadar], photograph of Leconte de Lisle, 1873, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France



funds and in disgrace with his family, he took ship for La Réunion in early 1843.⁹

A date for the portrait about 1840–1841 would thus coincide with a critical period in Leconte's early life when, gradually abandoning his legal studies, he made the fateful decision to turn to literature instead. It is not easy to imagine what might have prompted the painting of so formal a portrait of the reluctant student at this point. The picture may have been commissioned by his uncle, perhaps to mark Leconte's reception as *bachelier en droit* in January 1841,¹⁰ though this would seem a surprising gesture on the part of a relative who by that time had become deeply annoyed at his nephew's behavior.

The choice of Millet to undertake this portrait is equally difficult to explain. The biographies of Millet and Leconte do not record an encounter of the two men.¹¹ Millet, still an obscure young artist, starting on a career as a local portrait painter at Cherbourg, is not known to have worked in Brittany. After his years of study in Paris during 1837–1840, he returned to Cherbourg in the early part of 1840 and remained there for the entire year, revisiting Paris from March to October 1841, and returning to Cherbourg in November 1841 to be married. Early in 1842 he moved with his wife to Paris, where he stayed for the next two years, not returning to Cherbourg until the spring of 1844. If he painted Leconte in Brittany at any time in 1840–1842, he must have made unrecorded visits to Rennes in 1840, in very early 1841, or in the winter of 1841–1842. Otherwise it is necessary to assume an unrecorded visit by Leconte to Paris during Millet's presence there in March–October 1841 or in the course of 1842. The identification of the portrait's sitter as Leconte de Lisle at any rate poses a number of unresolved questions about the circumstances that brought together, in their obscure youth, the future great poet and the future great painter.

Notes

1. The unusual prominence of this signature contradicts the remark by Alfred Sensier, Millet's friend and biographer, that the artist felt such diffidence about his early portraits that "he did not dare to sign them" (Sensier 1881 [see Biography], 69).

2. Oil on canvas, 117 × 89 cm; Lepoittevin 1971, no. 68. The picture, formerly in the Peter Nathan collec-

tion, Zurich, bears the signature MILLET at its lower left, inscribed in large Roman capitals in a style resembling that of the unusual signature of the portrait at the NGA.

3. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure et lithographie des artistes vivans exposés au Musée Royal le 15 Mars 1840* (Paris, 1840), 134, no. 1199, *Portrait de M. L. F. Lepoittevin* (1971, no. 68) includes this picture in his catalogue of portraits by Millet but curiously omits mention of its exhibition at the Salon of 1840 and dates it "about 1842." In the catalogue of the Millet exhibition (Herbert 1975 [see Biography], 23) it is explicitly identified as Millet's Salon entry of 1840.

4. Among them particularly the following: 1) *Félix-Bienaimé Feuardent* (73.3 × 60.6 cm), Herman Shickman collection, New York (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 58), and its pendant, *Madame Félix-Bienaimé Feuardent* (same dimensions), The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 57); 2) *Henriette Ferre* (100 × 81 cm), Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 59); 3) *Maître Valmont, Notary at Cherbourg* (100 × 80 cm), Musée Thomas-Henry, Cherbourg (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 64), and its pendant, *Madame Valmont*, Saint Louis Art Museum (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 65); 4) *Pauline Ono* (73 × 60 cm), Musée Thomas-Henry, Cherbourg (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 63).

5. The picture is not mentioned in accounts of the Henri Rouart collection published on the occasion of the owner's death in 1912 (see Henri Frantz, "The Rouart Collection, III, the Works of Millet," *International Studio* 50, no. 198 [August 1913]: 97-107). Inherited by Henri Rouart's son, Ernest, it was consigned at the latter's death in 1942 to the Galerie André Weil in Paris from which Chester Dale bought it in 1950. Notes from this dealer, in the curatorial files of the NGA, assert that the portrait was "painted at Rennes, France" (invoice, 13 March 1950) and had been in the Rouart family "nearly for half a century. The family does not know exactly where it comes from before; but, probably was bought like most pictures of this collection from some leading Paris Galleries of that period such as: Georges Petit or others" (letter by André Weil, 14 April 1950). No notice was taken of the portrait in the literature of art before 1954, when it became the subject of a brief note by John Walker, then chief curator at the NGA (Walker 1954, 52).

6. Published, in a reproduction by J. A. Coraboeuf, as a frontispiece to Jean Dornis, ed., *Leconte de Lisle, contes en prose (impressions de jeunesse)* (Paris, 1910). Félix Jobbé-Duval (1821-1889), a portrait and history painter, pupil of Delaroche and Gleyre, submitted work to the Paris Salons from 1840 onward, including, in 1842, a portrait of Théophile G. (Gautier).

7. Nigel Gosling, *Nadar* (New York, 1976), 230.

8. Louis Tiercelin, "La Jeunesse de Leconte de Lisle," *Revue des deux-mondes* 150 (1898): 629-656.

9. Tiercelin 1898, 656.

10. Robert Herbert has suggested (letter of 21 February 1974, in NGA curatorial files) that the red neckcloth in Millet's portrait "might conceivably have some

reference to one of the law degrees that the subject was pursuing." A detailed contemporary account of the manners and customs of law students, which includes a description of their typical costume, E. de la Bedollière's "L'Etudiant en droit," *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (Paris, 1840), 1:17-25, makes no mention of red neckcloths.

11. Lepoittevin 1973, 53, notes, "Il n'existe aucun témoignage... en ce qui concerne les relations entre Leconte de Lisle et Millet, qui fit son portrait." Walker 1954, 52, ventures the guess that Leconte de Lisle, while a student at Rennes, may have "met Millet, who was also in his twenties and who spent the summers in Brittany with his family. There is a letter in which Leconte de Lisle mentions sight-seeing with 'three landscapists from Paris'. Whether Millet was one of these artists, or however they met, the young poet proved an attractive and romantic subject." But there is no evidence that Millet spent summers in Brittany with his family, nor has the letter mentioning the three landscapists been found.

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1963.10.43 (1707)

Portrait of a Man

c. 1845

Oil on fabric, 40.6 × 32.3 (16 × 12^{3/4})

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left, scratched into the paint with the handle of the brush: F. Millet

Technical Notes: The painting is executed on a medium-weight, finely woven, plain-weave fabric that was later lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cropped. An unusually thick, smooth, white ground covers the support, making the X-radiographic image faint and hard to read. The area beneath the figure has



Jean-François Millet, *Portrait of a Man*, 1963.10.43

been underpainted with a warm transparent reddish brown. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. The image is built up in fine, glazelike applications, progressing from the darker to the lighter areas, with the very slightly pastose highlights touched in last. A thin, even varnish covering the painting has yellowed, distorting the tonal relationships. Ultraviolet light reveals a small amount of inpainting in the background, the sitter's collar, and scarf. There is a repaired and inpainted hole at the center of the picture's left side.

Provenance: (Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 23 February 1925, no. 111). (Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 3 December 1925, no. 101). A. Devilder. (Galerie Joseph Allard, Paris); sold 16 June 1926 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MusFrA, 1928, *100 Years of French Portraits from the Chester Dale Collection*, no. 6. NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

SHOWN at half-length, the young man stands before a beige-gray background. Dressed in a dark overcoat, his right hand passed between its upper buttons, he faces to the left, but his eyes—small, light brown, and lively—are turned in the opposite direction. His fairly long hair is parted at the left, a fringe of beard frames his chin and lower cheeks. The early history of this portrait, of unusually small size, is not known. The fact that it only came to light in 1925¹ suggests that it had remained in the sitter's family until that date.

The portrait's refined colorism and the manner of its execution, soft in the contours and fuzzily diffuse in the shaded areas of the face, are characteristic of Millet's portraiture in the mid- and late 1840s and differs from the heavy and edgy touch that had marked his work of the earlier years of that decade. It gives the effect of fairly rapid handling, less energetic, but more assured than that of the earlier portraits. This new deftness and loosening of his brushwork, which has been called Millet's *manière fleurie* (flowery manner), marked a distinct if transitory phase in his work about 1845.² Lucien Lepoittevin,³ noting the painting's "freer handling," grouped it with Millet's portraits from that time and drew attention to the similarity of its signature, scratched into the wet paint with the handle of the brush, to that of the *Portrait of a Man* (Kunstmuseum, Saint Gall), which bears the date of 1845.⁴

In style and pose, Millet's *Portrait of Eugène-Félix Lecourtois* (fig. 1) at the Städelches Kunstin-

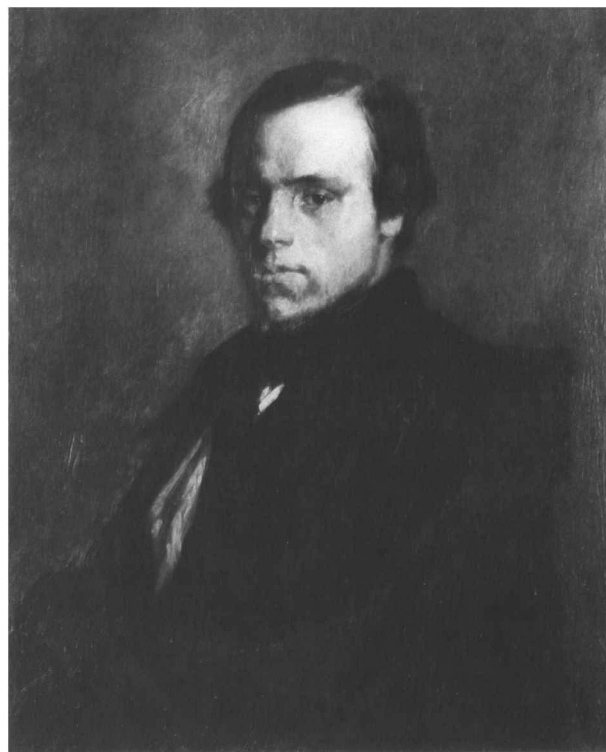


Fig. 1. Jean-François Millet, *Portrait of Eugène-Félix Lecourtois*, oil on canvas, c. 1845, Frankfurt, Städelches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, inv. 1415, photograph by Ursula Edelmann

stitut, Frankfurt,⁵ bears a marked resemblance to the National Gallery's picture, and its sitter's features, though apparently those of a somewhat older man, are not unlike those of the unidentified subject of the portrait in Washington. Lecourtois was a brother-in-law of Millet, and it seems possible that the National Gallery's portrait represents yet another member of the same family.

Notes

1. *Catalogue des tableaux modernes, appartenant à divers amateurs* [auction cat. Hôtel Drouot.] (Paris, 23 February 1925), 25, no. 111, repro. opp. 10.

2. Alfred Sensier, who coined the expression *manière fleurie*, dated the beginning of the phase in Millet's work which it described to about 1841 (Sensier 1881, 82).

3. Letter of 3 June 1965 in NGA curatorial files.

4. Oil on canvas, Kunstmuseum, Saint Gall (Lepoittevin 1971, no. 89).

5. Oil on canvas, 72 × 59 cm, Lepoittevin 1971, no. 53. Lecourtois was the husband of Armide-Adèle Ono, the sister of Pauline-Virginie Ono, Millet's first wife (d. 1844). In this portrait, to which Lepoittevin assigns the

improbably early date of 1841, Lecourtois resembles the sitter of the NGA's portrait, particularly in the shape and expression of his mouth and in the fringe of beard around his cheeks and chin, though his hair is shorter, his forehead higher, his nose less pointed and uptilted. It seems possible that he is the same person at a slightly older age. (See also Millet's portrait drawing of Lecourtois at an evidently much younger age, dated by Lepoittevin [1971, no. 20] to 1839–1840, in Musée Thomas-Henry, Cherbourg.)

References

- 1929 Dale: 7.
 1965a Dale: 46, repro.
 1965 NGA: 90.
 1968 NGA: 79, repro.
 1971 Lepoittevin: 90, repro.
 1975 NGA: 234, repro.
 1985 NGA: 269, repro.

1949.1.9 (1041)

The Bather

1846–1848

Oil on mahogany panel, 18.5 × 24.1 × 0.4 (7¹/₂ × 9¹/₂ × ³/₁₆)
 Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

Inscriptions

At lower right: *J F Millet*

Technical Notes: The picture's support is a cradled mahogany panel, horizontally grained, which appears to be of commercial preparation. There is no ground layer, and therefore no underdrawing was evident during infrared examination. X-radiographic and infrared examination indicate an underlying composition, a landscape with two buildings, painted directly on the wood.¹ This buried first design, executed in bold strokes of the heavily charged brush, appears on the picture's present surface in the form of horizontal ridges of impasto that are structurally unrelated to its composition. The painted ridges of a steeple in the underlying building on the right have become visible as a pentimento above and to the right of the bather. The thinness of the paint and the artist's evident intention to allow the dark unprimed wood to appear in shadowed areas around the bather suggest the underlying composition does not cover the entire panel. The final image is painted in thinner layers of paint which, in some areas, have become somewhat transparent. The painting is covered with an amber-colored varnish that is far from the original intended cool gray tonality visible at the painting's unvarnished edges.

Provenance: Adolph Edward Borie [1803–1880] and his wife, née Elizabeth Dundas McKean, Philadelphia;

possibly purchased from Borie or at a sale by George C. Thomas, Philadelphia.² (M. Knoedler & Co., London, New York, and Paris) in 1905, and again on consignment in 1910,³ when sold to R. Horace Gallatin [1871–1948], New York.

Exhibited: New York, M. Knoedler & Co., 1939, *Classics of the Nude*, no. 22. On loan for display with permanent collection, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, 1967–1971.

A YOUNG SHEPHERDESS sits nude at the edge of a stream. Sharply sunlit and contoured by dark shadows, her body stands out from among the rank growth of grasses and reeds on its bank. She leans back, cautiously extending her right leg into the water as if afraid of its coldness. Her discarded shirt and staff lie on the bank at her back, above which appear, silhouetted against the sky, the cows she has been guarding.

The picture belongs to a group of some twenty paintings of the nude, dating from the late 1840s, for the most part of small dimensions and painted on wood, in several of which Millet represented country girls bathing in secluded outdoor settings.⁴ These rustic nudes, chaste in their seeming privacy, followed the more overtly erotic compositions that had occupied him earlier, in about 1844–1846, when he struggled to support himself and his mistress. His talent contained a vein of sensuality that suited him for work of a mildly licentious kind, but he gradually abandoned, or repressed, an inclination that threatened to gain him the reputation of being a specialist in nudities.⁵ Instead, he turned to pastoral subjects of a serious, even melancholy cast, while continuing for a time to paint nudes, which he now conceived as intimate scenes from peasant life. The National Gallery's *Bather* belongs to this intermediate phase in Millet's work, midway between his earlier play with erotic themes and his later, nearly exclusive preoccupation with the realities of rural existence.

Rather than sensuality, his shy *Bather* expresses an adolescent country girl's awkwardness and timidity in her state of nudity. The picture's emotional charge results from the uncomfortable tension of her posture and the affecting lankiness of her young body. Millet has stressed the immaturity of the girl's figure with its small breasts and angular limbs. Her shaded face, by contrast, is a mere reddish blur, the bare sketch of the facial type that

in Millet's work customarily stands for "young girl." He is unlikely to have derived this figure from a life study; like his other bathers of the time, she was drawn from the imagination and shaped by an expressive intention.

No drawings or painted studies for this *Bather* are known.⁶ The small picture, an improvisation of broadly sketchlike execution, stands alone in its period but was to have an important sequel in Millet's work of a later decade, in the form of the famous *Goose Girl* (*Le Bain de la gardeuse d'oies*) of 1863 at the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, the only nude Millet is known to have executed after 1850 (fig. 1).⁷ When composing this much larger and more fully developed painting, Millet very evidently remembered his earlier *Bather*, repeating in the *Goose Girl*'s attitude—one leg stretched forward, the other raised and bent at the knee—the pose he had first used for that picture.

Notes

1. X-ray photograph in NGA curatorial files.
2. Lugt lists no Borie sale; the painting was not in the Thomas sale at Samuel Freeman, Philadelphia, 12–13 November 1924.
3. Knoedler dates are given according to Getty Provenance Index, based on Knoedler records. They are confirmed by Robert L. Herbert in a letter dated 15 November 1973 in NGA curatorial files.
4. Among the latter, *Baigneuse assise*, Claude Aubry collection, Paris (Lepoittevin 1973, fig. 49); *Baigneuse se lavant*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Algiers (Lepoittevin 1973, fig. 51); *Bather*, formerly H. Rouart collection

(*J.-F. Millet* [exh. cat. Wildenstein & Co.] [London, 1969], no. 10); *Nude in Back View*, MFA (Wildenstein 1969, no. 11); *Deux Baigneurs*, Louvre. Like the NGA's *Bather*, these paintings are on panel and of small dimensions, varying between 20.6 × 15.2 and 28 × 19 cm.

5. Sensier 1881, 112: "Un soir, devant la vitrine de Deforge, il aperçut deux jeunes gens examinant un tableau de lui, des *Baigneuses*. L'un disait: 'Connais-tu l'auteur de ce tableau?'—'Oui,' repondit l'autre, 'c'est un nommé Millet qui ne fait que des femmes nues.' Ces quelques mots le blessèrent au vif; il se crut condamné à la nudité à perpétuité, et sa dignité se revolta." Kenneth Clark believed that Millet's renunciation of nudes, his decision "at the age of thirty-five to cut out such a large part of his persona," threatened his creative faculties and made for "a certain drabness" in his mature work, "which may be attributed to the heavy hand with which he had to hold down the old Adam" (*The Romantic Rebellion* [New York, 1973], 290).

6. Robert Herbert, in a letter of 15 November 1973 (NGA curatorial files), described it as "[a] very typical Millet work of the period 1846–50. . . . There survive about 20 early nudes of this kind, but I know of none directly related to it, nor of any drawings."

7. Oil on canvas, 38 × 46.5 cm (Herbert 1975 [see Biography], 198, no. 160). It may be noted that a significant group of preparatory or related drawings exists for the *Goose Girl*, while none is known for the National Gallery's *Bather*.

References

- 1915 Hoeber, Arthur. *The Barbizon Painters*. New York: repro. opp. 17.
- 1965 NGA: 90.
- 1968 NGA: 79, repro.
- 1973 Lepoittevin: 63, 65, 67, figs. 49, 51, 53.
- 1975 NGA: 234, repro.
- 1985 NGA: 269, repro.

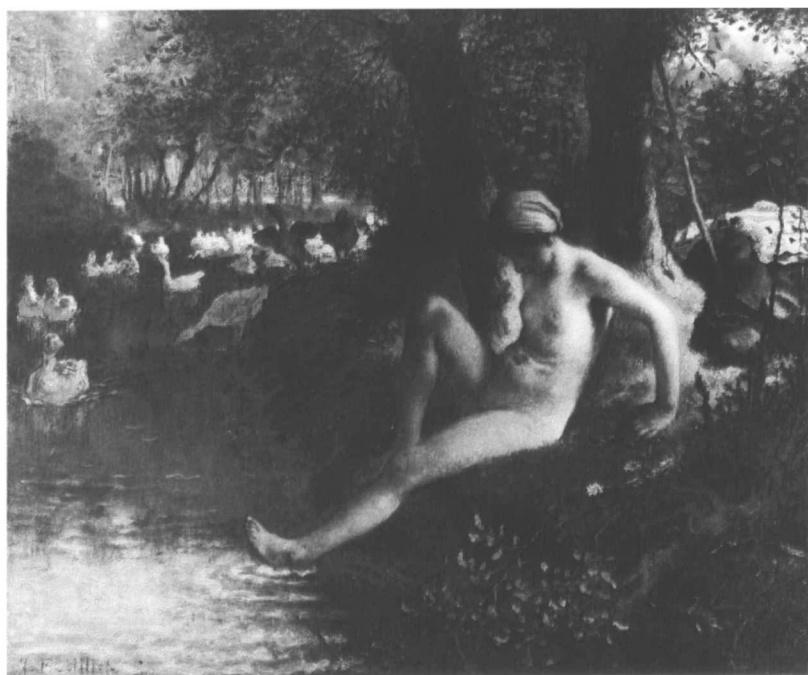


Fig. 1. Jean-François Millet, *Goose-Girl* (*Le Bain de la gardeuse d'oies*), oil on canvas, 1863, Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery, 37.153



Jean-François Millet, *The Bather*, 1949.1.9

Pierre-Paul Prud'hon

1758–1823

PIERRE-PAUL PRUD'HON was born in 1758 in the Burgundian town of Cluny, the son of a stonemason. Both parents died when he was very young. A Benedictine of the abbey of Cluny, Father Besson, befriended the boy and saw to his education. Supported by a recommendation from the bishop of Mâcon, Prud'hon was admitted to the provincial Academy of Dijon, then directed by François Desvoges, a competent painter. In 1778 he returned to Cluny to marry Jeanne Paugnet, the daughter of a notary, who was pregnant by him. The match was a miserably unhappy one from the start. Eager to escape, he obtained funds from a local amateur, Baron Joursanvault, that enabled him to continue his studies in Paris under the tutelage of Jean-Baptiste Pierre (1713–1789), First Painter to the king, who introduced him to a classicizing late rococo much influenced by Correggio. The Rome Prize of the Burgundian Academy, won in 1784, enabled Prud'hon to spend four years in Italy, where he developed a liking for the work of Leonardo. In his classical studies he followed his preference for sensuous Hellenic grace, a taste that separated him from his more rigorously Roman or Spartan contemporaries. He returned to Paris in 1789 and there lived through the Revolution in poverty, earning a scant living with portraits and graphic work. Though a Jacobin and member of the revolutionary Commune des Arts, he sought no political office.

To the Salon of 1793, at the beginning of the Terror, Prud'hon submitted erotic subjects, graceful allegories on the pleasures or torments of love, romantic in feeling and curiously unrevealing of the grimness of their time (*The Union of Love and Friendship*, 1793, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts). After Robespierre's fall (1794), he sheltered in the rustic security of a village in Franche-Comté, where he spent two years painting portraits (*Madame Anthony and Her Two Children*, 1796, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon) and designing illustrations for the publisher Didot. After the establishment of the Directory (1795), he returned to Paris, coolly received by Jacques-Louis David and his followers. His design for a ceiling intended for the Louvre, *Wisdom and Truth, Descending to Earth, Dispel*

the Darkness That Covers It (1799), hinting at peace and renewal after revolutionary strife, won him the commission and the privilege of lodgings at the Louvre. Though he was held in low esteem by David's faction, Prud'hon from this time on had to be reckoned with as a history painter. His aptitude for large-scale decorative work brought him the commission of a suite of allegorical wall paintings for the Hôtel de Lamoignon (1796–1799), the residence of one of the newly enriched financiers who set the tone of Directory society. Through his friendship with Nicolas Frochot, the powerful prefect of the department of the Seine, he received important commissions and was brought into the orbit of Bonaparte.

In 1803 he separated from his mentally ill wife. Shortly thereafter a young painter, Constance Mayer (1775–1821), came into his life, at first as a pupil, then as his collaborator and intimate companion. Prud'hon by this time was receiving generous state commissions. After the establishment of the empire in 1804 he was in demand as portraitist for the imperial family (*Portrait of the Empress Josephine*, 1805, Louvre). He designed the decor of court celebrations, as David had once overseen the pageants of the Revolution, and was charged with the artistic detail of festivities and ceremonies, notably those accompanying Napoleon's second marriage, in 1810, to Marie Louise of Austria. At the request of Frochot he painted *Justice and Divine Vengeance Pursuing Crime* (1808, Louvre) for the courtroom of the Palace of Justice. The picture created a strong impression by its powerful depiction of Crime as a fugitive assassin when exhibited at the Salon of 1808, which also included a painting in Prud'hon's more familiar, sensuously ingratiating manner, *Psyche Carried off by Zephyr* (1808, Louvre).

The fall of the empire, regretted by Prud'hon, did not impair his career, but his work now began to show signs of fatigue. In 1816, the year of David's exile, he was admitted to the Institute. His very existence was shattered in 1821 when Constance Mayer, who had been suffering from spells of depression, committed suicide in his apartment at the Sorbonne. Prud'hon survived this catastrophe by little more than a year, at work on a painting of Christ Expir-

ing on the Cross (1823, Louvre), unfinished at his death, that he had intended as a monument to his grief. He left no pupils. Many of his paintings have suffered serious damage from his excessive use of bituminous paints. He is now most admired for his drawings, studies of the nude in black and white chalk on tinted paper, that rank, together with Ingres' very different drawings, among the high achievements of French classicism.

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de Goncourt 1874: 2:387–485.
de Goncourt, Edmond. *Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre de P.-P. Prud'hon*. Paris, 1876.
Guiffrey 1924.

1961.9.84 (1636)

David Johnston

1808

Oil on fabric, 54.6 × 46.4 (21" × 18" 1/2)

Samuel H. Kress Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: Prudhon / 1808

Technical Notes: The picture's original support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric cut from one piece, was relined onto fabric in 1955. The tacking margins were removed, probably as part of the lining process, but cusping along all edges indicates that the original format has been retained. An off-white ground is visible through apertures of the craquelure. Infrared reflectography does not reveal any underdrawing. The sitter's features were first modeled in tones of brown and black applied directly to the ground. This tonal underpainting supplies the shadow in the finished image. The face was then built up with more thickly applied flesh colors. The individual brushstrokes are not fused into a smooth finish but remain visible throughout and underline the relief of the features. The interlocking paint layers indicate that the background and the sitter's black coat were finished last and that the highlights on the shirt and cravat were added after the coat and shirt had been completed.

The signature and date inscriptions, "Prudhon / 1808," at the lower right are heavily reinforced and run across the craquelure, suggesting that they may have been added at a later date.¹

Stereomicroscopic examination reveals many abrasions and inpainting of the paint film. The area best

preserved is the face, though even here the shaded portions have been covered with later glazes.² Restoration undertaken in 1955 involved some inpainting in the shaded areas of the face, along the edges of the canvas, in the background, and in a few small spots scattered throughout the sitter's coat and shirt. The painting is covered with a clear varnish applied following the 1955 treatment.

Provenance: The portrait's original owner is said to have been the sitter [1789–1854],³ Bordeaux, France; by descent to the Johnston family, Bordeaux. Edouard-Napoléon-César-Edmond Mortier, duc de Trévise [1883–1946], Paris, in 1913; (his sale, Hôtel Jean Charpentier, Paris, 19 May 1938, no. 36). (Robert Lebel, Paris). (Julius H. Weitzner, New York); sold 1952 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York.

Exhibited: Paris, Palais des Beaux-Arts, 1922, *Exposition de P.-P. Prud'hon*, no. 52, as *Portrait d'homme*. Paris, Palais National des Arts, 1937, *Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art français*, no. 211, as *M. Johnson [sic]* and with date given as 1809, repro. Paris, Grand Palais; MMA, 1997–1998, *Pierre-Paul Prud'hon*, no. 139, repro.

THE PRESUMED SUBJECT of this portrait, David Johnston, nineteen years old in 1808, is shown in nearly frontal view, at bust length, wearing a dark blue coat. His face, epically handsome, is cradled in a starched collar, a white cravat, and the up-turned lapels of an embroidered vest. His hair, in artful disorder, forms two long curls over his forehead. By its unusual bigness relative to the picture surface, the sitter's head assumes an impressive monumentality, reinforced by its emphatically sculptural saliences and its smooth, marmoreal features, prominent among them the heavy-lidded eyes and the full-lipped mouth with marked Cupid's bow.⁴

David Johnston, born in Bordeaux in 1789, was the son of Walter Johnston, a wealthy merchant established at Bordeaux since 1761 as the head of a widely ramified family of Anglo-Irish traders and bankers.⁵ The younger Johnston had received his education in Paris before joining the family business, and it may have been at this stage in his life that the portrait was commissioned. Nearly three decades later, in 1835, when he headed the firm, he invested much of his fortune in a large manufacture of ceramics. This enterprise briefly prospered, employing at one time as many as five hundred workers, but went bankrupt in 1844. Johnston had meanwhile served as Bordeaux' mayor from 1838 to



Fig. 1. Pierre-Paul Prud'hon,
Portrait of La Vallée, oil on canvas, 1809,
Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Orléans

1842. A friend of the arts, he left a valuable collection of paintings at his death in 1854.⁶

This portrait first came to light at the *Exposition de P.-P. Prud'hon* held in Paris in 1922.⁷ It was then owned by the duc de Tréville, an important collector, who is supposed to have bought it in 1913 from descendants of the Johnston family.⁸ But he seems not to have been certain of the sitter's identity. At its first exhibition, in 1922, the painting was merely called *Portrait d'homme*.⁹ This title was still used by Jean Guiffrey in 1924, when he included the portrait in his catalogue raisonné of Prud'hon's paintings,¹⁰ though evidently with some reservations, since he considered its "dry and cold" execution more characteristic of Gérard and other pupils of David than of Prud'hon. Guiffrey also noted that the signature, "Prudhon / 1808," was not typical since it lacks the initials *P. P.* that the artist generally used.¹¹

The identification of the sitter as David Johnston was first put forward in 1926 by Méaudre de Lapouyade,¹² the historian of Bordeaux' pottery industry, apparently as a guess based on the pic-

ture's provenance from the Johnston family. No certain portrait of David Johnston to which this could be compared was known to Lapouyade in 1926, and none has appeared since.¹³

In spite of the questions raised by Guiffrey, the picture has been universally accepted as a work by Prud'hon, though one unusual in some respects. Colin Eisler compared it in "pose and style" with Prud'hon's nearly contemporaneous *Portrait of La Vallée* of 1809 (fig. 1),¹⁴ but pointed to what he felt to be its "English feeling," noting that George Romney (1734-1802) had visited France and that "there was considerable French interest in English art" at the time.¹⁵ Romney's brief visit to France, however, had occurred nearly twenty years earlier, in 1790,¹⁶ and had left no apparent effect on French portrait painting. Nor is there anything of Romney's manner in this portrait, which, if an English parallel is to be thought of at all, seems rather more reminiscent of Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830). Prud'hon's *Portrait of La Vallée* does offer some analogies of painterly handling to *David Johnston*, though in conception, arrangement, and expression the resemblance is not close. Among the portraits by Prud'hon that are in some respects comparable to that of David Johnston¹⁷ none possesses its physical immediacy combined with an air of aloof detachment, none approaches its polished hardness of style.

The year 1808 marked the high point of Prud'hon's career during Napoleon's reign. His two large compositions, *Justice and Divine Vengeance Pursuing Crime* and *Psyche Carried off by Zephyr*, met with a resounding public success at that year's Salon¹⁸ and won him the Legion of Honor, bestowed by the emperor in person at the exhibition's close. Painted at the time of these official triumphs, the portrait of David Johnston reflects, surely not by chance, something of the formality of the empire style, of which Prud'hon, in high favor at the court of the Empress Josephine, had been one of the creators. This strain of courtly ostentation does not otherwise appear in Prud'hon's male portraits of the period, which, on the contrary, are marked by a homely middle-class realism. It is curious that it should emerge in the likeness of this youth of solidly commercial background and foreign extraction.

Prud'hon's portraiture occupies a position apart in French painting of his period, one that has defied classification. The brothers de Goncourt be-



Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, *David Johnston*, 1961.9.84

lieved that his portraits placed him, “not in the first rank of French painters, but above the ‘French School.’” This high estimate may have been intended specifically to apply to Prud’hon’s female portraits, in which they admired “characters of spiritual elevation, moral animation, intimate ideality, poignant beauty, and that delicious strangeness of the smile.”¹⁹ But, exceptional among Prud’hon’s male portraits, *David Johnston* in fact shares something of the strangeness and ideality that, in his portraits of women, reminded the de Goncourts of the great Italian masters.

Notes

1. Examination report, NGA Painting Conservation Department, July 1992.

2. Examination report, NGA Painting Conservation Department, July 1992. Opinions concerning the painting’s condition had varied widely over the previous decades. A dealer’s impression, at the time of its sale from the duc de Trévisse collection in 1938, is recorded in letters by Martin Birnbaum who attended that sale as agent of the American collector Grenville L. Winthrop and in that capacity examined both the portrait of David Johnston (no. 36 of the Trévisse sale) and Prud’hon’s *Portrait of Dagoumer* (no. 37 of the same sale). On 8 May, before the auction, Birnbaum reported: “The Prud’hon # 36 is in very fine condition (whereas # 37 is badly cracked all over).” In spite of this first impression, Birnbaum in the end chose *Portrait of Dagoumer* for Winthrop (it is now at the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.), explaining his change of mind in a letter of 19 May: “I decided not to bid on the attractive looking Prud’hon # 36 because it has been entirely repainted, retouched and made pretty.” It is possible that Birnbaum’s decision was influenced by the fact that the portrait of David Johnston was bid up to 200,000 francs at the sale, while that of Dr. Dagoumer was sold for only 61,000 francs (Grenville L. Winthrop papers in curatorial files of the Fogg Art Museum).

A condition report dating from about 1955 in the Kress file at the NGA notes that the painting was “slightly overcleaned prior to acquisition” (in 1952), requiring some restoration “with dry colors and Ayab, alcohol and bleached beeswax mixture.” Examination at the NGA in 1992 demonstrated that the damage and repainting that the painting had suffered affected it more seriously than was admitted in 1955, but far less than reported by Birnbaum in 1938. Silvain Laveissière, a specialist in the work of Prud’hon and chief curator at the Louvre’s Département des Peintures, observed in a letter to the author (9 November 1995): “Le portrait de Dagoumer, malgré ses craquelures, est en effet intact. Celui de Johnston a sans doute souffert. . . . Mais il n’est sûrement pas ‘entièrement repeint,’ et sa facture grasse est conformé à l’exécution large et magistrale qui

est celle de la *Justice et la Vengeance divine*, achevée en 1808 et donc exactement contemporaine.”

3. Information that the picture remained with the Johnston family until its purchase for the duc de Trévisse in 1913 was first published by Charles Sterling in *Chefs-d’oeuvre de l’art français* [exh. cat. Palais National des Arts.] (Paris, 1937), 105, no. 211. It was not repeated in the catalogue of the Trévisse sale in 1938.

4. A peculiarity of the portrait is the disproportionately small size of the sitter’s ear.

5. Méaudre de Lapouyade 1926, 74–79.

6. Edouard Ferot, *Statistique générale de la Gironde* (Bordeaux, 1889), 3:331.

7. Paris 1922 (see under Exhibited), 12, no. 52 (catalogue by Henry Lapauze).

8. See note 3 above.

9. See under Exhibited.

10. Guiffrey 1924, no. 704.

11. “Cette signature est anormale, le P ne présentant pas la forme habituellement employée par Prud’hon qui généralement fait précéder son nom des deux initiales P.P.” (Guiffrey 1924, 262, no. 704). There is in fact some physical evidence that the signature and date were reinforced, or even added, sometime after the completion of the portrait (see note 1 above).

12. Méaudre de Lapouyade 1926, 79: “It is surprising that despite his prominence, both as industrialist and mayor, Bordeaux does not possess any portrait of him [David Johnston]. We are therefore all the more happy to have found in Paris the charming portrait reproduced in plate XVIII. For all the sitter’s youth, his expression is already sufficiently manly to allow us to see in this image the true David Johnston of the pottery works,” adding in a footnote that the portrait in question, of which he presented a reproduction, belonged to the duc de Trévisse.

13. A portrait of David Johnston’s father, Walter Johnston, attributed to Pierre Lacour, is in the collection of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Bordeaux (see Pierre Lacour, *Notes et souvenirs d’un artiste octogenaire, 1778–1798*, ed. Philippe Le Leyzour and Dominique Cante [Bordeaux, 1989], 111).

14. Oil on canvas, 61 × 50 cm (Guiffrey 1924, no. 559).

15. Eisler 1977, 363.

16. See William Hayley, *The Life of George Romney, Esq.* (Chichester, 1809), 144–154. Hayley, Romney’s companion on his excursion to France, recorded visits to several artists in Paris, including David and Greuze, but made no mention of Prud’hon.

17. Besides that of Lavallée, dated 1809, at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans (fig. 1 and note 14 above), particularly those of M. Vallet, 60 × 49 cm, Louvre (Salon of 1812, Guiffrey 1924, no. 637), and of Dr. Dagoumer, dated 1819, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., 61 × 50 cm (Guiffrey 1924, no. 496).

18. *Justice and Divine Vengeance Pursuing Crime*, oil on canvas, 243 × 292 cm, signed P.P. Prud’hon 1808. Louvre, inv. 7340 (Salon of 1808, no. 484; Guiffrey 1924, no. 362; Laveissière 1986, no. 23); *Psyche Carried off by Zephyr*, oil on canvas, 195 × 157 cm, Louvre, RF 512 (Sa-

lon of 1808, no. 485; Guiffrey 1924, no. 146; Laveissière 1986, no. 2 J).

19. De Goncourt 1874, 2:457.

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- 1959 Kress: 375, repro.
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1968 NGA: 93, repro.
1975 NGA: 276, repro.
1977 Eisler: 362–363, no. K 1924, fig. 327.
1984 Walker: 418, no. 596, repro.
1985 NGA: 320, repro.
1986 Laveissière, Sylvain. *Prud'hon, "La Justice et la Vengeance divine poursuivant le Crime."* Les Dossiers du département des peintures, 32. Paris: 8.

Georges Rouget

1784–1869

A PUPIL of both Etienne-Barthélemie Garnier (1759–1849) and Jacques-Louis David, Georges Rouget became a prominent history painter who regularly exhibited at the Paris Salons between 1812 and 1866. Winner of the second grand prize in the Rome Prize contest of 1803, he was awarded a gold medal at the Salon of 1814 and the Legion of Honor in 1822. Attuned to the changing political climates of the time, his work ranged rapidly from Bonapartist eulogistics (*The Imperial Family Doing Homage to the Infant King of Rome*, Salon of 1812) to scenes from classical mythology (*Oedipus and Antigone*, Salon of 1814) and to glorifications of the Catholic monarchy (*Death of Saint Louis*, Salon of 1817). He received many large government commissions, particularly of subjects from French national history for King Louis-Philippe's Galerie Historique at Versailles, of several of which he also furnished cartoons for the Gobelins tapestry works. In 1855 his *Christian Martyrs Delivered to the Beasts* won a first-class medal. His many portraits show him to have been a competent follower of David in matters of technique and style.

He is chiefly remembered for having been David's favorite studio assistant, who shared in the execution of several of his master's major works

and painted repetitions of them, beginning with versions of *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at the Saint-Bernard* in about 1803. Working under David's supervision, Rouget laid in the figures of the *Coronation* picture (1804–1808, Louvre), helped David with *Leonidas at Thermopylae* in 1812 (1814, Louvre), and seems to have had a hand in *Napoleon in His Study* (see pp. 196–208). During his master's exile in Brussels, Rouget in 1821–1822 completed the full-scale repetition of the *Coronation* begun earlier by David and later signed by him (Versailles). Weaknesses in David's later work have sometimes been blamed, perhaps unjustly, on Rouget's collaboration.¹

Notes

1. Rosenthal 1904, 121.

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Studio of Georges Rouget

1963.10.212 (1876)

Copy after Georges Rouget's Portrait of Jacques-Louis David

c. 1813–1815

Oil on fabric, 89.2 × 67.8 (35 1/8 × 26 3/4)

Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: The painting was executed on a light-weight finely woven fabric that subsequently has been lined onto another piece of fabric. The X-radiograph shows traces of old tacking holes in the picture's surface, running along all four sides of the support, indicating that the picture at one time was nailed to a smaller stretcher, with the excess painted fabric presumably folded back at the top, sides, and bottom. Sometime later, the full canvas was attached to a larger stretcher, bringing the former tacking edges into the picture's front surface. This added 6 cm to the picture's top and 2 cm to its bottom and each of its sides, enlarging its exposed surface from an original 81 × 64 cm to its present dimensions of 89 × 68 cm. Because it is unlikely that the top edge foldover would be so wide nor would it be painted, it is probable that the larger present dimensions are original, restored when original paint was discovered on the foldover edges.

Over a ground of a warm, off-white color that was applied to the full dimensions of the support, the paint has been applied in broad strokes, fairly loose in the background and the sitter's costume and more finely controlled in the face. Under magnification, traces of darker lines that may be underdrawing were observed, although no underdrawing was visible during infrared examination. Most parts of the background have been inpainted, presumably to cover abrasion or very thinly applied original paint. The painting is covered with a clear, even layer of varnish.

Provenance: J. P. Mazaroz-Ribalier; (his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 1–3 December 1890, no. 175); purchased by Gustave Cahen [b. 1825], Paris; (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 24 May 1929, no. 78). Cahen collection on consignment with Felix Lachovski; (Cahen sale, Silo's, New York, 5–6 December 1929, day two, no. 483); purchased by Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: NGA, 1965, *The Chester Dale Bequest*, unnumbered checklist.

JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID (1748–1825) is shown at the age of about sixty-four. He is posed seated in front view, at knee-length, holding a pointed drawing

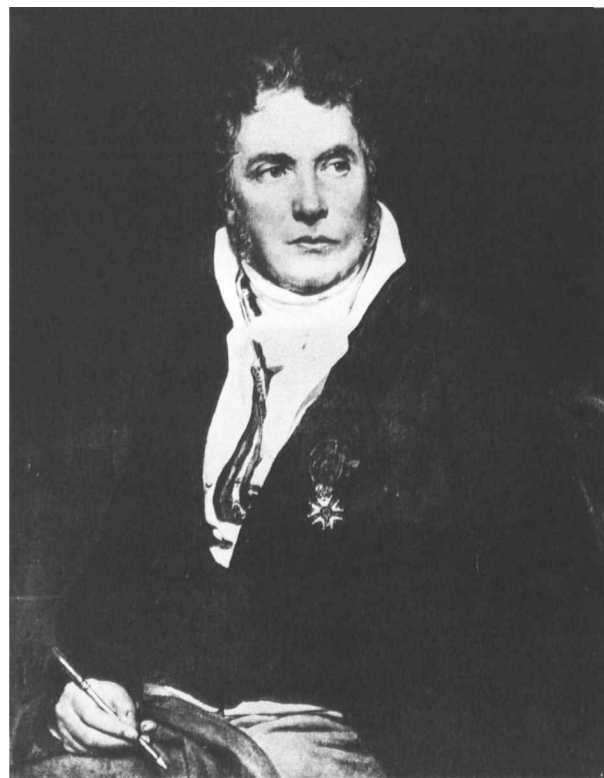


Fig. 1. Georges Rouget, *Portrait of Jacques-Louis David*, oil on canvas, 1812/1813, lost, formerly Paris, collection of vicomtesse de Fleury (illustrated in Cantinelli 1930: no. 133)

chalk in his right hand. The rosette and cross of an *officier* of the Legion of Honor are prominently displayed on the lapel of his coat.

The picture is the copy of a portrait painted in 1812 or 1813 by Georges Rouget, a student and favorite assistant of David. The original version (fig. 1), owned by David himself, is mentioned in both his wife's testament¹ and in an inventory drawn up after her death in 1826 that specifically mentions Rouget's authorship.² Passed on by family inheritance through several generations of David's direct descendants, it was lately in the collection of one of his great-granddaughters, Renée, vicomtesse de Fleury (1869–1948).³ Its present whereabouts are unknown. Unsigned and undated, Rouget's portrait of his master came in the course of time to be mistaken for a work by David himself.⁴



Studio of Georges Rouget, *Copy after Georges Rouget's Portrait of Jacques-Louis David*, 1963.10.212

David had a particularly close working relationship with Rouget, who for twenty years, from 1803 to 1822, served him as an assistant and, eventually, as his principal collaborator in the execution of major paintings.⁵ It was to Rouget that David in 1805–1807 entrusted the laying in and the finishing of many of the figures in his great *Coronation* picture (Louvre), to save himself the physical strain of working on the monumental canvas.⁶ At about the time Rouget painted his portrait of David, he was assisting his master in the completion of *Leonidas at Thermopylae* (Louvre) and probably also had a share in the execution of the National Gallery's *Napoleon in His Study* (see pp. 196–208).⁷

Though entirely by Rouget's own hand, his portrait of David is closely associated with a series of five family portraits that David himself began in 1810 with the portrait of his son-in-law General Baron Meunier and concluded in 1813 with the portrait of his wife, now in the National Gallery of Art (see pp. 208–212).⁸ The coherence of this series, underlined by the uniform dimensions (73 × 60 cm) that David gave to the portraits of his wife, two daughters, and their husbands, is only slightly disturbed by the somewhat larger dimensions (80 × 65 cm)⁹ in which Rouget executed the portrait of the family's patriarch, perhaps to give him visual prominence in this array of three female and three male members of his clan. That David chose Rouget to paint his portrait in this familial context, instead of carrying it out himself, bears witness to the regard and trust in which he held his young assistant. There is some poignancy, undoubtedly intentional, in the prominence given in the picture to the cross of *officier* of the Legion of Honor. David had been awarded this high distinction by Napoleon himself after the triumphal exhibition of the *Coronation* in 1808,¹⁰ a success to which Rouget had been a contributor. Since then, Napoleon's favor had been withdrawn, and from 1809 onward, though continuing in the honorific role of First Painter, David was given no further state commissions. The display of the decoration in a portrait painted at the time of official neglect was a reminder of honors earned in the past and may have expressed the hope for a future return of favor.

The presence at the National Gallery of a replica of the portrait raises the question of whether this replica is also by Rouget's hand. In the case of a close copy such as this, the answer can only rest

on a judgment of quality. Rouget's long practice in assimilating David's manner so far submerged his own artistic individuality as to make it hard to grasp. While it can be troublesome to distinguish between David's and Rouget's share in works they produced in collaboration, it is even more difficult to mark out Rouget's personal manner among the crowded ranks of David's school. But though lacking in originality, his work maintained a high level of painterly quality, which accounts for the esteem in which it was generally held in the early part of the nineteenth century. This has since given way to disparagement,¹¹ though it is well to remember, before dismissing Rouget as a simple hireling in the service of a great artist, that there are passages in some of David's most admired paintings that were brushed by Rouget.

The heavy-handed and in part quite coarse execution of the copy at the National Gallery speaks against Rouget's authorship. It lacks the subtleties of tone and color with which he enlivened the accessory detail of his portraits, suggesting the fresh beauty of starched collars and the luster of silken neckcloths with a justness of touch born of long practice in David's studio. The copy's timid adherence to minute details in the original, such as the individual strands of hair that frame David's brow, betrays the painstaking mediocrity of an uninspired imitator: it is unlikely that Rouget himself would have produced so pedantic and lifeless a duplication of his own work.¹² There was undoubtedly a demand for copies of his portrait of the celebrated painter which Rouget, following his own master's example, allowed a lesser artist to supply. Another copy of the portrait, of even more modest quality, is in the collection of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung in Munich (inv. 8922).

Notes

1. Dated 6 March 1826, Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier Central, CVIII, 1013 (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, no. 2045, and Schnapper et al. 1989, 635). In her testament Mme David bequeathed Rouget's portrait of her husband to their daughter Emilie, the wife of General Baron Meunier.

2. Dated 27 June 1826, Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier Central, CVIII, 1014 (Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, no. 2074, and Schnapper et al. 1989, 636).

3. The portrait had remained until fairly recently in the possession of the artist's descendants: bequeathed

by David's widow to her daughter Baroness Claude-Marie Meunier (d. 1863), it passed on to the latter's daughter-in-law Baroness Jules Meunier (d. 1903) and thence to her second cousin Mme Marius Bianchi, née Jeanin, who bequeathed it to her daughter Thérèse, comtesse Murat (d. 1940), who left it to her sister Renée, vicomtesse Fleury (d. 1948).

4. Cantinelli (1930, 113, no. 133, pl. LXXII) included it in his catalogue of David's work. Hautecoeur (1954, 230 note 124) explicitly described it as a self-portrait by David. Better informed, David's grandson, Jules David (1880, 623, 647), listed the picture among portraits of David by other artists, identified its painter as Rouget, and dated it to 1812.

5. Rouget began his work for David, in about 1803, as one of the assistants who executed replicas of his *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at the Saint-Bernard* (Hautecoeur 1954, 199).

6. For Rouget's share in the execution of the *Coronation* picture, see A. Jal, "Notes sur Louis David, peintre d'histoire," *Revue étrangère* 55 (September 1845): 704; Rosenthal 1904, 75-76 ("Monté sur un échafaudage, Rouget peignait, tandis que David dans un fauteuil le surveillait, prêt à prendre la palette pour achever une forme ou donner l'accent à un modelé"); Hautecoeur 1954, 204; Schnapper et al. 1989, 410, 414. When David in 1822 undertook the completion of a full-scale copy of the *Coronation* (Versailles) that he had started, then suspended fourteen years earlier, he charged Rouget with much of the work (Hautecoeur 1954, 252; Schnapper et al. 1989, 534-539). In the meantime, he had again employed him in 1808 to assist in the painting of a second version of *Napoleon in Coronation Robes* (lost), the original of which Napoleon had rejected (see Schnapper et al. 1989, 435-436).

7. Pierre Suau (1786-1855), one of David's pupils, reported in a letter written in February 1812, at the time when David was resuming work on *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, that Rouget was currently painting the draperies and, occasionally, the "flesh" in David's paintings (Mesplé 1969, 102). Though this remark probably refers mainly to the completion of *Leonidas*, it may also apply to another painting that was in David's studio at the same time, the NGA's *Napoleon in His Study*, a canvas of the size for which David normally required the help of assistants (see pp. 196-208).

8. For a discussion of David's *Madame David* and the related portraits of members of his family see pp. 208-212. According to his grandson, Jules David (1880, 487), David painted these portraits in 1810-1813 "pour se distraire" at a time when, in semidisgrace with the emperor, he received no state commissions. For some reason, he failed to include portraits of his two sons, Jules and Eugène, in the series. Rouget in part supplied this want by his portrait *Eugène David, fils du premier peintre de sa majesté*, which was shown at the Salon of 1812 (no. 810), together with several other portraits by him.

9. The NGA's copy of Rouget's portrait initially had roughly the same dimensions as the original, namely 81 x 64 cm, but was enlarged to its present size of 89 x 69 cm sometime before 1929 (see Technical Notes). It may be noted that David's *Self-Portrait* of 1794 (Louvre) also measures 81 x 64 cm.

10. David 1880, 444; Wildenstein and Wildenstein 1973, no. 1539. Etienne Delécluze (1855, 347) erroneously indicated 1812 as the date of the award.

11. Rosenthal (1904, 121): "Quand on voit à Versailles les tristes choses, sans accent, d'un dessin sourd, d'une couleur grisâtre, que Rouget a signé, on ne peut s'empêcher de lui attribuer la mollesse de facture de quelques parties de la toile [of the *Coronation*]."

12. In a letter of 22 April 1977 (in NGA curatorial files), the art historian Alain Pougetoux who at the time was working on a catalogue of Rouget's paintings expressed doubts about the attribution of the copy at the NGA to Rouget himself: "It does not really look like a painting by him (as far as the treatment of hair and skin are concerned, for instance); moreover it is not signed, whereas he nearly always signed his works." It might be observed, however, that the original of the portrait, lately in the vicomtesse de Fleury collection, also lacks a signature, although it is unquestionably by Rouget.

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Théodore Rousseau

1812–1867

THÉODORE ROUSSEAU was born in Paris, the son of a tailor from the Jura region. Sent at thirteen to his father's native province, to do office work at a sawmill, he learned to know and love the forests of the Jura. On his return to Paris, having decided to become a landscape painter, he studied briefly with Charles Rémond (1795–1875), a painter of historical landscape, whose instruction he found unhelpful and whom he left, in 1828, for another, no less academic, master, the history painter Guillon-Lethière (1760–1832). He had meanwhile begun to sketch on his own at Saint-Cloud and in the forests of Compiègne and Fontainebleau. In 1829 he vainly tried to enter the academic competition for the Rome Prize for Historical Landscape. The following year, on a tour in the Auvergne, he painted his earliest, distinctly personal landscape studies, on which in 1831 he based his first Salon entry. From a voyage to Normandy in 1832, he returned with studies of sky and sea that he used for *The Coast near Granville* exhibited in 1833. The following year, a landscape of “Dutch” character, *Edge of the Forest at Pierrefonds*, was bought by the duc d'Orléans and won him a medal at the Salon. He had meanwhile joined a bohemian clique gathered around Théophile Thoré, an early socialist and future art critic, which included the “prophet” Ganneau, known as the Mapa, who preached ecstatic nature worship. Rousseau's association with these eccentrics and dissenters irritated the Salon authorities, who retaliated by rejecting his submissions. On a tour in the Jura in 1835 he conceived a vast, crowded composition, *Descent of the Cattle from the Meadows*, that occupied him for a year; it was emphatically rejected by the Salon of 1836. More rebuffs in the following years discouraged him from entering further work. Finding the Salon closed to him, he shifted to saleable subjects of modest scale, treated in a naturalist style. In search of motifs, he visited the forest of Fontainebleau, staying at Chailly in 1834 and at Barbizon in 1836. In *The Forest at Bas-Bréau* (Louvre), begun in 1836 and completed in 1867 after many revisions, he presented nature in its irregular forms of growth and decay, without regard to conventions of formal arrangement, while in *The*

Avenue of Chestnuts (Louvre), painted during 1837–1840, he composed a symmetrical view, animated by the writhings of interwoven branches that form a natural architecture. With Jules Dupré, his friend and painting companion in the 1840s, he explored the spacious plains of the Berry and Landes regions, which led him to develop a new compositional scheme, opening large skies and wide horizons behind trees formed of massed dots of color that suggest wind-stirred foliage. During 1845 and 1846 he shared a studio with Dupré in L'Isle-Adam. A contented bachelor until then, he was brought to the brink of matrimony in 1847 by the novelist George Sand who offered him the hand of her adopted daughter. Gossip, which Rousseau blamed on Dupré, frustrated the match. Deeply resentful, he withdrew to the village of Barbizon at the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau, accompanied by an ailing woman, Eliza Gros, with whom he shared the rest of his life. For purposes of business he kept a Paris address.

The Revolution of 1848, in which he took no active part, temporarily broke the power of academic juries. A committee of artists, including Rousseau, took charge of the liberated Salon, to which he did not himself contribute that year. The government of the new Republic, to make amends for past neglect, asked him for a picture on a subject of his own choice. The result was the large and rather formal *View of the Forest of Fontainebleau: Sunset* (Louvre). In 1849, at his first Salon in fourteen years, he showed three paintings and was given a gold medal; but Dupré, who had exhibited nothing, received the cross of the Legion of Honor. This ended their friendship. Jean-François Millet who had moved to Barbizon in 1849 now took Dupré's place in Rousseau's life. Appointed to the Salon jury in 1850, Rousseau exhibited seven paintings that year. The Legion of Honor at last accepted him following the Salon of 1852, at which the duc de Morny, half brother of Napoleon III, had bought his *Oaks at Apremont* (Louvre). The following years were an interlude of prosperity in his life. At the Universal Exposition of 1855, which he had helped to jury, his entry of thirteen paintings won a triumphant success. But a reaction soon

set in. At the Salons of 1857–1863 his paintings were coldly received. The demand for his work slackened; sales held in 1861 and 1863 produced poor results. Rousseau lived in a state of nervous excitation, haunted by creditors and depressed by his wife's gradual decline into insanity. Mannerisms of color and pattern, at odds with the naturalism expected of him, reawakened the hostility of the critics. In 1866 large purchases by the dealers Brame and Durand-Ruel temporarily restored his finances. Later that year, he was elected president of the art jury for the Universal Exposition of 1867, and at its close received the Grand Medal of Honor. But, unlike other members of the jury, he was not made an officer of the Legion of Honor. The emperor himself ultimately repaired this slight, but the exasperation it had caused Rousseau broke his health. Cared for by Millet, he died in his cottage at Barbizon in December 1867.

Rousseau's naturalism was the product of meditative study, not rapid transcription: incapable of spontaneity, he doggedly reworked his pictures in the studio. He understood nature as a process of constant growth and dissolution and thought of trees as fellow creatures, each marked by its own fate and struggle. Solitary, pious without religion, a materialist romantically in love with nature, he sought in his work to reconcile emotional empathy with objective sight.

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1997.24.1

Mountain Stream in the Auvergne

1830

Oil on paper mounted on fabric, 31 × 37 (12^{3/16} × 14^{9/16})
 Chester Dale Fund

Inscriptions

At lower left: *Tb. Rousseau*

Technical Notes: The painting was executed on a laid paper support subsequently attached to fabric mounted on a stretcher. The oil paint covers a fairly thick off-white ground. On this ground the image was initially formed by thin, transparent applications of paint over which layers of thicker and more opaque paint were then brushed; their very energetic handling, wet-on-wet, produces a somewhat marbled effect. White highlights in low impasto accentuate the litter of rocks in the picture's foreground. Light, mechanical touches define the silhouetted foliage. Infrared reflectography reveals no underdrawing, though there may have been some preliminary drawing with brush and paint. The picture is coated with a clear varnish. It is well preserved.

Provenance: Mme Mendès-France; (her estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 30–31 May 1932, no. 169). (Schiller & Bodo, New York).

Exhibited: Bourges, Maison de la Culture, 1973, *Les Peintres de Barbizon à travers la France*, no. 35.

THE VIEW leads into a shady gorge through which flows the torrent of the Durolle, its bed littered with craggy boulders, its banks spanned by two bridges. Along the steep rock face on either side the paper mills and cutlery forges of Thiers line the stream from which they draw their power.

Rousseau set out on his tour of the Auvergne in June 1830,¹ oblivious of the impending revolution that, the following month, was to plunge Paris into turmoil and bring down the Bourbon monarchy. Barely eighteen years old, he had received instruction from two landscape painters, Pierre-Alexandre Pau de Saint-Martin (act. 1812–1843), a relative,² and Charles Rémond (1795–1875), the winner in 1821 of the academic Rome Prize for Historical Landscape.³ Both of his teachers had painted in the Auvergne,⁴ and it may have been their example and advice that led Rousseau to direct his first sketching expedition to that region, whose southern part, the mountainous Cantal, had the reputation of be-

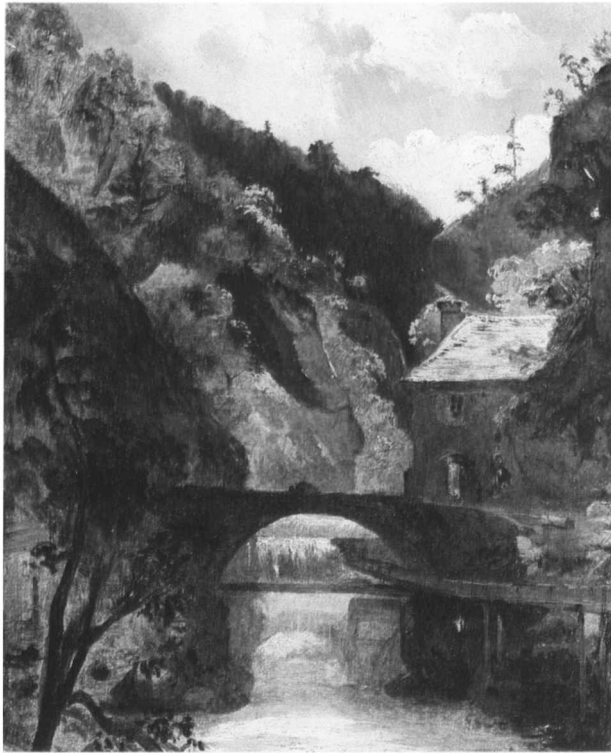


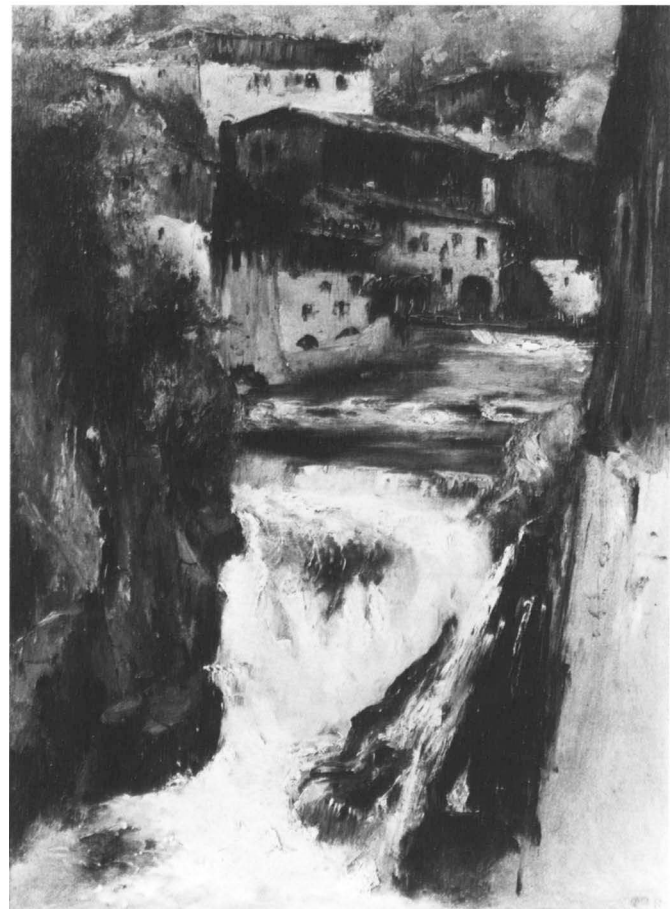
Fig. 1. Théodore Rousseau, *Water Mill, Thiers*, oil on canvas, c. 1830, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of John T. Dorrance, 1965-85-2

ing an unspoiled wilderness, where “a half-savage population” lived amid “a turbulent nature that was much as it had been at the beginning of the world.”⁵ Bored with the commonplaces of academic landscape painting, Rousseau had early been caught in the momentum of that Byronic current which, in the words of his friend Alfred Sensier, swept the romantic youth of his day toward “titanic naturalism and passionate action.”⁶ The primordial Auvergne promised grand motifs and fresh discoveries.

Auvergne views abounded among the landscapes shown at the Paris Salons between 1827 and 1833, reflecting that region’s particular attractiveness to painters of the time.⁷ Before reaching the region of the Cantal in the southern Auvergne, which was generally their goal, many of them stopped at Thiers,⁸ a small industrial town not far from the Auvergne’s borders and a convenient station on the way to its rugged interior. Built on the steep slopes of a gorge carved into the mountainside by the fast-flowing Durolle, Thiers, with its

bridges, mills, and cascading waters, offered a variety of picturesque motifs. From the depths of its echoing precipice, the pounding of forges mingled with the sound of rushing water in a dramatic convergence of natural and human power. Traveling from Paris via Lyon toward the Cantal, his ultimate destination, Rousseau paused at Thiers. Though it did not present him with the views of pristine nature for which he had started out, he found the desolate, half-spoiled site of sufficient interest to paint several sketches of the Durolle’s boulder-strewn stream bed, bordered by derelict factories and crossed by masonry bridges. He was not the first painter to set up his easel at this spot. Others had recently preceded him to the “cascades de Thiers,” which a popular travelers’ guide of the period described fulsomely as being “equally worthy of the painter’s brush as those of Terni.”⁹ Views of Thiers were not uncommon at the Salons of the time.¹⁰ Rousseau stayed long

Fig. 2. Théodore Rousseau, *La Chute d'eau à Thiers*, oil on paper laid down on canvas, c. 1830, England, private collection, photograph courtesy of Hazlitt, Gooden and Fox





Théodore Rousseau, *Mountain Stream in the Auvergne*, 1997.24.1

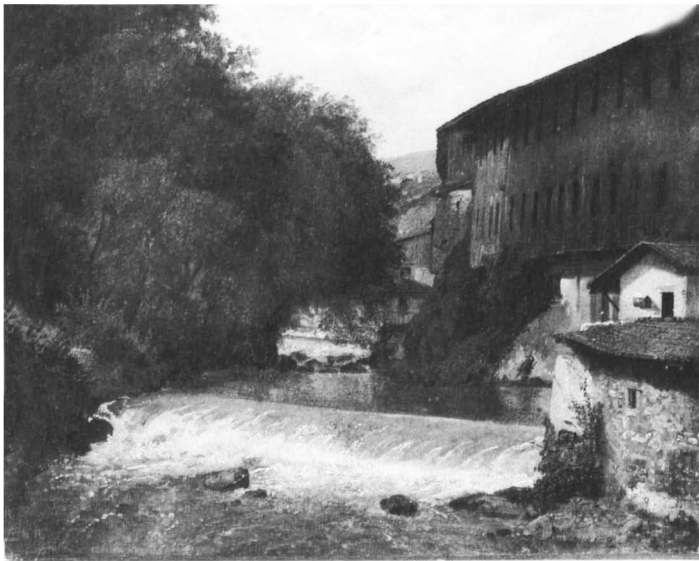


Fig. 3. Théodore Rousseau, *La Vanne*, oil on canvas, c. 1830, Paris, Musée du Louvre (illustrated in Louvre 1861, 4: no. 1667)

enough to paint a series of studies in the town and its environs, alternating between the somber confinement of its industrial valley and the wide prospects of the Limagne plain that the heights above Thiers afforded.

Working below its mills and bridges, he painted a second version of the site of the National Gallery's study in a larger painting on canvas, *Water Mill, Thiers* (fig. 1), in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.¹¹ In a related sketch on paper, *La Chute d'eau à Thiers* (fig. 2), in an English private collection, he took a different view of the Durole cascading through the town,¹² while in still another study, *La Vanne* (fig. 3), he concentrated more closely on its industrial aspect.¹³

Following this pause at the Auvergne's border, he continued southwestward toward the highlands of the Massif du Cantal, going by Clermont-Ferrand along the valley of the Cère as far as Thiézac¹⁴ and deviating westward into the mountainous region of Le Falgoux and Saint-Vincent, noting his impressions along the way in a series of oil studies of rapid and vigorous execution.

On his return to Paris, he showed his Auvergne studies to his teachers. Their rough directness so scandalized Rémond that, as Sensier reports, he broke with his wayward pupil.¹⁵ But Rousseau unexpectedly found a defender in Ary Scheffer (1795–

1858), a rising star among the painters of the July Monarchy.¹⁶ Scheffer's lachrymose scenes from literature had nothing in common with Rousseau's open-air sketches, but the older painter's eye was struck by their vivid originality, causing him to invite the promising novice to display his work on the walls of his much-visited studio, a generous gesture on the part of the influential older artist—Scheffer was drawing master to the family of Louis-Philippe—and calculated to help the start of a very young and entirely unknown colleague.

For his first submission to a Paris Salon, Rousseau in 1831 chose an Auvergne landscape (now lost)¹⁷ which, according to Sensier, he had composed in his Paris studio, rather than taken from nature, since he did not yet dare to present himself to the general public with what he still considered private studies.¹⁸ Although Rousseau was not innovative in his choice of Auvergne settings, his sketches expressed an arrestingly personal vision in their consistent emphasis on abruptly clashing forms and vehement contrasts of illumination, carried out with a tempestuous freedom of handling. His Auvergne sketches stand out from the work of the plein-air naturalists of the 1830s as being both more romantic in feeling and more assertively individual in their energy of execution. Their bold individuality—astonishing in an artist still in his teens, but perhaps attributable to his very youth—gave the measure of a strong personality at the very start of his career. Eugène Delacroix, visiting the sale exhibition of Rousseau's studies in 1850,¹⁹ which included some of his early sketches, remarked in his diary on their "extreme originality."²⁰ And near the end of Rousseau's life, Millet expressed to him his admiration of these youthful portents of future achievement: "I went to look at your Auvergne studies and also at those that preceded them. I was struck once again, in seeing them together, that [your] strength is manifest from the outset. From the first you gave evidence of a freshness of vision that leaves no doubt about the pleasure you take in looking at nature... c'est de vous et non d'autrui, as Montaigne put it."²¹

Notes

1. Sensier 1872, 20.
2. Little is known of the landscape painter Pierre-Alexandre Pau de Saint-Martin who regularly exhibit-

ed topographical landscapes at the Paris Salons from 1824 until 1843. He was the son and pupil of the elder Alexandre Pau de Saint-Martin, participant in the Salons of 1802–1819, with whom he is often confused. Sensier (1872, 16) reports that Pierre-Alexandre (whom he mistakenly calls Alexandre) introduced Rousseau to outdoor landscape sketching about 1826 and persuaded the boy's parents to enroll him in the teaching atelier of Charles Rémond.

3. Rémond, a pupil of Jean-Baptiste Régnault (1754–1829) and Jean-Victor Bertin (1767–1842), followed in the tradition of heroic classical landscape painting recently revived by Achille-Etna Michallon (1796–1822). Sensier (1872, 18–19) reports that Rémond attempted to groom Rousseau for the Rome Prize for Historical Landscape, which he himself had won in 1821, but found his pupil entirely uninterested and at length rebellious.

4. Pierre-Alexandre Pau de Saint-Martin in 1835 exhibited a *Vue de Puy-de-Dôme, prise de la vallée de Royat* at the Salon (no. 1665). According to Pierre Miquel (1975, 3:433) Pierre-Alexandre had earlier shown a *View of Thiers* at the Salon of 1831, but no such painting is mentioned in the Salon's catalogue. Charles Rémond's *Vue d'Auvergne*, now in an English private collection, is dated on its stretcher "1828 Auvergne"; see *From Revolution to Second Republic* [dealer's cat. Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox.] (London, 1978), no. 26. Subsequently, Rémond exhibited *Un Moulin d'Auvergne* (no. 1746) at the Salon of 1831.

5. Sensier 1872, 20.

6. Sensier 1872, 20–21, noted that the studies Rousseau painted on the way from Lyon to the Cantal became progressively more eccentric in their choices of motifs and points of view. But "celles qu'il peint avant d'arborer le Cantal, sur la route de Lyon, son panorama de Thiers, les esquisses de Royat, sans être aussi radicales que les suivantes, annoncent cependant un homme très fortement frappé des grandes perspectives. . . . Le ton spécial du lieu, le caractère géologique de chaque site et la rapidité de l'exécution y sont écrites avec la conviction la plus ardente."

7. There were nine Auvergne views at the 1827 Salon, the work of six painters (Gouttay, Loisel, Poupert, Régnier, Schaal, Thénot); twenty-nine at the Salon of 1831, by thirteen painters (Barbier, Chevalier, Collet, Daguerre, Danvin, Duplat, Gouttay, Gué, Loisel, Montvignier, Régnier, Rémond, and Rousseau); and eleven in 1833, by six painters (Boichard, Fumerand, Gué, Montvignier, Pulet, Van der Burch). In addition to these painted views, the Salons of 1831 and 1833 included a number of lithographs of Auvergne subjects, reproducing paintings by Aubry LeComte, Louis Daguerre, Adrien Dauzats, Nicolas Chappuy, Eugène Isabey, Jean-Baptiste Sabatier, Jules Villeneuve, and others, which had been commissioned to illustrate the two volumes devoted to the Auvergne in the series *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*, published in 1829 and 1833 by Charles Nodier, Baron Taylor, and

Alphonse de Cailleux. The marked interest in Auvergne subjects among French artists around 1830 was undoubtedly stimulated in part by the well-publicized commissions given in preparation of these richly illustrated volumes.

8. Contemporary travelers' guides described Thiers, a posting stage and *sous-préfecture* of about 9,000 inhabitants, as being in a "situation on ne peut plus pittoresque. . . . Au pied du rocher à pic sur lequel une portion de la ville est bâtie, la rivière la Durolle roule avec fracas ses eaux resserrées dans une gorge étroite, fait mouvoir plusieurs forges et papeteries, et se réunit à la Dore un peu au dessous de Thiers" (Girault de Saint-Fargeau, *Guide pittoresque, portatif et complet du voyageur en France*, 3d ed. [Paris, 1844], 311, 451–453).

9. Charles Nodier et al., *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France* (Paris, 1833), 5:4–5.

10. The site of Thiers figured in five paintings at the Salon of 1827 (by Gouttay, Loisel, Poupert, and Régnier) and in four at the Salon of 1831 (by Daguerre, Danvin, Duplat, and Rousseau). Miquel 1975, 3:433, claims that Rousseau's teacher, Pau de Saint-Martin, showed a *Vue de Thiers* at the Salon of 1831, but the catalogue of that Salon does not list such a picture.

11. 40.3 × 52.1 cm; see *Paintings from Europe and the Americas in the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 1994), 155, repro.

12. 43.8 × 31.1 cm; see Green 1982, 39, no. 6.

13. 30 × 37.7 cm; see Louvre 1961, 4: no. 1667, pl. 1667.

14. The stagecoach lines from Paris to the Cantal area of the Auvergne took voyagers from Paris to Lyon on Posting Route no. 82 via Sens, Châlons-sur-Saône and Mâcon, and from Lyon to Clermont-Ferrand via Feurs and Thiers. From Clermont-Ferrand they followed Route no. 44 to Aurillac via Murat, Thiézac, and Vic (Girault de Saint-Fargeau 1844, 451–453). It is apparent from the localities included among Rousseau's Auvergne sketches that he proceeded along the successive stages of these routes; see also Sensier 1872, 20.

15. Sensier 1872, 23: "Rémond l'anathématisa et le voua aux dieux infernaux: ces paysages étaient l'oeuvre du délire."

16. Sensier 1872, 23.

17. Listed in the Salon's catalogue as "No. 1854—*Paysage; site d'Auvergne*" (*Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture des artistes vivans exposés au Musée Royal* [Paris, 1831], 144).

18. Sensier 1872, 30.

19. Sensier 1872, 204: "Rousseau rassembla ses anciennes études, ses tableaux dédaignés, et les mit en vente. . . . Nous y revoyions, pour la dernière fois peut-être, ses lacs et ses pâturages d'Auvergne." The sale comprised upward of 54 paintings and realized the considerable sum of 15,700 francs; *Catalogue d'une collection de tableaux et études peintes d'après nature par M. Théodore Rousseau* [sale cat. Hôtel des Ventes Mobilières.] (Paris, 2 March 1850).

20. Delacroix 1932, 1:345 (25 February 1850): "J'ai été voir à 4 heures les études de Rousseau, qui m'ont fait le plus grand plaisir. Exposés ensemble, ces tableaux donneront de son talent une idée dont le public est à cent lieues, depuis vingt ans que Rousseau est privé d'exposer"; and 346 (1 March 1850): "Vu l'exposition des tableaux de Rousseau pour sa vente. Charmé d'une quantité de morceaux d'une originalité extrême."

21. Letter from Millet to Rousseau (26 July 1867), quoted in Miquel 1975, 3:434.

1949.1.10 (1042)

Landscape with Boatman

c. 1860

Oil on mahogany panel, 19.4 × 26.3 × 0.4 (7⁵/₈ × 10³/₈ × 1/4)
Gift of R. Horace Gallatin

Inscriptions

At lower left: *TH. Rousseau*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a 0.4-cm-thick panel of horizontally grained mahogany covered with a white ground. No underdrawing was detected during infrared examination. The image was built up with scumbles, opaque layers, and glazes. The paint film varies from a thin and smooth application to a moderate impasto in the clouds, the foliage, and parts of the foreground. The X-radiographic image reveals that in the center of the image, beyond the river, the artist had originally al-

lowed a reserve for three trees, but he reshaped the tree farthest to the right into the small house that now appears in its place. By contrast, no reserve was kept for the two larger trees at the left, for the rows of trees along the horizon, and the lone boatman. The line of the horizon was originally lower, and a large billowing cloud near the center of the sky was replaced by several horizontal cloud layers. The paint layer is very well preserved. The picture surface is covered by a discolored, slightly milky varnish that distorts the tonal harmonies and sense of depth within the painting.

Provenance: Possibly Maurice Geautier.¹ R. Horace Gallatin [1871–1948], New York.

Exhibited: Loan for display with permanent collection, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, 1967–1971.

FROM THE DARK, weedy field in the picture's foreground, a slender tree rises, silhouetted against the lightly clouded sky. Behind it, the reflecting surface of a river traverses the scene. At its near shore, toward the right, appears the shaded figure of a boatman. On the opposite bank, a cottage nestles in the shade of a tree. Sunlit fields extend to the horizon, bordered in the far distance by a line of trees.

This small landscape brings together several stock motifs—dark foreground with a silhouetted tree, a watercourse in mid-distance, a rustic cottage, a boatman pushing on his pole—that, in various arrangements, often appear in Rousseau's later work.² In the horizontal layering of its picture space, it represents, much simplified, the type of riverine subject of which the Metropolitan Museum's considerably larger *River Landscape* is a more elaborate example (fig. 1).³ The scheme that underlies these compositions undoubtedly originated in studies painted out-of-doors, but by the time Rousseau used it in the small panel at the National Gallery frequent repetition had long since hardened it into a studio formula.

The painting's miniature format and its sketchy execution on a wooden support link it with landscapes of similar size and finish dating from the 1850s and 1860s.⁴ Rather than preparatory studies, these rapid improvisations, evidently made for sale, are reductions of established compositions, the marketable by-products of Rousseau's otherwise extremely slow and profitless working habits. How

Fig. 1. Théodore Rousseau, *A River Landscape*, oil on panel, c. 1850, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Richard de Wolfe Brixey, 43.86.7





Théodore Rousseau, *Landscape with Boatman*, 1949.1.10

little these studio productions owe to any direct nature study is apparent in the present instance from Rousseau's casual transformation, revealed by the X-ray,⁵ of what he had begun as a tree near the painting's middle into the picturesque farmhouse that now occupies its place.

Notes

1. According to a note on the NGA accession card.
2. For comparable examples of small riverscapes painted on wood, see *Bord de rivière*, oil on panel, 27 × 34.5 cm, Louvre, RF 2052 (datable about 1849); *Le Passeur*, oil on panel, 15 × 20.6 cm, Louvre, RF 1444 (about 1852–1855); *La Mare. Ciel orageux*, oil on panel, 22.5 × 31 cm, Louvre, RF 1889 (about 1865–1867).

3. 41.6 × 63.2 cm. The painting is believed to date from about 1850, though it may ultimately have been based on sketches made in 1839 during a trip along the Loire.

4. See note 2 above. To these small *ébauches* on panel, the following may be added as examples of marketable "dealer paintings": *Le Sentier*, oil on panel, 18.4 × 24.2 cm, private collection, London (dating from the 1850s; Green 1982, no. 49, pl. 34); *La Chaumière*, oil on panel, 22.9 × 33 cm, private collection, London (1850s; Green 1982, no. 50, pl. 35); *La Mare*, oil on panel, 27 × 41 cm, private collection, London (1860s; Green 1982, 54, pl. 36).

5. See Technical Notes above.

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| 1965 | NGA: 117. |
| 1968 | NGA: 104, repro. |
| 1975 | NGA: 312, repro. |
| 1985 | NGA: 359, repro. |

Constant Troyon

1810–1865

CONSTANT TROYON was born in Sèvres, the son of a decorator of porcelain. He received his early training in this craft at the royal china works of Sèvres but at the same time followed his own interests by sketching out-of-doors in the vicinity of Meudon and Saint-Cloud. Like several of the other landscape painters of his generation who ultimately formed the group of Barbizon, he was essentially self-trained. His acquaintance with the painter Paul Huet (1803–1869), begun in about 1830, brought him under the influence of a current of naturalist landscape painting, of English origin, that had received a strong impulse in France from the exhibition of John Constable's *Hay Wain* (National Gallery, London) at the Paris Salon of 1824. About 1832, the painter Camille Roqueplan (1802–1855), met by chance in the park of Saint-Cloud, introduced him to Théodore Rousseau, Jules Dupré, and Narcisse Diaz, who became particularly influential on his further development. He had his first public exhibitions at the Salons of the 1830s, traveled extensively in the French provinces, and, beginning in the early 1840s, worked frequently in the forest of Fontainebleau and in Brittany. In 1842

he established himself in Paris. Specialized entirely in landscape painting throughout his early years, Troyon changed direction after a voyage in Holland in 1847 during which he came under the spell of the Dutch animal painters, particularly of Paulus Potter (1625–1654) and Aelbert Cuyyp (1620–1691). Animal painting thereafter became his central interest; he adapted his landscapes to furnish the luminous and atmospheric settings by which he dramatized his compositions. Awarded first-class medals at the Salons of 1846 and 1848, elected to the Legion of Honor in 1849, Troyon became one of Europe's most prominent and highly rewarded painters, at a time when many of his friends at Barbizon were still struggling for recognition. His preference for unusually large formats, not unlike those of Constable's exhibition pieces, probably furthered his Salon successes, by giving his work a visibility and weight beyond that of ordinary landscape and genre painting, though sometimes at the expense of the freshness of his naturalist vision. During the 1850s, Troyon frequently worked on the Norman coast, where, in 1854, he established himself in a house of his own at Villers-sur-Mer. Mem-

ber of the jury of the Universal Exposition in 1855 and winner of a first-class medal at that prestigious occasion, his income enabled him to engage the architect Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc to build him a grand town residence with large studio. In 1859 he showed at the Salon for the last time. His health had meanwhile begun to fail. The paralytic symptoms of a venereal infection at first slowed, then put an end to his work. In the spring of 1864 he showed symptoms of persecution mania and suffered fits of rage that required his commitment to an asylum. Released after eight months of confinement, he died in Paris on 20 March 1865. He was considered at that time a painter in the very first rank of modern French artists, but by the end of the century his reputation was in decline, owing largely to the waning of public interest in the rural animal genres that had been his renowned speciality.

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 Gensel 1906.

1995.42.1

The Approaching Storm

1849

Oil on fabric, mounted on fiberboard, 116.2 × 157.5
 (45³/₄ × 62)
 Chester Dale Fund

Inscriptions

At lower left: *C. Troyon. / 1849*

Technical Notes: The painting's original support is a plain-weave fabric of moderate weight. Its cusping shows that it was once nailed to a stretcher. When the fabric was later adhered to a Masonite panel, its tacking edges were cropped, but without reducing the dimensions of the image. The painting's ground, off-white or tan, does not extend to its outer edges, suggesting that it was applied by the artist himself. No underdrawing appears during infrared examination. The paint is applied in complex layers ranging from thin washes (in the foreground water) to moderate im-

pasto in the figures and foliage of the middle ground. The X-radiograph reveals several minor design changes: the body of a grazing animal, probably a cow, was painted out at the water's far bank, slightly left of center; the prow of the left boat at the dock was slightly shortened and narrowed, and a mooring post originally placed above the point of the boat's prow was painted over. The general lack of contour changes and the absence of an underdrawing suggest that the artist may have adhered closely to a detailed sketch during the painting's execution. The surface of the picture is covered with a clear, even varnish. Although the painting is in generally good condition, its lining has produced some flattening of impasto passages and has caused the weave pattern of the support to appear through some paint layers. Abrasions in the foreground water and in the shadowed areas of the foliage in the middle ground, as well as paint losses along the top edge and in small spots throughout the painting, have been masked by inpainting.

Provenance: J. Grant Morris, of Allerton Priory, Woolton, Liverpool; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 23 April 1898, no. 126, to Arthur Tooth & Sons, London); (transferred to Arthur Tooth & Sons, New York, in April 1901);¹ private collection, Chicago, by 1927; thence by descent; (sale, Christie's, New York, 25 May 1995, no. 216).

A RIVER occupies the foreground. At the left, a ferryman holding a pole prepares to punt his boat to the landing stage on the opposite shore, where, beneath wind-plowed trees, country folk await its arrival, among them a woman leading a child by the hand. An approaching storm drives towering thunderheads across the sky. Bursts of sunlight, breaking through the clouds, illuminate the scene below. In the far distance, at the left, a wide, level expanse of land, partly wooded, extends toward the horizon on which appear the steeple of a church and the houses of a village.

The painting has been called *The Ferry*, as well as *The Approaching Storm*,² titles equally appropriate to it and applicable to two of Troyon's favorite landscape motifs—a river about to be crossed by a ferry and cattle being moved out of the way of threatening weather.³ These subjects he sometimes conflated in a single image of cattle being ferried across a river in the face of an impending storm, combining a bit of rustic genre with the drama of elemental nature.

In 1849, when he completed the painting, Troyon was at work in the area of La Brie, near the town of Melun, where he was the guest of friends

who owned an estate at Saint-Germain-Laxis.⁴ Here, according to his biographer, he found all the conveniences he needed to work at his ease: “The environs were not particularly beautiful, but there were grand trees in the park, a stream, fields and farmlands, and, in the distance, a horizon bounded by massed foliage of the kind Troyon loved.”⁵ He also found here a plentiful supply of cows, goats, and sheep—the farm animals that were about to become his particular speciality.

The Salon of 1849, held under the auspices of the recently established Second Republic, became a turning point in Troyon’s career.⁶ The Legion of Honor, awarded to him on this occasion, opened his way to popular and commercial success.⁷ *The Approaching Storm*, though painted that year and in size and careful execution a typical exhibition picture, was for some reason not included in that Salon, nor in any other public exhibition in Troyon’s lifetime. Its early history remains obscure; no mention of it is to be found in any of the biographical sources, press reviews, or auction records antedating 1884, when it turned up in the collection of J. Grant Morris of Allerton Priory, Woolton (Liverpool), described at the time as “one of the largest and richest gatherings of drawings and French and English pictures which even the merchants of the Mersey can boast of.”⁸ The French part of this collection consisted mainly of works from the 1860s and 1870s, by such painters as Jules Breton, Narcisse Diaz, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Ernst Meissonier, and Alphonse de Neuville. At its sale in 1898,⁹ *The*

Approaching Storm was bought by the London firm of Arthur Tooth & Sons, which commissioned a proficient printmaker, Théophile Chauvel (1831–1909), to etch a reproduction of it, with the title *Le Bac* (fig. 1).¹⁰ In 1901 the painting was transferred to Tooth & Sons’ New York branch, only to be lost from sight again until 1927, when it reappeared in a Chicago collection.¹¹

The picture’s earliest notice, published in 1884, had made a point of its resemblance to Constable’s riverscapes but declared it to be “more solid and masculine.”¹² That very evident resemblance is largely one of topography and atmosphere: the reflecting sheet of water, the frieze of tall, densely leafed trees, the dramatic cloudscape, and the rain-swept distance recall characteristic motifs from Constable’s repertoire, familiar to French artists since the successful exhibition of four of his large landscapes at the Paris Salons of 1824 and 1827.¹³ But a more particular debt to Constable is apparent in the ferryman wearing a red vest who wields a pole in the picture’s foreground, a figure that, in posture and costume, corresponds closely enough to the lock tender in Constable’s *Lock* (fig. 2)¹⁴ to indicate a direct borrowing. None of the several versions of that composition was ever exhibited in France, but David Lucas’ mezzotint copy,¹⁵ published in 1834, was available there and probably served as the immediate model for Troyon’s ferryman. Nor is this the only link between his and Constable’s composition. Both open at the left onto a deep landscape vista that terminates in a



Fig. 1. Théophile Chauvel, *Le Bac*, etching, c. 1900, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes Ef 436 Oeuvre de T. Chauvel, no. 64



Constant Troyon, *The Approaching Storm*, 1895.42.1



Fig. 2. John Constable, *The Lock*, oil on canvas, 1824, Madrid, Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza collection

church steeple, and in both the sky is filled by a curving sweep of overhanging clouds, vapory and luminous in Constable's *Lock*, heavier and more threatening in *The Approaching Storm*, but of similar structure.

An oil study for the ferry and rowing boats at the landing stage in Troyon's picture is in the Musée National des Beaux-Arts, Algiers;¹⁶ a drawing corresponding to this study, now lost, is known from its publication in 1906 (fig. 3).¹⁷

Fig. 3. Constant Troyon, *A Ferry*, pencil, c. 1849, location unknown (illustrated in Gensel 1906: 71, fig. 5)



Notes

1. Stock books of Arthur Tooth & Sons, London, at the Getty Archives of the History of Art and the Humanities, Los Angeles.

2. Listed as *The Gathering Storm* in the catalogue of the J. Grant Morris sale of 1898, the picture had earlier been called *A Ferry* in its first publication (*Athenaeum* 1884, 341). *Le Bac* was the caption of Théophile Chauvel's reproductive etching, dating from about 1900 (fig. 1 and note 10 below).

3. Soullié listed five paintings and one drawing by Troyon on the subject of the ferry (Soullié 1900 [see Biography], 86, 114, 116, 121, 155, 200) and two paintings of the approaching storm (155, 157) as having passed through Paris sales before 1900. According to the much fuller account by H. Mireur (*Dictionnaire des ventes d'art* [Paris, 1912], 7:219–239), paintings by Troyon sold between 1866 and 1898 included eleven on the subject of the ferry and six on that of the approaching storm.

4. Dumesnil 1888 (see Biography), 65–66. Troyon may have painted the picture for his host at Saint-Germain-Laxis, identified as “E. C.” by Dumesnil, who remarks that Troyon was bound to him by a friendship “devenue très intime et profonde.” On his death in Rome, in 1851, this friend left Troyon an annuity of 1,200 francs.

5. Dumesnil 1888, 65.

6. Troyon was represented by eight paintings at this exhibition, four of them landscapes of the Brie area (nos. 1949, 1951, 1952, 1955); see the catalogue *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, et lithographie des artistes vivants, exposés au Palais des Tuileries* (Paris, 1849), 170.

7. Charles Blanc, director of the fine arts after the Revolution of 1848, recorded the circumstances of this award, in which he had played a part, in Blanc 1876 (see Biography), 318–321.

8. *Athenaeum* 1884, 340–341.

9. *Catalogue of the Highly Important Collection of Modern Pictures . . . of J. Grant Morris, Esq.* [auction cat. Christie, Manson & Woods.] (London, 25 April 1898), 24, no. 126. The entry in this catalogue describes the picture in left-right reversal, suggesting that its author worked from a reversed reproduction, perhaps the one referred to in the remark “Vide Illustration” at the entry's end. But none of the copies of the catalogue, examined recently, contains an illustration, and no print of *The Approaching Storm* from 1898 or before has as yet come to light (see note 10 below).

10. The impression of the print at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Cabinet des Estampes, Ef 436 a gr. folio, Oeuvre de T. Chauvel, no. 64, is inscribed “in progress for Mr. Tooth & Sons,” suggesting that it was made not long after the picture's purchase in 1898. As etcher and lithographer, Chauvel specialized in reproductive work, mainly of landscapes by the painters of Barbizon. His print does not reverse the composition.

11. The stock books of Arthur Tooth & Sons, preserved at the Getty Archives of the History of Art and the Humanities, Los Angeles, indicate that the picture was taken from London to New York in April 1901.

No further mention of it appears in these stock books for the years of 1906–1912 and 1919–1924, nor is there any indication in *American Art Annual* for 1901–1941 that the picture was sold at auction during that time.

12. *Athenaeum* 1884, 341. The anonymous critic concludes: “The distance is good, but, as a whole, this is not a first-rate Troyon.”

13. Constable was represented at the Paris Salon of 1824 by three paintings, no. 358, *Une Charette à foin traversant un gué au pied d'une ferme* (*The Hay Wain*, National Gallery, London); no. 359, *Un Canal en Angleterre; paysage* (*View on the Stour near Dedham*, The Huntington, San Marino, Calif.); no. 360, *Vue près de Londres; Hampstead Heath* (lost?). The Salon of 1827 included only a single painting by Constable, no. 219, *Paysage avec figures et animaux* (*The Cornfield*, National Gallery, London). The painting by Constable that offers the broadest thematic and compositional analogies to *The Approaching Storm* is *View on the Stour near Dedham*, which Troyon may have seen at the Salon of 1824, but which, more likely, was known to him through David Lucas' mezzotint of 1831, copied after Constable's full-size sketch of the composition (Royal Holloway College, London).

14. Formerly Walter Morrison Collection, Sudeley Castle, England. The original was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1824 and at the British Institution in 1825. A mezzotint engraving after it, by S. W. Reynolds (1825), remained unpublished. Constable painted a replica of *The Lock* in 1825, which, having remained in his possession until his death in 1837, ultimately passed into the collection of Maj. Gen. E. H. Goulburn. It was probably this replica, rather than the original version, that was exhibited in Brussels in 1833, where Troyon may have seen it.

15. Lucas' print was not based on the original version of *The Lock*, but on Constable's replica of 1825 (see note 14 above).

16. Possibly no. 178 of the posthumous sale of Troyon's studio, 25–31 January 1866, *Bac et chaloupes amarrées près du rivage*, 50 × 60 cm.

17. Gensel 1906, 71.

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Comte Lancelot-Théodore Turpin de Crissé

1782–1859

LANCELOT-THÉODORE TURPIN DE CRISSÉ, scion of an ancient patrician family of Angers, was the son and grandson of high army officers who had earned a reputation for their publications in the military sciences but also cultivated the arts. His father, a gifted amateur, exhibited two paintings and several drawings of Roman views at the Paris Salon of 1787, anticipating what would become his son's artistic speciality. A devoted royalist, the elder Turpin emigrated in 1794, at the height of the revolutionary Terror, and died penniless in Philadelphia. His family meanwhile found shelter with relatives in Anjou, where his mother supported them by painting portrait miniatures. Returning to Paris, after the persecution of nobles had ceased during the Directory, the young Turpin was befriended by the comte de Choiseul-Gouffier who gave him the means for a period of independent study in Switzerland (1803). Turpin made his Salon debut in 1806 with a landscape composition based on a literary subject from Châteaubriand, *Les*

Adieux de René à sa soeur, which won him a gold medal. During a stay in Rome and Naples in 1807–1808, he continued his studies of landscape and architectural views. Back in France, he entered the circle of Queen Hortense, stepdaughter of Napoleon, who recommended him to her mother, the ex-Empress Josephine, then in the midst of her divorce from the emperor and about to form her personal court at Navarre and Malmaison. Appointed as one of Josephine's chamberlains in 1810, Turpin, “homme doux, agréable et de bonne compagnie,”¹ remained in her service until her death in 1814 and is believed to have become her lover. The fall of Napoleon in 1814, followed shortly by the death of Josephine, freed Turpin of his court functions and enabled him to devote himself to painting.

He had meanwhile married (1813) and been rendered financially secure by a large inheritance from a cousin, the marquis de Lusignan. Held in high esteem by the Bourbons, who knew him to be a

loyal partisan of the dynasty, despite his past attachment to a Napoleonic court, he had no difficulty in establishing himself with the Restoration government. Made an honorary member of the Academy in 1816 and appointed to the Conseil des Musées, he served in the Commission des Beaux-Arts and in 1825 was elected to the Legion of Honor. A frequent exhibitor at the Paris Salons from 1806 until 1835, he traveled in Italy in search of picturesque motifs in 1818 and again in 1824 and 1830.

When the Bourbon government was brought down by the July Revolution of 1830, Turpin resigned his state functions and retired to private life in his native Angers to devote his remaining years to the formation of a collection of antiquities and works of art. In 1850 he bequeathed his collections to Angers, where they are housed in the museum that bears his name.

Note

1. Laure Junot, duchesse d'Abrantés, *Histoire des Salons de Paris* (Brussels, 1838), 5:251.

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1997.102.1

View of a Villa, Pizzofalcone, Naples

c. 1819

Oil on fabric, 41 × 54 (16 1/8 × 21 1/4)

New Century Fund, Gift of Lois and Robert Erburu

Technical Notes: The painting is executed on a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric commercially prepared with a thick gray-white ground that extends onto the tacking margins. The painting is unlined and mounted on its original keyed, butt-joined stretcher, which contains

one vertical crossbar. Infrared examination shows that a ruled drawing marked the basic elements of the architecture before painting was begun. No other drawing is visible. The painter built his paint around the drawing, first in thin midtones, with thicker paint used for the darker and brighter tones. Fine details and the figures were put in last. The painting is generally well preserved, apart from small abrasions that have been covered by scattered inpainting. The picture has undergone a selective cleaning in the past, so that while lighter areas appear relatively clear, remnants of old, darkened varnish still cover some of the darker areas of paint.

Provenance: Private collection, Bern.¹ (Marc Blondeau, Paris).

A GLEAMING white structure, fronted by arched buttresses and flanked by lower buildings, rises from the wooded brink of a deep, rocky hollow. Below it, toward the left, appears the vaulted opening of a vast natural cavern partly closed off by a long wall. Branches set against this wall form a shelter under which cattle have sought cover from the sun. A grassy meadow in the foreground is traversed by a road that, at the picture's right, leads to the tall entrance of a tunnel into which a horse-drawn cart is about to enter. The disproportionate smallness of the foreground figures is a characteristic trait of Turpin's architectural views.

The artist traveled in Italy in 1818, on which occasion both he and his wife sat to Ingres for a pair of pencil portraits now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.² It was during this, his second, Italian voyage, that Turpin began to produce the studies in pencil and oil that later (1822) served him to prepare a series of landscape and architectural motifs gathered in the area of Naples. In 1824 he again visited Naples to complete this work, which was published in 1826 as *Souvenirs du golfe de Naples*, a suite of thirty-nine in-folio lithographs dedicated to the duchesse de Berry.³

View of a Villa belongs to this body of works, though its image was not used for any of the lithographic plates of that publication. Despite the distinctive topography represented in the painting, and the fact that Turpin was not the first painter to work at this location, the identification of the site has posed problems, owing to the extensive transformations it has undergone since 1818. The lower part of the building in Turpin's picture, recognizable by its arched buttresses and by the large



Lancelot-Théodore Turpin de Crissé, *View of a Villa, Pizzofalcone, Naples*, 1997.102.1



Fig. 1. Thomas Jones, *Ruined Buildings, Naples*, oil on paper, c. 1782, Swansea, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

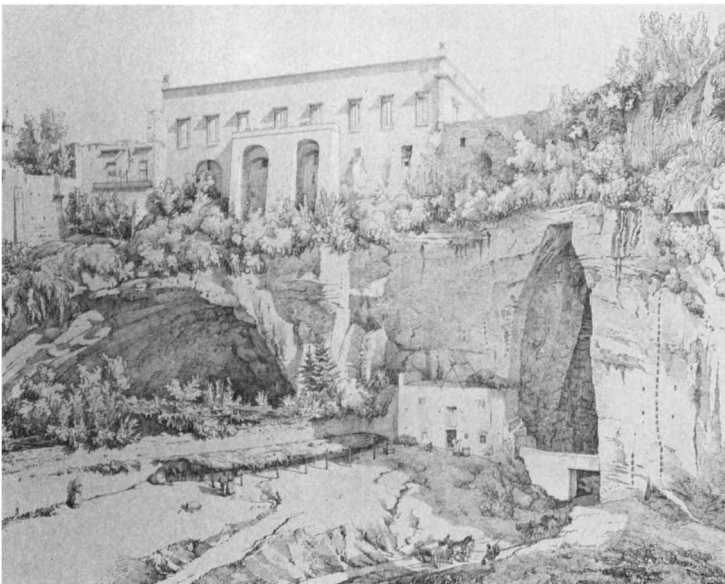
cavern that opens below it, appeared earlier in a picture by the Welsh painter Thomas Jones (1742–1803), dating from about 1782, that shows this very structure in semiruinous condition before its later rebuilding (fig. 1). Anthony Blunt believed that he recognized in Jones' painting the foundation walls of one of the religious houses on the slopes of Capodimonte, "almost certainly the Sagra Famiglia di Gesu,"⁴ but Lawrence Gowing recognized that Jones' view in fact represented substructures on the slope of the Pizzofalcone Hill, a rocky spur at the southernmost tip of Naples.⁵ When Turpin visited this site during his Italian voyage of 1818, more than thirty years after Jones, it had undergone con-

siderable changes. The principal building at the crest of the cliff, which appeared in derelict condition in Jones' picture, had in the meantime been rehabilitated and enlarged to form the lower story of the freshly whitewashed villa that dominates Turpin's painting.⁶ A property of the Carafa family at the time, this neoclassical villa was an adjunct to their palace on the Via Monte di Dio that runs along the high ground behind these buildings. The low-lying rocky terrain below the villa that Turpin still painted in its unimproved state, as a picturesque wilderness with a cavern and antique tunnel, subsequently was transformed by later owners of the property into an English garden, which in its present state exhibits none of the features that may originally have attracted Turpin to this site by their somber contrast to the bright modernity of the building above.

A highly finished pencil drawing in a private collection (fig. 2), signed by Turpin and dated 1819, corresponds in every minute detail to the National Gallery's painting.⁷ Rather than a preparatory study, this appears to be an exact copy based on the painting and may have been drawn in connection with Turpin's early preparatory work for his lithographic suite of 1826, in which, however, it was not included.

An accomplished, though mainly self-taught painter of topographical landscape, Turpin early developed a personal manner that retained traces of classicist artifice in its linear definition of clouds, crisp stylization of foliage, and harmonious delica-

Fig. 2. Lancelot-Théodore Turpin de Crissé, *View of a Villa*, pencil, 1819, private collection



cy of local colors but that also aimed at a more direct recording of effects of light and atmospheric color. Though evidently based on fresh observation out-of-doors, his views still have a preternatural clarity of definition and smoothness of touch that made them seem old-fashioned to critics of the time. Thus Adolphe Thiers, in his review of the Salon of 1822, to which Turpin had contributed some of his Neapolitan views, sarcastically praised the artist for his minute execution of details, while disparaging his pictures for their “laxity of touch and color,” which, in his opinion, gave them the look of colored drawings.⁸ It is possible that the severity of Thiers’ criticism owed something to political rancor. Closely identified with the Bourbon regime, the aristocratic Turpin was an inviting target for the progressive Thiers, a rising star in the ranks of the opposition and soon to become a leader in the cabinets and art politics of the July Monarchy.

Notes

1. A label on the back of the frame refers to an unidentified auction sale of 29 March 1904, in which the painting was offered under “No. 54, 2ème vente.”
2. Inv. 1972.118.218 (see Naef 1978–1981, 4:426, no. 227).
3. *Souvenirs du golfe de Naples, recueillis en 1808, 1818, et 1824, dédiés à son altesse royale Madame, duchesse de Berry,*

par le Comte Turpin de Crissé, membre honoraire de l’Académie des Beaux-Arts, du conseil des Musées royaux, de la commission de la préfecture, etc. (Paris, 1826). Views taken at or near Naples figured prominently among Turpin’s Salon submissions of 1818–1822, several of them probably based on studies made during his voyage in 1818: *Vue prise à Terracine* (Salon of 1818) and *Vue du château de l’Oeuf à Naples* (Salon of 1819). Such views were particularly numerous among his exhibits at the Salon of 1822, which included *Vue de Naples prise du quai de Sainte-Lucie* (no. 1267), *Vues prises dans le golfe de Naples* (no. 1272), and *Vue prise à l’extrémité du Pausilippe* (no. 1268); see *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure des artistes vivans, exposés au Musée Royal des Arts* (Paris, 1822).

4. Anthony Blunt, “Recorders of Vanished Naples—I: Thomas Jones,” *Country Life*, August 1973, 498–500.

5. Lawrence Gowing, *The Originality of Thomas Jones* (London, 1985), 50, 63.

6. The rebuilding of the structures at the back of the Palazzo Carafa di Noia at Via Monte di Dio no. 66, including the villa in Turpin’s painting, was undertaken by Pompeo Carafa in the early years of the nineteenth century. The villa subsequently passed into the possession of the Miceli di Sepino, Wenner, and Apuzzo families (see Arnaldo Venditti, *Architettura neoclassica a Napoli* [Naples, 1961], 398–399).

7. According to a note dated 8 September 1997 in the NGA curatorial files, the drawing once formed part of a series representing “vues prises dans le royaume de Naples, dessinées par M. le Comte Turpin de Crissé et legués par lui au Duc de Luynes l’an 1859.”

8. *Salon de mil huit cent vingt-deux* (Paris, 1822), 141.

Horace Vernet

1789–1863

HORACE VERNET was predestined for art by family inheritance: the grandson of the engraver Jean Moreau le Jeune (1741–1814) on his mother’s side and, on his father’s, of Joseph Vernet (1714–1789), France’s foremost painter of land and seascapes, he was casually trained by his father, Carle Vernet (1758–1836), the witty chronicler of the elegancies of the post-Revolutionary decades and the empire. A prodigy in his childhood, a professional in his teens, he was spurred by financial needs arising from his early marriage in 1811 to exploit his phenomenal native facility. A torrent of saleable work soon poured from his stu-

dio: fashion designs, caricatures, portraits, horses in the manner of Carle, and landscapes in the manner of Joseph. In 1814 he was among the civilian defenders of Paris against the approaching allies, an episode he later represented in *La Barrière de Clichy* (1820, Louvre). In the early years of the Restoration, his studio became the meeting place of artists and veterans openly hostile to the Bourbon government. Much to that government’s irritation, he flaunted his cult of Napoleon and found a patron in Louis-Philippe, duc d’Orléans, head of the disaffected cadet branch of the dynasty. A resolute modernist but little affected by romanticism,

he befriended Gericault and was one of the pioneers of lithography. In a series of battle scenes from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, *Jemmapes*, *Montmirail*, *Hanau*, and *Valmy*, painted for the duc d'Orléans in 1821–1826 (National Gallery, London), he gave a foretaste of what was to become his speciality. His discreetly conciliatory gestures to the government had meanwhile been gratefully received and were producing prompt results. In short order, he was made an *officier* of the Legion of Honor (1825), a member of the Institute (1826), and after successes at the Salons of 1826 and 1827 was appointed director of the French Academy in Rome (1829). During his seven years there, he displayed an agile versatility with paintings of Italian popular life (*The Brigand's Confession*), oriental subjects (*The Arab Story-teller*), and historical anecdotes (*Encounter of Raphael and Michelangelo in the Vatican*). The Revolution in July 1830, which raised Louis-Philippe, Vernet's patron, to the throne, opened vast opportunities of official employment to him. The rapid flow of state commissions for battle pieces that now came his way taxed even his prodigious facility. Four very large canvases for the Galerie des Batailles at Versailles, shown at the Salon of 1836, were followed by a second series in 1841. Accepting his calling as that of a painter of modern national subjects, specifically of scenes of combat, Vernet conceived of his work as a form of eyewitness reportage that required observation at the actual theaters of war. In five long visits to North Africa (1833, 1837, 1839–1840, 1845, 1853), he gathered on-the-spot documentation of the French conquests in Algiers and Morocco, material that he later worked up into wall-size canvases destined for Versailles. Louis-Philippe's overthrow by the Revolution of 1848 and the advent of Napoleon III in 1849 scarcely affected his activity. The year 1850 found him at the French siege of Rome; in 1854 he visited the battlefields of the Crimea. He had in the meantime enjoyed the lucrative patronage of Czar Nicholas I during two long visits to Russia in 1836 and 1842–1843.

The Universal Exposition of 1855, at which he was represented by twenty-four paintings, crowned his popular and official success. His reputation among artists and critics, on the other hand, was not uncontested. Baudelaire scathingly referred to him as "un militaire qui fait de la peinture," and

while his painstaking factuality and the sheer magnitude of his production commanded respect, the prosy shallowness of his realism, his stylistic banality, and the stridency of his chauvinism were early noted and contributed to the eventual neglect of his work. At the time of his death in 1863, Vernet, a member of thirty academies, was nevertheless France's most famous artist, admired and imitated throughout Europe and deeply imbedded in popular culture.

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1989.3.1

Hunting in the Pontine Marshes

1833

Oil on fabric, 100 × 137 (39 1/2 × 54)

Chester Dale Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: H. Vernet / Rome 1833 (or Roma?)

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a loosely woven twill fabric. The original tacking margins are present. The picture has not been lined. The off-white ground was applied by the artist in a moderately thick layer over the fabric support after the fabric was stretched; it does not extend onto the tacking margins. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. The paint was built up using a system of underpaint that varies from brown and olive green (in the water) to a bright reddish orange (in the illuminated foliage at the near right) and a deep blue-green (in the distant foliage at the upper left). In the lower third of the picture, the paint was very thinly applied over the ground, while in the upper two-thirds it was built up more thickly in opaque layers. Layering is complex, with extensive glazing and wet-on-wet brushwork. Three tears in the support, at the upper left, bottom center, and left edge center, have been repaired and inpainted. The painting is covered with a clear varnish.

Provenance: Pierre-Hippolyte Aumont [d. 1865], by 1846.¹ (Sale, Ader Picard Tajan, Paris, 12 December 1988, no. 78).



Horace Vernet, *Hunting in the Pontine Marshes*, 1989.3.1

Exhibited: Paris, Galerie des Beaux-Arts, boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, 1846, *Ouvrages de peinture exposées au profit de la Caisse de Secours et Pensions de la Société des Artistes*, no. 70.

A JUNGLELIKE WILDERNESS, of suffocating density, rises from the stagnant waters of a marsh. In its midst lies a dead tree of colossal dimensions, uprooted and denuded of its bark. Its fall has torn the vines that encumbered it and broken or bent the branches of the surrounding trees. The enormous, splintered trunk, held in precarious balance by those branches, forms a bridge across a narrow inlet of the marsh from which a small punt, poled forward by an Italian boatman, emerges into the watery clearing in the picture's foreground. A smartly dressed hunter accompanied by his dog sits in the boat's prow and aims his rifle into the shrubbery.

Painted during Vernet's directorship of the French Academy's Villa Medici in Rome from 1829 to 1835, the picture is one of a pair of hunting scenes, both of them set in the Pontine Marshes, at that time a malaria-infested, partly wooded wasteland some forty kilometers to the southeast of Rome. Vernet exhibited its pendant, *Départ pour la chasse dans les marais Pontins* (location unknown), at the Salon of 1831.²

Pure landscapes are rare in Vernet's work. His two Pontine hunting pictures contain an autobiographical element. Eighteen months after he had assumed his position in Rome, the revolution that erupted in Paris in July 1830 swept away the devoutly Catholic Bourbon monarchy and brought

Louis-Philippe of the traditionally liberal house of Orléans to the throne. The papal government and Roman public opinion viewed these events with abhorrence. Since the French ambassador to the Vatican, an enemy of the new regime, had left his post, Vernet, as director of the academy, remained for a time in the uneasy role of the senior French official in Rome. On friendly terms with Louis-Philippe, he greeted his accession with enthusiasm, but in the face of clerical and political hostility in Rome found it convenient to steer clear of social embarrassments by frequently absenting himself from the city. An ardent sportsman, he seized the opportunity to go on shooting rambles in the vicinity of Rome. To explain his conduct, he wrote to comte Forbin, director-general of French museums:

I therefore don't frequent society, but for distraction quit the studio and go hide myself in the woods. There is one (do you know it?) between Ardea and Nettuno; I have never seen anything more majestic. Here man has never spoiled the order of nature. The trees flourish and perish in exuberant variety, thanks to the freedom they enjoy. If memories of Versailles were to follow you to such a site, and cause you to apply these ideas to humanity—to what reflections might they not lead!³

The woods between Ardea and Nettuno to which Vernet refers in this letter were the Padiglione Woods that lay between the Pontine Marshes, long since drained, and the sea.⁴ The image that his letter evokes—of a forest in which majestic trees live and die in wild freedom—striking-



Fig. 1. Achille-Etna Michallon, *The Oak and the Reed*, oil on canvas, 1816, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge University, PD 180-1991

ly resembles that of his painting. The fact that the spectacle of the forest's unfettered growth and decay moved Vernet to reflect on the liberty that pervades nature, in contrast to the controlled artifice of Versailles, suggests that in painting the very site that had prompted these reflections he may have intended to give further expression to ideas which, in the aftermath of the Revolution of 1830, had an eminently political significance.

It is probable, at the same time, that the inspiration for the picture's imagery did not derive solely from Vernet's actual impressions of those woods but also owed a debt to the dramatic landscape art of Achille-Etna Michallon (1796–1822), in whose work uprooted trees play an important, clearly symbolic role.⁵ Michallon's *Oak and the Reed*, dating from 1816, bears a marked resemblance in composition and mood, and perhaps in allegorical significance, to Vernet's painting (fig. 1).⁶ Like Michallon, Vernet based his forest scene on the close representation of particular tree and plant forms, emphasizing their fracture and disruption and, like Michallon, creating the illusion of enormous size by placing these fragments near figures of disproportionately small scale.

French 19th Century

1963.10.28 (1692)

A Young Girl Posing in Back View

1820–1830

Oil on fabric, 61.2 × 50.2 (24 1/8 × 19 3/4)
Chester Dale Collection

Technical Notes: The painting's support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been lined onto fabric. The tacking margins have been cropped, but cusping along all edges indicates that the original format has been preserved. An off-white ground is visible through the thinly painted areas of the image. No underdrawing was noted during infrared examination. The layering of the paint is simple, without intervening semi-opaque or transparent layers. There is little variation in the general smoothness of the brushwork in the figure as well as the background, with the exception only of

Notes

1. In a Paris sale, *Tableaux modernes provenant en partie de la collection de M. D****, 29 March 1862, a painting by Horace Vernet, *Chasse au marais*, figured under no. 53. The dimensions, given as 51 × 41 cm, are so much smaller than those of the picture in the NGA that a confusion with it seems not possible.

2. *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture exposés au Musée Royal* (Paris, 1831), 162, no. 2085.

3. Vernet's letter to Forbin is quoted in Durande 1863 (see Biography), 91.

4. The forest, a few kilometers to the north of Anzio and Nettuno, became the site of a particularly savage, prolonged battle following the Allied landings at the Anzio-Nettuno beach head on 22 January 1944; see Raleigh Trevelyan, *Rome '44: The Battle for the Eternal City* (New York, 1981), esp. 47–48, 81–82, 161–166, and map of the area following XVII. The adjacent marshes had previously been drained and transformed into agricultural land by the Mussolini regime.

5. On the motif of the uprooted tree in the work of Michallon, see Chiara Stefani, "L'Oeuvre graphique de Michallon dans le cadre de la peinture du paysage à la fin du XVIII^e siècle," in *Achille-Etna Michallon, Les Dossiers du Musée du Louvre* (Paris, 1994), 49–62.

6. 43.5 × 53.5 cm; see *Achille-Etna Michallon* 1994, 98, no. 12, and color pl. on 67.

the somewhat more broadly painted rose-colored drapery. The flesh tones and hair of the sitter were laid in first, followed by the wood frame of the chair and the green background. The green cloth of the chair and the drapery were finished last. The background is damaged and has been inpainted. Less extensive inpainting is present in the flesh tones, chair, and drapery. The varnish is slightly discolored.

Provenance: Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice, 5th marquess of Lansdowne [1845–1927], Bowood Hall, Wiltshire, England, by 1897; by inheritance to Henry William Edmund Petty-Fitzmaurice, 6th marquess of Lansdowne [1872–1936], Bowood Hall; (Lansdowne sale, Christie's, London, 7 March 1930, no. 16); purchased by Joseph. (James P. Silo, New York); sold 25 October 1930 to Chester Dale [1883–1962], New York.

Exhibited: MusFrA, 1931, *Renoir and His Tradition*, no. 7. Dallas, State Fair of Texas, 1933, no. 28.

A SMALL GIRL is shown in back view, seated, apparently nude, in a chair over the high back of which a length of drapery has been thrown. The chair conceals all but her neck and her softly rounded shoulders, the painting's main motif. Of her face only part of the left cheek and some eyelashes are visible, but much prominence is given to the smoothly combed hair of the back of her head crowned by a large topknot. The style of the girl's coiffure indicates a date about 1820–1830.

The odd character of the picture, which combines child portraiture with a—perhaps half-humorous—touch of erotic genre, is without parallel in the school of Jacques-Louis David to which it has sometimes been assigned. Its originality lies in its curious, slightly prurient emphasis on the exposed, fleshy back of this young girl, very smoothly painted, and of a soft plumpness entirely free of classicist stylization. The prominent ear, around which a lock of hair curls in lieu of an earring, is the portrait's most marked physiognomic feature. The harsh line of the chair back, cutting across the lower part of the girl's naked shoulders, introduces a dissonant note into the picture's composition and seems spatially unrelated to the girl's body, though it curiously echoes the black band around her head. The refined, minutely detailed treatment of her hair contrasts strikingly with the awkward, almost primitive execution of the stiff folds of drapery at the back of the chair and raises the possibility that the lower part of the picture may be by another, less practiced hand.

The attribution to Baron François Gérard (1770–1837) with which the picture entered the National Gallery of Art appears to be groundless. It is unsupported by any documentary or stylistic evidence. At the time of its first publication, in 1897, when it was in the marquess of Lansdowne collection, it bore the whimsical title *Les Épaules de ma soeur* and was attributed to "Artist Unknown."¹ It was only in 1930, when it was offered at Christie's sales rooms in London, together with other paintings from the Lansdowne collection, that it was called *The Model* and cautiously listed as being by "F. P. S. Gérard,"² an abbreviation that in the auctioneers' code signaled the uncertainty of its attribution. That halfhearted guess nevertheless soon mutated, apparently unexamined, into an acceptance of Gérard's authorship,³ and it was under his name that the painting came to the National

Gallery in 1963 and has continued to be exhibited and published since,⁴ though no fresh evidence has yet emerged to confirm this attribution, which was repeatedly questioned by competent experts.⁵

There is in fact nothing in its stylistic character and manner of execution that points to Gérard or that would justify the early date of "about 1800" to which it has generally been assigned. Its style and sentiment suggest rather that it is unlikely to antedate 1825, and its droll coquetry is closer to Biedermeier whimsy than to neoclassicism. The identity and even the precise nationality of the artist remain unknown.

Notes

1. Ambrose 1897, 117, no. 332, under "Artists Unknown."
2. *Ancient and Modern Pictures, the Property of the Marquess of Lansdowne, etc.* [auction cat. Christie's.] (London, 7 March 1930), "F. P. S. Gérard, 16, *The Model* (332)," the last figure a reference to the painting's listing in the catalogue of 1897; see note 1 above.
3. In its first public exhibition, *Renoir and His Tradition* (see Exhibited, above), the picture was listed without qualification as by François Gérard and given the title *La Modèle*.
4. See Walker 1984, no. 597, and NGA 1985, no. 172.
5. Pierre Rosenberg, of the Louvre, in a letter to David Rust of the NGA (1 December 1964, in NGA curatorial files), found the attribution to Gérard "très douteuse." Robert Rosenblum, quoted by David Rust (note dated 8 February 1971, in NGA curatorial files), declared that the picture "couldn't be Gérard." Only Phyllis Hattis, in a letter to David Rust (12 March 1971, in NGA curatorial files) expressed a belief that "the brushwork—apparent in the drapery, hair, and smoothed down in the figure—is handled to a certain degree that Gérard does [*sic*]" and supposed the picture to be an early work by Gérard, "the student of David who is learning to paint drapery in the manner of David, and who has had his training until now drawing and painting miniature portraits"—assumptions unsupported by stylistic evidence or biographical facts.

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- 1965a Dale: 26, repro.
- 1965 NGA: 56.
- 1968 NGA: 49, repro.
- 1975 NGA: 148, repro.
- 1984 Walker: 418, no. 597, color repro.
- 1985 NGA: 172, repro.



French 19th Century, *A Young Girl Posing in Back View*, 1963.10.28

GERMAN AND SWISS ARTISTS

German 19th Century

1942.8.7 (560)

An Artist and His Family

c. 1830

Oil on fabric, 75.5 × 63.5 (29³/₄ × 25)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Technical Notes: The support is a plain-weave fabric. On the surface glued to the back of the primary support is a landscape painting, dimly visible in the X-radiograph and evidently unrelated to the portrait on the primary support.¹ The edges of the primary support (the original canvas), covered with a white ground and an uncompleted sketch, are folded back around the top and side edges of the stretcher and now form its tacking margins, indicating that the painting—which originally measured c. 77.5 × 67.5 cm—was reduced to its present size during the underpainting stage. After reducing the size, the artist completed the painting. The image was defined by an unusually detailed underdrawing over which its main forms were blocked out with thin paints. Minor contour adjustments were made in the baby's ruffled collar and red shoe. The paint surface is disfigured by weave enhancement, probably caused by the lining. Small losses throughout the image have been repaired by inpainting, some of which has discolored. A slightly discolored, unevenly applied varnish covers the picture.

Provenance: (Rose M. De Forest); sold 3 January 1921 to Thomas B. Clarke [1848–1931], New York; his estate; sold as part of the Clarke collection 29 January 1936, through (M. Knoedler & Co., New York), to the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.

Exhibited: Union League Club, New York, March 1922, *Exhibition of Portraits by Early American Artists*, no. 13. PMA, 1928–1931, *Portraits by Early American Artists of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries, Collected by Thomas B. Clarke*, unnumbered, unpaginated catalogue, as *The Artist Krimmel and His Family by John Lewis Krimmel*. NGA, 1943, 1950, 1951, 1953, 1956, *American Paintings from the Collection of the National Gallery of Art*, no cat.

TEN MEMBERS of a family are gathered in a small room. Behind them, a partly curtained window opens on a distant landscape traversed by a tree-lined stream. At the left, an artist—a man of middle age—stands at a drawing table, chalk in hand. A young woman in a high-waisted red dress sits

facing him on a chair placed on a low platform. She holds a male infant² on her knee. Behind her, at the right, stands a young man dressed in a long overcoat who, hand on hip, contemplates the five small girls grouped in the foreground under the eyes of a grandmotherly figure. A discarded doll lies on the wooden floor in their midst. The family's black poodle crouches at their feet.

The picture first came to light in 1921 when it was sold by its first known owner, Rose De Forest, the wife of the New York art dealer and picture restorer Augustus De Forest, to Thomas Benedict Clarke, a prominent collector of American portraits. It bore an attribution to John Lewis Krimmel (1786–1821),³ a German painter of genre subjects active in Philadelphia after 1809, and was claimed to be a portrait of the artist himself and of his family. Both the attribution and identification of the painting were maintained at its first public exhibition in 1922⁴ and published on this occasion in a short article by Frederick F. Sherman that included a concise biography of Krimmel and specified that he had painted the picture in Germantown about 1820.⁵ No documentation of any kind supported these claims, which nevertheless remained unchallenged for more than thirty years, although what little came meanwhile to be known of Krimmel's work as a portraitist in oil—two half-lengths of modest quality⁶—bore no resemblance to this accomplished and psychologically complex family group. When the picture was shown at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1928–1931 with other portraits from the T. B. Clarke collection,⁷ Virgil Barker in his review of the exhibition gave it a paragraph that hinted at a shadow of doubt—“its masterly technical suavity makes it impossible to classify it as a work of specifically American quality”—but stopped short of denying the attribution to Krimmel.⁸

In 1955 Milo N. Naeve completed a master's dissertation, subsequently expanded into a monograph on Krimmel (1987),⁹ in which he refuted the picture's attribution and the identification of its subject on biographic and stylistic grounds. He pointed out that it strikingly differs—in conception, execution, and, indeed, quality—from all of



German 19th Century, *An Artist and His Family*, 1942.8.7



Fig. 1. Karl Begas, *The Begas Family*, oil on canvas, 1821, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz Museum

Krimmel's known works and observed that it does not represent the artist's family, since Krimmel never married and died childless. Later efforts by Anneliese Harding (1994) to reassert Krimmel's authorship,¹⁰ based in part on an elaborate interpretation of what she regarded as the esoteric funeral iconography of the family portrait, failed to address the fundamental question of its stylistic and qualitative incompatibility with Krimmel's securely documented work.¹¹

Naeve's rejection of Krimmel's authorship had meanwhile come to be shared by curators of the National Gallery, who were discovering that several of the paintings acquired from the T. B. Clarke collection¹² together with the alleged Krimmel family portrait carried attributions and provenances that did not withstand critical examination. A study of the Clarke collection, commissioned by the National Gallery and carried out by Anna W. Rutledge and James W. Lane (1952),¹³ concluded that most of these wrongly attributed pictures had been sold to Clarke by the dealer and picture restorer Augustus De Forest and his wife, Rose,¹⁴ who over the years had maintained a close business relationship with him. De Forest appears to have made it a practice to transform nameless portraits, bought on the art

and antiques market and restored in his New York studio, into saleable merchandise by providing them with imaginative attributions to known artists and with fictitious identifications of their sitters.¹⁵ Rose De Forest, said to have been a genealogist, supplied the "provenances" with which he enhanced his purchases.

Cautioned by these findings and by their own observations, curators of the National Gallery reexamined the painting's attribution and title and in 1963 changed them to "German, about 1820, *An Artist and His Family*."¹⁶ But prompted by the high quality and distinctive style of the portrait, efforts were made to determine its origin and authorship more closely. Consultation with German authorities during the 1960s failed to produce a definite attribution,¹⁷ though there was agreement that the picture was German. A name often proposed was that of Karl Begas (1794–1854),¹⁸ a native of Cologne, best known for one of the classics of Biedermeier portraiture, *The Begas Family* (1821; fig. 1), of which several correspondents felt reminded by the National Gallery's picture. But aside from resemblances due to its national origin and iconographic type, the stylistic individuality manifest in it clearly differs

Fig. 2. Simon Meister, *The Tillman Family*, oil on canvas, 1832, Düsseldorf Museum



from that of Begas. More closely comparable to it are works by another Rhenish painter, Simon Meister (1796–1844),¹⁹ whose group portraits, such as that of the Tillman family (1832; fig. 2), resemble it in their compositional groupings and in the weighty corporeality, scale, and facial characterization of their figures. Though not sufficient for a definite attribution, these similarities help to locate it in a regional tradition within the context of German middle-class portraiture of the 1820–1830s.

Notes

1. X-radiographs taken in 1983 (NGA curatorial files) show the lining to be a landscape painting of oblong shape, tattered along one side and representing a spacious view with a tall tower silhouetted against the sky. The damaged piece of fabric was lined at a right angle to the back of the original support, which, remarkably, is still in good condition and shows no signs of having needed reinforcement (see Examination Report, 7 August 1984, NGA curatorial files). This suggests that the addition of the backing, stamped with the address “S. N. Dodge’s / Artist and Painter’s / Supply Store / 189 Chatham cor / of Oliver St. / N. York,” may have been intended for a purpose unrelated to the picture’s structural soundness (see note 15 below). The firm of Samuel N. Dodge used this stamp from 1852 to 1864 (see Alexander W. Katlan, *American Artists’ Materials Suppliers Directory, Nineteenth Century* [Park Ridge, N.J., 1987], 85, 378, repro. 403).

2. The artist has taken pains to specify the sex of the infant, an unusual feature in middle-class family portraits of the period.

3. For Krimmel’s biography, see Naeve 1987, 15–29.

4. See under Exhibited.

5. Sherman 1923, 57–58.

6. Only two fair-sized portraits in oil by Krimmel are known, *Portrait of Jacob Ritter, Sr.* (1818, Kennedy Galleries, New York), and *Portrait of John Heckewelder* (1820, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia). Neither one of these shows any resemblance in style, technique, and conception (not to mention quality) to the picture in the NGA.

7. See under Exhibited.

8. Barker 1928, 280–281.

9. Naeve 1955, 197–199; Naeve 1987, 186, no. 117.

10. Harding 1994, 185–194, fig. 309.

11. Harding 1994, 186–189, argues that the painting represents both living and deceased members of the Krimmel family: the artist at the drawing table is John Lewis Krimmel himself; the seemingly younger man at the right is his brother George (who was in fact eleven years older than John Lewis). George’s wife, Susanna, who had died in 1818, is shown seated on the raised platform, holding the infant whose birth caused her death. Of her other children, the three girls at her left had predeceased her; the two girls, still alive, are shown being

cared for by Susanna’s elderly mother. According to Harding (186), “The living persons are depicted at their ages when the mother died, and the dead are depicted according to their ages at death.” There are some difficulties with Harding’s account of the family of George and Susanna Krimmel. A child, identified only as “J” and whose gender is not known, had died at age eleven in 1813 but is not included in the family group, nor is a boy, Georg Friedrich, who was born in 1811 and died in 1812. Most unaccountable, if Harding’s system of interpretation is to be given any weight, is the absence of a third son, Heinrich, born about 1807 and alive when the picture was painted. “His absence is inexplicable,” admits Harding (194), who is, on the other hand, not disturbed by the inclusion in the family group of realistic portraits of persons who could not have sat to Krimmel: “Krimmel was adroit at painting recognizable portraits without the benefit of a sitter in front of him” (190).

The recent (1998) reappearance of a long-lost family group portrait actually by John Lewis Krimmel, *Self-Portrait with Susanna Krimmel and Her Children*, now in a private collection in Philadelphia, makes it possible to compare the painting at the National Gallery with a work of similar subject matter by this artist. The comparison strikingly demonstrates the differences—of style and quality—between Krimmel’s naïve folk-art primitivism and the mastery apparent in the National Gallery’s portrait. A reproduction of the painting by Krimmel is in *American Paintings* [dealer’s cat. Schwarz Fine Paintings.] (Philadelphia, n.d.), together with a discussion by the Krimmel scholar, Milo M. Naeve.

12. On Clarke’s death in January 1931 his collection was to be sold at auction. After several unsuccessful attempts to sell the collection (through the City Bank Farmer’s Trust in early 1931, the American Anderson Galleries later that year, and the American Art Galleries in January 1935), the Andrew W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust in 1936 authorized M. Knoedler & Co., New York, to purchase the collection on its behalf. The trust donated the Thomas B. Clarke collection to the National Gallery in 1942.

13. Rutledge and Lane 1952, 1–27.

14. On Augustus De Forest (born August Oberwalder) and Rose M. De Forest, see Rutledge and Lane 1952, 12–17.

15. According to Rutledge and Lane 1952, 14–15, De Forest’s practices included deceptive alterations in the linings of the paintings that he prepared for sale: “Some of these [portraits obtained by De Forest] came from the Philadelphia area and were supplied to De Forest by the dealer Richard Sessel. Some of them De Forest himself is said to have brought in. He did restoring himself. . . . De Forest was said to be adept at inscribing some of the canvases on the back. . . . He is said also to have re-lined, so that (a) an inscription already faked and photographed could no longer be examined, or (b) by the reverse process, a re-lining canvas could be torn away to show a supposedly old inscription, but which actually had recently been inserted on the original canvas when bared.”

16. Undated memorandum from William P. Campbell, assistant chief curator, in NGA curatorial files. The changes were approved by the Board of Trustees on 30 April 1969.

17. Correspondence, dating from 1966 to 1969, with Dr. Evelyn Weiss, Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne; Marilies von Fabeck, Berlin; and Dr. Peter Krieger, Nationalgalerie, Berlin, in NGA curatorial files.

18. Son of a Cologne judge, Begas studied with Antoine-Jean Gros (1771–1835) in Paris during 1813–1818 and in 1822–1824 worked in Italy in close touch with the painters of the Nazarene group. From 1824 he held a professorship at the Berlin Academy. He exhibited at the Paris Salons of 1824, 1837, and 1855.

19. Born in Koblenz, originally apprenticed as a saddler, Meister went on to study painting in Paris, where Horace Vernet (1789–1863) accepted him as a pupil from 1821 to 1825. He exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1827. Settled in Cologne from 1833 as a painter of portraits, battles, and landscapes, he was much employed by the Prussian court (see Adolf Jungjohann, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Koblenzer Malerei in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* [Koblenz, 1929], 29–30). His brother, Nikolas Meister (1809–1883), who had begun as his pupil and assistant, became a landscape painter, immigrated to the United States in 1860, and died in Newport, Rhode Island. Long forgotten, Simon Meister was rediscovered through exhibitions held in the 1920s (see *Koblenzer Porträtkunst* [Koblenz, 1923]; and *Die letzten 100 Jahre rheinischer Malerei* [Düsseldorf, 1925]).

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1923 Sherman, Frederic Fairchild. "John Lewis Krimmel's Portrait of Himself and Family." *Art in America* 11, no. 1: 57–58, repro.

1928 Barker, Virgil. "Portraiture in America before 1876." *Arts* 13, no. 5: 280–281.

1948 Louchheim, Aline. "Children Should Be Seen." *ArtN Annual* 17: 71, color repro.

1952 Rutledge, Anna W., and James W. Lane. "110 Paintings in the Clarke Collection. Report on Projects of October 1951–October 1952." Typescript in NGA curatorial files.

1955 Naeve, Milo Merle. "John Lewis Krimmel, His Life, His Art, and His Critics." M.A. thesis, University of Delaware, 1955.

1970 NGA: 168, repro.

1975 NGA: 150, repro.

1975 Bridgeman, Harriet, and Elizabeth Drury. *The Encyclopedia of Victoriana*. New York: 266, repro.

1975 Harding, Anneliese. *America through the Eyes of German Immigrant Painters*. Boston: 12–13, repro., as "The Artist and His Brother's Family, present location unknown."

1980 NGA: 308, repro.

1985 NGA: 30, repro.

1987 Naeve, Milo M. *John Lewis Krimmel*. Newark, Del.: 186, no. 117 (rejects attribution to Krimmel).

1994 Harding, Anneliese. *John Lewis Krimmel*. Winterthur, Del.: 185–189, color repro. 187 (reasserts attribution to Krimmel).

Unknown 19th Century

1947.17.19 (927)

A Painter and Visitors in a Studio

c. 1835

Oil on paper mounted on fabric, 35 × 43 (13⁷/₈ × 17)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Technical Notes: The painting's original support, a thin sheet of paper, has been lined with two fabrics and mounted on a stretcher. The support is covered with a thick white ground on which the composition has been sketched with thin washes of paint. Over this, the image has been formed in oil paint, applied in fluid pastes and glazes, with minutely textured touches in the highlights of the faces, and broader unblended strokes in the draperies. A thick, yellowed varnish covers the picture surface. An old, inverted V-shaped, repaired tear

is evident at the lower right, and some dark-shadowed drapery has been reglazed.

Provenance: Charles Henry Hart [1847–1918], New York, by 1915; consigned in 1915 to Frank Bayley, Boston, as by Washington Allston; sold to Thomas Benedict Clarke [1848–1931], New York; (Clarke sale, American Art Association, New York, 7 January 1919, no. 27); Arthur Meeker, Chicago; bought back by Clarke through (M. Knoedler & Co., New York) in 1924; his estate; sold as part of the Clarke collection 29 January 1936, through (M. Knoedler & Co., New York), to the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh; given to NGA in 1947.

Exhibited: New York, Union League Club, 1924, *Exhibition of the Earliest Known Portraits of Americans by Painters of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Cen-*



Unknown 19th Century, *A Painter and Visitors in a Studio*, 1947.17.19

tures, no. 10, as Washington Allston, *Gilbert Stuart's Family*. PMA, 1928–1931, *Portraits by Early American Artists of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries*, Collected by Thomas B. Clarke, unnumbered, unpaginated catalogue, as Washington Allston, *Gilbert Stuart's Family*. New London, Connecticut, Lyman Allyn Museum, 1944, *John Trumbull and His Contemporaries*, no. 41, as Attributed to Washington Allston, *Gilbert Stuart's Family*.

A PAINTER, palette in hand, is seated in front of an easel, in conversation with an older, heavy-set man who appears to be reading to him from a letter. Four young, dark-haired women stand behind the men, one of them holding an infant; they are modishly dressed in the fashion of the 1830s. At the left, an elderly man holding a cane and followed by two youths, evidently pupils of the artist, is entering the studio.

The early history of the picture, a composed genre scene, rather than a simple group portrait, remains unknown. The grounds on which it was at one time attributed to the American painter Washington Allston (1779–1843) and interpreted as representing Allston at the easel, conversing with the painter Gilbert Stuart in the latter's studio crowded with members of Stuart's family, have not withstood critical examination. The picture first came to light about 1900 as part of a large body of paintings of diverse origin and quality, to which the names of famous American artists, together with fictional provenances, had been attached by owners interested in their sale on the American market. Its first known owner, Charles Henry Hart (1847–1918), a New York collector and dealer, appears to have devised its attribution to Allston¹ and to have furnished the conjectural identification of its subject,² before selling it to Thomas Benedict Clarke (1848–1931), a New York collector with whom Hart had business relations.³ Together with a miscellaneous collection of American portraits formed by Clarke, it was acquired in 1936 by the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust and in 1947 given to the National Gallery of Art.

It still carried the attribution to Washington Allston at the time, but this was soon found to be unsustainable, since conception and style of the scene did not agree with Allston's known work and the sitters bore no resemblance to their supposed models. On consulting specialists, it was decided that

there was no reason to consider the picture as the work of an American painter. Its designation was therefore changed to "American School (?)" in 1964, then to "European 19th Century," and in 1983 to "Unknown 19th Century."

The national origin and specific authorship of this modest work remain unresolved. Its affinities seem to be mainly with North German or Scandinavian scenes in studio settings dating from about 1835, like those of the Hamburg painter Julius Louis Asher (1804–1878)⁴ or—allowing for evident differences in quality and sophistication—those of the Dane Wilhelm Bendz (1804–1832).⁵

Notes

1. Charles Henry Hart was a former director of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (1882–1902) and for many years covertly a picture dealer. About 1911 he became associated with Thomas Benedict Clarke, a New York collector and "gentleman-dealer," for whose gallery (Art House, near Fifth Avenue) Hart located and expertised American portraits. Before selling the painting to Clarke, Hart, who had probably devised its attribution to Washington Allston, also produced an imaginative account of its early provenance. According to a handwritten note (in NGA curatorial files), it was said to have been inherited by Gilbert Stuart's daughter who later sold it to one Uriah Bulkley, who bequeathed it to his daughter, Hetty Harrison of Southport (Conn.), who in turn left it to her daughter, Lora Harrison, from whom Hart supposedly acquired it by 1915. The complicated, unverifiable account seems designed to support the identification of the picture's subject and its attribution to Allston. In fact, nothing is definitely known of its history before 1915 when it was part of Hart's stock-in-trade.

2. According to Charles Henry Hart's note (NGA curatorial files): "On the right Allston sits beside the canvas with palette set and brushes in his left hand. Leaning on his chair is wife of Stuart in center of picture with back to front and head in profile looking at Allston sits Stuart with drawing in his hand. About Stuart are grouped his three daughters who grew to womanhood. Emma Stebbins with child in her arms, Ann and Jane. To the left are grouped three men entering the room. One from the likeness to him of the child in Mrs. Stebbins arms is doubtless Stebbins, while another with a portfolio in his hands resembles the portraits of Gilbert Stuart Newton, the only child of G. S. in whom he seems to have taken much interest."

3. On Thomas B. Clarke's collection of American portraits, on his collaborators and practices, see the report by Anne W. Rutledge and James W. Lane, "110 Paintings in the Clarke Collection. Report of October 1951–October 1952," typescript in NGA curatorial files.

4. See Asher's *Artist at the Easel*, c. 1835, Kunsthalle, Hamburg, inv. 1167.

5. See Bendz' *Interior in Amaliegade*, c. 1830, Den Hirschsprungske Samling, Copenhagen.

Eduard Gaertner

1801–1877

BORN IN BERLIN in 1801, Eduard Gaertner served an apprenticeship as decorator at the Prussian porcelain manufacture (1814–1821), after which he was employed by Karl Gropius, a designer of stage scenery, while also enrolled at the Berlin Academy. A royal stipend in 1825 enabled him to go to Paris for further studies, perhaps with the landscape painter Jean-Victor Bertin (1767–1842) and possibly also with technicians in the new art of panorama painting. On his return to Berlin in 1827, he rapidly established himself as a painter of architectural subjects and urban scenes, much appreciated for the sharp precision and colorist refinement of his paintings. Elected to the academy in 1833, he won the steady patronage of King Frederick William III, for whom he painted, in 1835, the large six-part panorama of Berlin that is considered his masterwork. His reputation soon reached beyond Prussia and in 1837 brought him an invitation from Czar Nicholas I, for whom, during a two-year stay in Russia, he produced a panorama of Moscow seen from the Kremlin.

After 1840 the slackening of popular interest in topographical painting prompted Gaertner, now less heavily employed by the court, to adjust his work to the taste of a middle-class clientele. Practicing a looser, more painterly manner, he sought to enliven his architectural views with romantic suggestions of late afternoon or sunset and cultivated effects of atmospheric color, perhaps in an effort to counter the competition of photography. During the 1840s and 1850s he traveled constantly in search of motifs, extending his rambles from his base in Berlin to the provinces of West and East Prussia, to Bohemia, and to Austria. After 1860 the number and quality of his paintings declined.

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1980 NGA: 306.
1985 NGA: 415.

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1973.13.1 (2648)

City Hall at Thorn

1848

Oil on fabric, 50.7 × 80 (20 × 31½)
Gift of Ethel Gaertner Pyne

Inscriptions

At lower right: *E. Gaertner fec. 1848*

Technical Notes: The painting's support is a plain-weave, medium-weight fabric that is unlined and mounted on its original four-member keyed, butt-joined stretcher. The fabric is commercially prepared with a thick salmon-colored priming that extends onto the tacking margins. It is clearly evident through the upper paint layers and influences the tone of the image. A penciled grid pattern, visible in infrared reflectograms, presumably was used to transfer the image from a preliminary drawing to the primed fabric. A precise underdrawing guided the painting's execution in a succession of thin paint applications. Sky and foreground were blocked in first, the buildings painted next, with the figural bywork, touched with slightly pastose highlights, at the end added over the previously completed foreground. The painting is generally well preserved, though the paint layer has reticulated slight-



Fig. 1. Infrared photograph of 1973.13.1, detail of inscription and date

ly, a condition most clearly evident in the darks. The painting is covered with a yellowed varnish.

Provenance: By inheritance to the granddaughter of the artist, Ethel Gaertner Pyne [Mrs. Henry Rogers Pyne, d. 1972], Washington, D.C.

Exhibited: Berlin, Berliner Bauwochen, 1968, *Eduard Gaertner, Architekturmaler in Berlin*, no. 22, as *Das Rathaus zu Thorn*.

GAERTNER'S PAINTING of the late-medieval town hall of Thorn represents this building and its adjacent thoroughfares as they appeared in 1846, when Thorn was part of the kingdom of Prussia. On the Vistula, Thorn (in Polish, Torun) was founded by the Teutonic Order in 1231, birthplace of the astronomer Copernicus, and, from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries, a flourishing member of the Hanseatic League.

The massive brick structure of the town hall is shown from the southwest. Its Gothic clock tower indicates the morning hour of eight. On the spacious pavements below, the day's market is being prepared, wagons are arriving with merchandise, old-clothes dealers arrange their wares. Soldiers of the municipal guard are shown at rest near the town hall's entrance. In the immediate foreground at the

lower left, three bearded men of beggarly appearance, perhaps vagrants, are being admonished or sent on their way by a top-hatted gentleman.

A visit by Gaertner to Thorn in 1846¹ is well documented by the painting of an extensive view of Thorn from across the Vistula (formerly in a private collection, Dortmund) that bears this date,² as well as by three watercolors of sites in Thorn inscribed with dates in September 1846.³ The somewhat indistinct date inscription of the National Gallery's *City Hall at Thorn*, however, reads as "1848" under infrared light (fig. 1), indicating either that the picture was painted during a later, not otherwise recorded visit to Thorn, or—more probably—that it was executed in Berlin, sometime after Gaertner's stay in Thorn, with the help of studies Gaertner had made there in 1846. One such preparatory study, undoubtedly based on direct observation, is in the Märkisches Museum, Berlin (fig. 2).⁴ A contemporary lithographic version of the scene, captioned *Rathaus in Thorn*, bears the attribution "drawn from nature by Gaertner, lithographed by Loeyllot in Berlin."⁵

In its treatment of architectural forms the painting exhibits the insistent, somewhat pedantic precision of detail that earned Gaertner the epithet "Biedermeier Canaletto."⁶ The rigorous perspectival construction that underlies its composition, smacking of straight edge and T square, is typical of his urban prospects. It is mitigated in this instance, as in his best works, by an equally characteristic subtlety in its suggestion of sunlight and atmosphere, and a particularly lively figural foreground.

In 1853 Gaertner returned to the site, which meanwhile had been changed by the erection of a statue of Copernicus, to paint two watercolor views, *City Hall of Thorn with Copernicus Monument*.⁷

Fig. 2. Eduard Gaertner, preparatory study for *City Hall at Thorn*, pen, 1848, Berlin, Märkisches Museum, inv. VII, 59/89



Notes

1. Gaertner may have gone to Thorn on behalf of his royal patron, at that time Frederick William IV, but the painting of the city hall at Thorn was not bought by the king, and for some reason remained in Gaertner's possession.

2. Wirth 1979, 235, no. 73, fig. 150.

3. *Street in Thorn with the House of Copernicus*, dated 7 September 1846 (Wirth 1979, no. 340), and *View of Thorn*, dated 11 September 1846 (Wirth, no. 342), both Staatliche Museen, Nationalgalerie, Berlin, and *Interior of Marienkirche, Thorn*, dated 10 September 1846 (Wirth, no. 341), formerly Georg Schäfer collection, Schwein-



Eduard Gaertner, *City Hall at Thorn*, 1973.13.1

furt. Related to these, but undated, is the pencil drawing *Celebration at the City Hall of Thorn* (Wirth, no. 350), Märkisches Museum, Berlin.

4. Inv. VII, 59/89. Unsigned and undated, the pen drawing measures 27.9 × 44 cm; see Wirth 1979, no. 351. The same museum preserves a further undated drawing in pencil and watercolor, *A Festival at the Thorn City Hall* (Wirth, no. 350). Wirth dates both these drawings to 1846.

5. Wirth 1979, no. 528.

6. Springer, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1899), 5:202.

7. Both watercolors are in Sanssouci, Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten, Aquarell Sammlung, Potsdam (Wirth 1979, nos. 398 and 399), and both are dated 1853. The second of these watercolors served as model for a color lithograph published in Thorn about 1853 (Wirth 1979, no. 530).

References

- 1975 NGA: 140, repro.
1979 Wirth: 235, no. 74, fig. 141.
1985 NGA: 163, repro.

Franz Xaver Winterhalter

1805–1873

BORN in the Grand-Duchy of Baden in 1805, of peasant stock, Franz Xaver Winterhalter received early training in Freiburg as a graphic artist. In 1824 he enrolled at the Munich Academy for further study in painting, while continuing to earn a living with lithographic work. Moving to Karlsruhe in 1828, he found employment as drawing master to the margravine of Baden and thus entered the world of aristocratic patronage. A travel stipend in 1833–1834 took him to Italy, where he composed romantic genre scenes in the manner of Léopold Robert (1794–1835). Though appointed court painter to the grand-ducal court on his return to Karlsruhe, he shortly moved to Paris, where he soon attracted notice with Italian genre scenes exhibited at the Salons from 1836 to 1838. King Louis-Philippe commissioned him to paint portraits of the entire royal family and of leading members of the court. Their success earned Winterhalter the reputation of a spe-

cialist in dynastic and aristocratic portraiture, skilled in combining likeness with flattery and enlivening official pomp with modern fashion. As the “Painter of Princes” he was thereafter in constant demand by the courts of Britain (from 1841), Spain, Belgium, Russia, the Germanies, and France after the accession of Napoleon III. To deal with the pressure of portrait commissions, many of them calling for multiple replicas, he made extensive use of assistants. He died in Frankfurt in 1873.

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Studio of Franz Xaver Winterhalter

1954.3.1 (1344)

Queen Victoria

c. 1843

Oil on fabric, 128 × 95.9 (50³/₄ × 37³/₄)

Gift of the children of the late William H. Donner

Technical Notes: The painting's plain-weave fabric support has been lined to a secondary fabric. The tacking margins are cropped, but cusping along all edges indicates that the painting's original dimensions have not been altered. The ground is white or off-white. Infrared reflectography reveals some underdrawing in the face to mark the placement of the eyes. It is presumably



Studio of Franz Xaver Winterhalter, *Queen Victoria*, 1954.3.1

present elsewhere although not generally evident during infrared examination. The paint, very smoothly applied in blended strokes in the flesh parts, is more broadly laid on in the background and costume. Wet-on-wet passages are apparent throughout. Shadows were created by using an underlayer or by applying dark transparent glazes. The painting is covered with a somewhat yellowed varnish. Except for small areas of inpainted damage in the sitter's forehead, shoulder, and arm, and in parts of the background, the painting is well preserved.

Provenance: William Henry Donner [1864–1953], Montreux, Switzerland; his children, Robert Donner, Elizabeth Donner Hanson, and Dora Donner Ide.

Exhibited: Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences [now Chrysler Museum], 1967–1972, loan for display with permanent collection.

QUEEN VICTORIA (1819–1901) is shown, at the age of twenty-three, standing against a background of dark clouds over a hilly landscape. She wears a dress of white satin. Her arms are folded at her waist. A small bunch of roses dangles from her left hand. The order of the Garter is fastened to her upper left arm. On her chignon she wears a small jeweled crown.

This unsigned painting is one of the fairly numerous repetitions of the portrait that Winterhalter had painted of the young queen in the early summer of 1842.¹ By early December of that year, the original portrait,² together with its pendant, a portrait of the Prince Consort, had been installed on the walls of the White Drawing Room at Windsor, where it remains (fig. 1).

Several replicas had meanwhile been commissioned, intended as gifts for friends, members of the royal family, and foreign courts.³ Winterhalter himself executed some of the copies. The queen sat to him in September 1842 for a copy destined for Baroness Lehzen, her former governess, and payment records for a copy sent to King Louis-Philippe of France suggest that it was also painted by Winterhalter himself. But it is certain that assistants played a large role in the production of the many unsigned replicas. These must have been based on a master copy kept in Winterhalter's studio, since the original in the private apartments at Windsor remained inaccessible. A brother of the artist, Hermann Winterhalter (1809–1891), was among the studio assistants who helped him with



Fig. 1. Franz Xaver Winterhalter, *Queen Victoria*, oil on canvas, 1842, Windsor Castle, The Royal Collection, OMCV 809, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

costumes and accessories, and painted full-scale copies on demand.⁴

The National Gallery's replica of the portrait very closely follows the original, except for the fact that it shows the queen wearing the insignia of the Garter, a feature present in all the copies but not in the first version at Windsor. The portrait type which that original and its repetitions exemplify modifies the format of regular state portraiture by stressing the attractive humanity, rather than the official dignity, of the royal person. In mid-nineteenth-century court art, portraits of this type, not intended for public display so much as for domestic use by the royal family itself or by its relatives and friends, came close to middle-class portraiture in style and sentiment. They nevertheless retained discreet elements of monarchical ideology. It has been suggested that the portrait of the queen holding a rose idealizes her as Flora and at the same time links her with the English dynastic tradition of which the Tudor rose was an emblem.⁵

Notes

1. For the history of the original version of the portrait, see Ormond and Blackett-Ord 1987, 190, no. 27.

2. Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, Windsor; oil on canvas, 133.4 × 97.8 cm, signed "Fr Winterhalter. /1842."

3. Replicas of the portrait of the queen were commissioned, as early as 1842, for Baroness Lehzen, for Count Mensdorff-Pouilly, for Prince Albert's family (now at Fürstenberg, Veste Coburg), and for King Louis-Philippe (together with its pendant, the portrait of the Prince Consort; both now at Versailles). These early, signed, and dated replicas were probably at least in part autograph. Copies of the pair of portraits were shown at the Crystal Palace exhibition in London in 1851. Further copies are recorded to have been painted for the duchess of Kent (in 1843, signed by Alexander Melville) and for the earl of Hardwicke (Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire). Still other copies are preserved at Examination School, Cambridge (signed by R. Rowe), at Burgley, and at Government House, Sidney (Australia). Old replicas of varying quality have ap-

peared on the art market (Christie's, London, 20 February 1953, no. 83; Christie's, London, 10 July 1953, no. 161, with pendant; Sotheby's, London, 29 October and 5 November 1986, no. 245; Sotheby's, London, 8 June 1987, no. 354; Christie's, New York, 23 May 1988, no. 305, dated 1844 and signed by Alexander Melville).

4. Nagler (1924, 24:459) also mentions Grafle, Coblitz, and Bontibonne as being among Winterhalter's assistants. Some early replicas of the portrait of Queen Victoria bear the signatures of R. Rowe and Alexander Melville (see note 3 above).

5. Schoch 1973 (see Biography), 143.

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- 1924 Nagler (see Biography): 24:459.
1965 NGA: 140.
1968 NGA: 127, repro.
1975 NGA: 376, repro.
1985 NGA: 438, repro.
1987 Ormond and Blackett-Ord (see Biography): 190.

Alexandre Calame

1810–1864

ALEXANDRE CALAME was born at Vevey in the Swiss canton of Vaud in 1810, the son of a marble carver. In 1813 the family moved to Neuchâtel, then under Prussian government, where Calame spent his boyhood, marred by an accident in 1820 that cost him the sight of one eye. Following his father's bankruptcy, the family settled in Geneva in 1824, where young Alexandre found employment as a bank clerk. The death of his father in 1826 left him, at sixteen, as his and his mother's sole support. To supplement his income and to pay the debts left by his father, he colored engravings of Alpine views for the print trade. A kindly employer, sensing some talent in the boy, provided him with a small stipend that enabled him to take lessons in Geneva from the painter François Diday (1802–1877), a specialist in Alpine landscapes. From 1829 Calame began to produce watercolors of his own composition, and from 1830 his first, timid paintings in oil. Extremely hardworking, he made rapid progress. Married in 1834 to a musician, Amelie Muntz-Berger, a pupil of Franz Liszt, he first exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1835 and in 1837 visited Paris, where he familiarized himself with

the work of such contemporary landscape painters as Jules Dupré and Théodore Rousseau. In the summer of 1838 Calame traveled in Holland, gathering impressions at The Hague and in Amsterdam of the work of the great Dutch landscape painters, among whom Jacob van Ruisdael (1628/1629–1682) particularly affected him. The following year, his *Storm at Handegg fall* (see fig. 1, p. 376), much noticed at the Paris Salon, won him a second-class gold medal. Hereafter Calame rapidly gained wide recognition, rising from a first-class gold medal at the Paris Salon of 1841 for *View of the Valley of d'Asasca*, and the purchase of this picture by King Louis-Philippe, to the award of the Legion of Honor for *Storm-Beaten Oaks (Waldstetten)* following the Salon of 1842. Students from all parts of Europe now began to flock to his studio. His tour of Italy, undertaken in 1843 with a retinue of his disciples, was immortalized by Rodolphe Toepffer in *Voyage en zigzag* (Paris, 1844), one of the classics of the romantic illustrated book. By 1845 Calame was considered to have surpassed his teacher, Diday, in what was their shared speciality, grand Alpine views under stormy skies. Charles Baudelaire, in

his review of the Salon of 1845, joked that once it had been thought that a single artist of split personality hid under the names of Diday and Calame, but since then "it was noted that he used the name Calame on the days when his painting went well."¹ The large exhibition pieces that spread Calame's name throughout Europe were composed according to a scheme that called for foregrounds of rock, torrents, and windswept pines beyond which the view opened on distant vistas of towering mountains, a formulaic arrangement that he enlivened with sharply observed details taken from close nature study. Extensive voyages took him to England (1850), Germany and the Netherlands (1852), and the Mediterranean (1853). An exhibitor at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1855, he was distinguished by Napoleon III who purchased his *Lac des quatre cantons*. Despite the provinciality of his milieu and the almost exclusively Swiss subject matter of his art, Calame achieved a surprising degree of international recognition, attested by his election to eight national academies and an abundant harvest of honors and decorations from the courts of Russia, Prussia, Belgium, and Holland; only the French critical press persisted in ignoring him. In the last years of his life, his productivity was taxed and his frail health strained by the many commissions that came to him from a large aristocratic and commercial clientele. Deeply religious, of taciturn and melancholy temperament, compulsively industrious, Calame suffered frequent illnesses and aged prematurely. A bout of pleurisy contributed to his death in 1864, in his fifty-fourth year.

Notes

1. Baudelaire 1968, 853.

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 Anker 1987.

1997.73.1

Fallen Tree

1839–1845

Oil on paper mounted on fabric, 25 × 41 (9¹³/₁₆ × 16¹/₈)
 Gift of Ivan E. Phillips in memory of his brother Neil Phillips

Inscriptions

At lower left: A. Calame

Technical Notes: The support is a sheet of paper, glued down to canvas and mounted on a butt-joined, keyed wooden stretcher, probably original, with one vertical crossbar. The paper support has been prepared with an off-white ground whose thickness prevents determining whether the paper is laid or wove. The forms of the design are contoured by dark brown brushed lines that are not traditional underdrawing because they are visible in normal light at the top surface of the paint but may lie in the underpaint as well. During infrared examination, these brushed lines are not apparent, nor is any conventional underdrawing visible. Over these lines, the image is painted in thick, complex layers varying from smoothly blended strokes to a vigorously brushmarked impasto. No design changes were apparent during infrared or X-radiographic examination. A clear varnish covers the paint layer, which is generally well preserved.

Provenance: (David & Constance Yates, New York); Ivan E. Phillips, Bedford, New York.

PROBABLY taken from nature, the study presents in dramatically close view two broken and splintered tree trunks—the one of an oak, the other apparently of a beech—complexly entangled with one another in their fall to the ground.

Calame won a gold medal at the Paris Salon of 1839 with a large Alpine landscape, *Storm at the Handegg fall* (fig. 1),¹ in which uprooted pines, evidence of nature's destructive rage, occupy the foreground of an immense scene of storm-swept mountains. In the same year, he took up a subject of similar significance in another large canvas, *The Avalanche* (Alpines Museum, Bern),² a scene of devastation with a foreground of tumbled rocks and splintered trees. Fallen and broken trees henceforth became a regular feature of Calame's Alpine landscapes.³ The small study at the National Gallery merely offers an accessory detail for such a scene, but the urgent immediacy of its presentation of shattered trunks vividly conveys Calame's fascina-



Alexandre Calame, *Fallen Tree*, 1997.73.1



Fig. 1. Alexandre Calame,
Storm at the Handeggfall,
oil on canvas, 1839, Geneva,
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire

tion with nature's destructive energies. Though it bears some resemblance to the uprooted and shredded pines at the lower right of his *Storm at the Handeggfall*, it does not seem to have served directly for this or any of his other Alpine scenes in which fallen trees play a part.

Calame's landscape art represented a current of resurgent romanticism that, in reaction against the more objective naturalism of the period, exalted nature's grandiose, awe-inspiring, and catastroph-

ic aspects. Though he based his mountain scenery on studies from nature,⁴ he went beyond objective observation in composing his exhibition pictures, striving for emotional effects very like those suggested by Kant's formula of the sublime:

threatening rocks, thunder clouds piled up the vault of heaven, borne along with flashes and peals, volcanoes in all their violence of destruction, hurricanes leaving desolation in their track, the boundless ocean rising with rebellious force, the high waterfall of



Fig. 2. François Diday,
Le Chêne et le roseau,
oil on canvas, 1843, Geneva,
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire

some mighty river, and the like, make our power of resistance of trifling moment in comparison with their might. But, provided our own position is secure, their aspect is all the more attractive for its fearfulness; and we readily call these objects sublime.⁵

In the tradition of landscape painting, dead trees often symbolized transience and mortality, as they did for instance in the work of Ruisdael.⁶ In romantic painting the motif took on a variety of meanings, ranging from the symbolic to the merely picturesque (instances from works by Achille-Etna Michallon [1796–1822],⁷ Horace Vernet [1789–1863],⁸ and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot⁹ are dealt with elsewhere in these pages). Calame, who during his travels in Holland had seen and commented on paintings by Ruisdael,¹⁰ may have taken hints from him in this respect, as he certainly did in others. Michallon had recently made spectacular use of broken-tree imagery in his *Oak and the Reed* (1816; see fig. 1, p. 354), a subject that Calame's teacher, François Diday, in 1843 paraphrased in a monumental version of his own (fig. 2):¹¹ their romantic compositions are moral allegories in the guise of landscape. In Calame's Alpine scenes, dead trees are a constant feature but remain subordinate to a presentation of physical states in nature, as the actual witnesses and victims of nature's rages, not as moralizing reminders of human fate.¹² The detail studies that he painted out-of-doors in preparing his large, synthetic compositions generally do not go beyond objective description. In this respect, the National Gallery's *Fallen Trees*, by its drastic vividness and suggestion of terrific violence, deviates from his usual practice.

Notes

1. 190.2 × 260 cm (Anker 1987, 108). The painting was exhibited at the Salon under no. 274 as *Vue prise à la Handeck, route de Grimsel, Canton de Berne*.

2. Oil on canvas, 190 × 260 cm (Anker 1987, 117). Exhibited at the British Institution, London, in 1840, and at the Paris Salon of 1841 (no. 265, *Paysage: vue des Hautes Alpes, après un orage [Suisse]*).

3. The motif figures prominently in the fore-

grounds of nearly all of Calame's composed Alpine views, beginning with his youthful successes of 1839 and concluding, shortly before his death, with his unfinished composition *The Wetterhorn* (1863). It occurs most frequently in his early works (1839–1845) but is again much in evidence during 1851–1855, and reappears spectacularly in his large exhibition pictures of 1858–1863.

4. Calame was noted for his lifelong addiction to outdoor sketching and for the detailed precision of his sketches, despite the speed with which he executed them (Anker 1987, 39, 42–43). His very numerous studies, generally in oil on paper or on cardboard, broadly fall into two groups: close-up views of foreground details (torrents, rocks, and trees) and more inclusive, pictorially conceived landscape motifs. The study at the NGA belongs to the first kind but is exceptional in the extreme closeness of its scrutiny. Its nearest relatives among Calame's studies are the nature studies of small size, freely brushed on paper or cardboard, that are datable about 1839–1845 (Anker 1987, nos. 124–130, 180–181).

5. *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790), trans. James C. Meredith, *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Oxford, 1911), 108.

6. On the motif of dead or stricken trees in the work of Ruisdael, see Walford 1991, 33–38, 133–140.

7. See pp. 352–355.

8. See pp. 352–355.

9. See pp. 29–36 (on Corot's *Forest of Fontainebleau*) and 39–44 (on his *View near Volterra*).

10. Calame traveled in Holland in the summer of 1838, going via Düsseldorf. In letters and diary jottings, he commented extensively on his impressions of paintings by Ruisdael encountered on his way, in Düsseldorf, The Hague, and Amsterdam (see Anker 1987, 171–177).

11. 212 × 271 cm (Anker 1987, 223, fig. 150).

12. Note, however, that Anker 1987, 296, commenting on a particular example of this image in Calame's work, *Tree Fallen into a Chasm* (c. 1859; location unknown) interprets the fallen or uprooted trees in Calame's paintings as symbols of the artist's personal fate: "l'arbre terrassé, symbole de la condition humaine... notre destin (celui de Calame particulièrement) est symbolisé par cette arbre terrassé... il est permis de discerner dans le nombre d'arbres abattus dans l'oeuvre de Calame les traces des coups que le sort lui a déjà réservés... l'arbre déraciné est d'ailleurs le thème romantique par excellence... Calame exprime un romantisme de la fatalité où l'homme est dépassé par les voies impénétrables d'un dieu tout-puissant."

Abbreviations for Frequently Cited Institutions

AIC	Art Institute of Chicago
Louvre	Musée du Louvre, Paris
MFA	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
MOMA	Museum of Modern Art, New York
MusFrA	Museum of French Art, New York
NGA	National Gallery of Art, Washington
PetitPal	Musée du Petit Palais, Paris
PMA	Philadelphia Museum of Art
Versailles	Musée National du Château, Versailles

Abbreviations for Frequently Cited Periodicals

<i>ArtN</i>	Art News
<i>BSHAF</i>	Bulletin de la société de l'histoire d'art français
<i>BurlM</i>	Burlington Magazine
<i>GBA</i>	Gazette des Beaux-Arts
<i>KuK</i>	Kunst und Künstler
<i>RAAM</i>	Revue de l'art ancien et moderne

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Appendix of Donors and Dealers

Chronological list of gifts to the National Gallery of Art, arranged by donors and their dealers.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Artist</i>	<i>Accession Number</i>	<i>Dealer</i>
1941	Duncan Phillips	Daumier	1941.6.1	Etienne Bignou, 1941
1942	Widener	Corot	1942.9.13	Galerie Georges Petit, 1891
		Corot	1942.9.11	Durand-Ruel et Cie, 1892
		Corot	1942.9.12	M. Knoedler & Co., 1892
	Mellon Trust	German 19th c.	1942.8.7	Thomas B. Clarke, 1936
1943	Frelinghuysen	Corot	1943.15.1	Durand-Ruel et Cie, 1893
		Courbet	1943.15.2	Durand-Ruel, 1897
	Rosenwald	Daumier	1943.11.2	Unknown source, by 1930
		Daumier	1943.11.1	Charles Sessler, 1930
	Dale	Boilly	1943.7.1	Etienne Bignou, 1933
1946	Kress	Ingres	1946.7.18	Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1945
1947	Mellon Trust	Unknown 19th c.	1947.17.19	Thomas B. Clarke, 1936
1949	Gallatin	Corot	1949.1.2	M. Knoedler & Co., 1909
		Millet	1949.1.9	M. Knoedler & Co., 1910
		Diaz	1949.1.4	M. Knoedler & Co., 1912
		Dupré	1949.1.5	M. Knoedler & Co., 1918
		Rousseau	1949.1.10	Maurice Geautier, unknown date
		Daubigny	1949.1.3	M. Knoedler & Co., after 1923
1951	Pecci-Blunt	Corot	1951.21.1	Possibly Frederick Blumenthal, unknown date
1952	Kress	Ingres	1952.2.24	Wildenstein & Co., 1949
		Ingres	1952.2.23	Wildenstein & Co., 1949
1954	Avalon Foundation	Corot	1954.6.1	Galerie Nathan, 1954
	Donner	Studio of Winterhalter	1954.3.1	Unknown source and date
1955	Pecci-Blunt	Corot	1955.9.1	Possibly Frederick Blumenthal, unknown date
1957	Lindeman	Courbet	1957.6.1	Jacques Seligmann, 1957
1960	Timken	Corot	1960.6.4	Arthur Tooth & Sons, 1925
1961	Kress	Prud'hon	1961.9.84	Julius H. Weitzner, 1952
		J.-L. David	1961.9.15	Wildenstein & Co., 1954
		J.-L. David	1961.9.14	M. Knoedler & Co., 1954
1963	Dale	Ingres	1963.10.34	Galerie Georges Bernheim, 1925
		Millet	1963.10.43	Galerie Joseph Allard, 1926
		Courbet	1963.10.113	C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries, 1926
		Daubigny	1963.10.166	Galerie Georges Petit, 1926
		Follower of Daumier	1963.10.117	C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries, 1927

<i>Date</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Artist</i>	<i>Accession Number</i>	<i>Dealer</i>
1963	Dale	Follower of Delacroix	1963.10.126	Josef Stransky, 1928
		Corot	1963.10.8	John Levy Galleries, 1929
		Courbet	1963.10.112	Galerie Georges Petit, 1929
		Studio of Rouget	1963.10.212	Silo's, 1929
		Unknown French	1963.10.28	Unknown source and date
		Corot	1963.10.110	Etienne Bignou, 1930
		Corot	1963.10.9	Etienne Bignou, 1930
		Circle of David	1963.10.118	American Art Association, 1930
		Boilly	1963.10.2	American Art Association, 1930
		Boilly	1963.10.3	American Art Association, 1930
		C. David	1963.10.15	American Art Association, 1930
		Corot	1963.10.108	Bernheim-Jeune, 1931
		Corot	1963.10.111	Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1932
		Delacroix	1963.10.127	Galerie Georges Petit, 1932
		Courbet	1963.10.114	Galerie Georges Petit, 1932
		Daumier	1963.10.14	Etienne Bignou, 1933
		Daumier	1963.10.13	Etienne Bignou, 1933
		Corot	1963.10.109	Etienne Bignou, 1933
		Follower of Delacroix	1963.10.19	American Art Association, 1934
		Daumier	1963.10.12	Arthur Fischer, 1949
		Gericault	1963.10.29	Julius H. Weitzner, 1950
		Millet	1963.10.42	Galerie André Weil, 1950
		Courbet	1963.10.10	Jacques Dubourg, 1952
		Gros	1963.10.154	Julius H. Weitzner, 1954
1966	Dale Fund	Delacroix	1966.12.1	James Jerome Hill,
			unknown date	
1970	Mellon Bruce	Corot	1970.17.22	Edward H. Molyneux, 1955
		Corot	1970.17.117	Edward H. Molyneux, 1955
		Corot	1970.17.23	Thomas Agnew & Sons, 1966
		Manner of Daumier	1970.17.24	Edward H. Molyneux, 1955
		Merle	1970.17.101	Harry MacNeil Bland Galleries, unknown date
1972	Dale Fund	Gericault	1972.25.1	Galerie Schmidt, 1971
	Harriman	Courbet	1972.9.7	Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1946
		Courbet	1972.9.8	Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1947
1973	Gaertner	Gaertner	1973.13.1	family collection
1984	Mellon	After Gericault	1984.29.2	Frank Partridge & Sons, c. 1967
1985	Mellon	Corot	1985.64.9	Wildenstein & Co., 1960
		Courbet	1985.64.10	Galerie Nathan, 1985
1989	Dale Fund	Vernet	1989.3.1	Ader, Picard, Tajan, 1989
1994	Ide	Coignet	1994.52.1	Fischer-Kiener, 1991
		Coignet	1994.52.2	Fischer-Kiener, 1991
		Giroux	1994.52.3	Fischer-Kiener, 1991

<i>Date</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Artist</i>	<i>Accession Number</i>	<i>Dealer</i>
1994	Ide	Giroux	1994.52.4	Fischer-Kiener, 1991
1995	Dale Fund	Troyon	1995.42.1	Christie's, New York, 1995
1997	Dale Fund	Rousseau	1997.24.1	Schiller & Bodo, 1997
		Giroux	1997.65.1	Didier Aaron, 1997
	Philips	Calame	1997.73.1	D. & C. Yates, 1997
	New Century Fund	Turpin de Crissé	1997.102.1	Marc Blondeau, 1997

Appendix of Works Now in the Special Collection

Anonymous French 19th Century
Portrait of a Lady
1947.17.69

Unknown Nationality 18th Century
Portrait of a Man
1947.17.100

Unknown Nationality 19th Century
Portrait of a Lady
1942.8.37

Unknown Nationality 19th Century
Portrait of a Young Lady
1947.17.1

L. de Vuillemin
Portrait of an Old Woman
1964.19.8

L. de Vuillemin
Portrait of a Young Woman
1964.19.9

Appendix of Works Acquired after Publication

Johan Christian Clausen Dahl
View from Vaekero near
Christiana
1999.99.1

Simon Denis
View near Naples
1998.21.1

Concordance of Old-New Attributions

Attributions changed since publication by the National Gallery of Art of *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, 1985).

<i>Accession Number</i>	<i>Old Attribution</i>	<i>New Attribution</i>
1963.10.19	Eugène Delacroix	Follower of Eugène Delacroix (Possibly Pierre Andrieu)
1963.10.28	Baron François Gérard	French 19th Century
1984.29.2	Théodore Géricault	After Théodore Géricault
1963.10.212	Georges Rouget	Studio of Georges Rouget
1954.3.1	Franz Xaver Winterhalter	Studio of Franz Xaver Winterhalter

Concordance of Old-New Titles

Titles changed since publication by the National Gallery of Art of *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, 1985).

<i>Artist</i>	<i>Accession Number</i>	<i>Old Title</i>	<i>New Title</i>
Louis-Léopold Boilly	1963.10.2	Mademoiselle Mortier de Trévisé (facing right)	Caroline Mortier de Trévisé
Louis-Léopold Boilly	1963.10.3	Mademoiselle Mortier de Trévisé (facing left)	Malvina Mortier de Trévisé
Jean-Baptiste-Camille-Corot	1970.17.22	River Scene with Bridge	Bridge on the Saône River at Mâcon
Gustave Courbet	1943.15.2	The Stream	The Stream (Le Ruisseau de Puits-Noir; vallée de la Loue)
Gustave Courbet	1972.9.8	Landscape near the Banks of the Indre	La Bretonnerie in the Department of Indre
Charles-François Daubigny	1949.1.3	Landscape with Figures	Washerwomen at the Oise River near Valmondois
Jacques-Louis David	1961.9.15	Napoleon in His Study	The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries
Eugène Delacroix	1963.10.127	Columbus and His Son at La Rábida	Christopher Columbus and His Son at La Rábida
Théodore Gericault	1972.25.1	Trumpeters of Napoleon's Imperial Guard	Mounted Trumpeters of Napoleon's Imperial Guard
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres	1952.2.24	Monsieur Marcotte	Marcotte d'Argenteuil
Unknown 19th Century	1947.17.19	An Artist's Studio	A Painter and Visitors in a Studio

Concordance of New-Old Accession Numbers

1941.6.1	545	Honoré Daumier, <i>Advice to a Young Artist</i>
1942.8.7	560	German 19th Century, <i>An Artist and His Family</i>
1942.9.11	607	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>The Artist's Studio</i>
1942.9.12	608	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>The Forest of Coubron</i>
1942.9.13	609	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>View near Epernon</i>
1943.7.1	738	Louis-Léopold Boilly, <i>A Painter's Studio</i>
1943.11.1	752	Honoré Daumier, <i>In Church</i>
1943.11.2	753	Honoré Daumier, with additions by later hands, <i>Feast of the Gods</i>
1943.15.1	761	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>The Eel Gatherers</i>
1943.15.2	762	Gustave Courbet, <i>The Stream (Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir; vallée de la Loue)</i>
1946.7.18	882	Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, <i>Madame Moitessier</i>
1947.17.19	927	Unknown 19th Century, <i>A Painter and Visitors in a Studio</i>
1949.1.2	1034	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>River View</i>
1949.1.3	1035	Charles-François Daubigny, <i>Washerwomen at the Oise River near Valmondois</i>
1949.1.4	1036	Narcisse Virgilio Diaz de la Peña, <i>Forest Scene</i>
1949.1.5	1037	Jules Dupré, <i>The Old Oak</i>
1949.1.9	1041	Jean-François Millet, <i>The Bather</i>
1949.1.10	1042	Théodore Rousseau, <i>Landscape with Boatman</i>
1951.21.1	1079	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Gypsy Girl with Mandolin</i>
1952.2.23	1106	Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, <i>Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel</i>
1952.2.24	1107	Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, <i>Marcotte d'Argenteuil</i>
1954.3.1	1344	Studio of Franz Xaver Winterhalter, <i>Queen Victoria</i>
1954.6.1	1345	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Italian Girl</i>
1961.9.14	1373	Jacques-Louis David, <i>Madame David</i>
1961.9.15	1374	Jacques-Louis David, <i>The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries</i>
1955.9.1	1418	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Ville-d'Avray</i>
1957.6.1	1481	Gustave Courbet, <i>La Grotte de la Loue</i>
1960.6.4	1556	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Saint Sebastian Succored by the Holy Women</i>
1961.9.84	1636	Pierre Paul Prud'hon, <i>David Johnston</i>
1963.10.2	1666	Louis-Léopold Boilly, <i>Caroline Mortier de Trévis</i>
1963.10.3	1667	Louis-Léopold Boilly, <i>Malvina Mortier de Trévis</i>
1963.10.8	1672	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Italian Peasant Boy</i>
1963.10.9	1673	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Portrait of a Young Girl</i>
1963.10.10	1674	Gustave Courbet, <i>Beach in Normandy</i>
1963.10.12	1676	Honoré Daumier, <i>The Beggars</i>
1963.10.13	1677	Honoré Daumier, <i>French Theater</i>
1963.10.14	1678	Honoré Daumier, <i>Wandering Saltimbanques</i>
1963.10.15	1679	Charles David, <i>Portrait of a Young Horsewoman</i>
1963.10.19	1683	Follower of Eugène Delacroix (Possibly Pierre Andrieu), <i>Michelangelo in His Studio</i>
1963.10.28	1692	French 19th century, <i>Young Girl Posing in Back View</i>
1963.10.29	1693	Théodore Géricault, <i>Nude Warrior with a Spear</i>

1963.10.34	1698	Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, <i>Ulysses</i>
1963.10.42	1706	Jean-François Millet, <i>Leconte de Lisle</i>
1963.10.43	1707	Jean-François Millet, <i>Portrait of a Man</i>
1963.10.108	1772	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Agostina</i>
1963.10.109	1773	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Forest of Fontainebleau</i>
1963.10.110	1774	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Rocks in the Forest of Fontainebleau</i>
1963.10.111	1775	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>A View near Volterra</i>
1963.10.112	1776	Gustave Courbet, <i>Portrait of a Young Girl</i>
1963.10.113	1777	Gustave Courbet, <i>The Promenade</i>
1963.10.114	1778	Gustave Courbet, <i>A Young Woman Reading</i>
1963.10.116	1780	Charles-François Daubigny, <i>The Farm</i>
1963.10.117	1781	Follower of Honoré Daumier, <i>Hippolyte Lavoignat</i>
1963.10.118	1782	Circle of Jacques-Louis David, <i>Portrait of a Young Woman in White</i>
1963.10.126	1790	Follower of Eugène Delacroix, <i>Algerian Child</i>
1963.10.127	1791	Eugène Delacroix, <i>Christopher Columbus and His Son at La Rabida</i>
1963.10.154	1818	Antoine-Jean Gros, <i>Dr. Vignardonne</i>
1963.10.212	1876	Studio of Georges Rouget, <i>Copy after Georges Rouget's Portrait of Jacques-Louis David</i>
1966.12.1	2329	Eugène Delacroix, <i>Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains</i>
1970.17.22	2394	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Bridge on the Saône River at Mâcon</i>
1970.17.23	2395	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Madame Stumpf and Her Daughter</i>
1970.17.24	2396	Manner of Honoré Daumier, <i>Study of Clowns</i>
1970.17.117	2489	Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Beach near Etretat</i>
1972.9.7	2592	Gustave Courbet, <i>Boats on a Beach, Etretat</i>
1972.9.8	2593	Gustave Courbet, <i>La Bretonnerie in the Department of Indre</i>
1972.25.1	2628	Théodore Gericault, <i>Mounted Trumpeters of Napoleon's Imperial Guard</i>
1973.13.1	2648	Eduard Gaertner, <i>City Hall at Thorn</i>
1984.29.2		After Théodore Gericault, <i>The Gray Stallion</i>
1985.64.9		Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, <i>Young Girl Reading</i>
1985.64.10		Gustave Courbet, <i>Calm Sea</i>
1989.3.1		Horace Vernet, <i>Hunting in the Pontine Marshes</i>
1994.52.1		Jules Coignet, <i>View of Bozen with a Painter</i>
1994.52.2		Jules Coignet, <i>View of Lake Nemi</i>
1994.52.3		André Giroux, <i>Forest Interior with a Painter, Civita Castellana</i>
1994.52.4		André Giroux, <i>Forest Interior with a Waterfall, Papigno</i>
1995.42.1		Constant Troyon, <i>The Approaching Storm</i>
1997.65.1		André Giroux, <i>Santa Trinità dei Monti in the Snow</i>
1997.73.1		Alexandre Calame, <i>Fallen Tree</i>
1997.24.1		Théodore Rousseau, <i>Mountain Stream in the Auvergne</i>
1997.102.1		Lancelot-Théodore Turpin de Crissé, <i>View of a Villa, Pizzofalcone, Naples</i>