



George Bellows
American, 1882 - 1925

Anne with a Japanese Parasol

1917

oil on canvas

overall: 150.1 x 91.7 cm (59 1/8 x 36 1/8 in.)

framed: 168.9 x 111.8 x 6.4 cm (66 1/2 x 44 x 2 1/2 in.)

Inscription: lower right in red: Geo Bellows; upper left in dark blue: Geo Bellows
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon 1983.1.1

ENTRY

In this richly colored, broadly rendered, full-length portrait, six-year-old Anne Bellows stands on a mauve carpet holding an open Japanese parasol in her right hand and a small purse in her left. [1] She looks forthrightly at the viewer with her wide-set blue-gray eyes. Anne is posed against a blue background, and a green curtain hangs at the right. The purple flowers at her left may signify the freshness of youth. *Anne with a Japanese Parasol* was completed in September 1917 in Camden, Maine, where the Bellows family summered. In his Record Book, Bellows, apparently in error since no leaves are shown, assigned the painting the subtitle *Autumn Leaves and Purple*.

The previous year Bellows had painted *Anne with Her Parasol* (1916, private collection), in which he represented his daughter, this time seated in a chair, clasping the handle of a closed parasol with both hands. [2] The painting's title indicates that the parasol was not merely a studio prop but a personal possession that Anne herself actually used. In contrast, the decorative, more sophisticated type featured open on the floor in *Anne with a Japanese Parasol* may suggest that Anne's imagination and self-awareness were expanding—that she was growing up. Parasols, especially Japanese ones, were fashionable accessories for well-to-do women during the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. They frequently appear in paintings by the French impressionists, for example Claude Monet's *Woman with a Parasol - Madame Monet and Her Son*, and their American counterparts, most notably Frederick Frieseke. Bellows would have been aware of

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these precedents. His ongoing interest in the decorative qualities of Japanese objects was again evident in his next portrait of his daughter, *Anne in White* (1920, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA), which features a brightly colored and patterned fan.

Though George Bellows established his fame by capturing the almost entirely male world of New York's boxing clubs, he spent the second half of his career surrounded by and frequently painting women. After his marriage to Emma Story in 1910 and the births of their two daughters, Anne and Jean, he lived in an all-female household that often included his Aunt Elinor and his mother, Anna. Over the last half of his abbreviated career Bellows's depictions of women came to rival, in both their variety and scope, his more famous boxing scenes. [3] That ambition is apparent in the range of images he devoted to Anne, from *My Baby* in October 1912 (private collection) to the brilliant family portrait *Emma and Her Children* (1923, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), completed just over a year before Bellows's premature death at the age of 42 in 1925. [4]

Robert Torchia

August 17, 2018

NOTES

- [1] Anne, the eldest of Bellows's two daughters, was born in 1911 and named after her paternal grandmother. She married Maynard Skipper Kearney in 1937, and the couple had three sons and one daughter. She died in 1974.
- [2] This painting was purchased by the collector Stephen Clark, who became dissatisfied with it and offered to exchange it for another in 1920. Bellows declined, saying, "I feel that when I sell a picture it is a good one, and carries a value that can be realized upon it in the Art market, if for any reason the owner wishes to dispose of it." Clark again requested an exchange in 1921, when he wanted to acquire *Katherine Rosen* (1921, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT). This time Bellows accepted the exchange, possibly because *Anne with Her Parasol* was of sentimental value to him. See Charles W. Morgan, *George Bellows: Painter of America* (New York, 1965), 234, 258–259.
- [3] For a comprehensive discussion of Bellows's family portraits, see M. Melissa Wolfe, "Family Life: Portraiture, 1914–1923," in Charles Brock et al., *George Bellows* (Washington, DC, 2012), 187–209.

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- [4] Other portraits of Anne include *Portrait of Anne* (1915, High Museum of Art), *Anne* (1915, Canajoharie Library and Art Gallery), *Anne in Blue Green Silk* (1916, marked “destroyed” in Bellows’s Record Book), *Anne in Black Velvet* (1917, Mead Art Museum, Amherst College), *Anne in Purple Wrap* (1921, Addison Gallery of American Art), and *Anne in Pink with Flowers* (1921, location unknown).
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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The fine, plain-weave fabric support has been lined with a fabric similar to that of the painting using an aqueous adhesive and mounted on a nonoriginal stretcher. The bottom tacking margin has been flattened to expand the painting by 3 cm, but the others have been removed. The fabric was prepared with a white ground. The artist applied paint alla prima with vigorous, broad brushstrokes using a variety of techniques ranging from thin scumbles and glazes to high impasto. X-radiographic examination reveals that the figure was originally placed higher in the composition and that the basket of flowers was considerably lower. No underdrawing was visible in infrared examination. [1] Heavy retouching is evident along the expanded bottom tacking margin and over the pentimenti of the originally higher hat and head position. The surface is coated with a glossy, slightly discolored layer of varnish.

TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Infrared examination was conducted with the Kodak 310-21x, a platinum silicide camera with a 55 mm macro lens and a 1.5–2.0 micron filter.
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PROVENANCE

The artist [1882-1925]; by inheritance to his wife, Emma S. Bellows [1884-1959]; her estate; purchased June 1964 through (H.V. Allison & Co., New York) by Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia; gift 1983 to NGA.

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EXHIBITION HISTORY

1917 Carson, Pirie and Scott Gallery, Chicago, 1917 [a commercial gallery, according to the artist's Record Book].

1917 Hill Tollerton, San Francisco, 1917 [a commercial gallery, according to the artist's Record Book].

1917 Oakland Art Museum, California, 1917 [according to the artist's Record Book].

1918 Exhibition of Paintings by George Bellows, Gallery of Fine Arts and Art Association of Columbus, Ohio, January-February 1918, no. 4, as Anne.

1918 Twenty-Fifth Annual Exhibition of American Art, Cincinnati Art Museum, May-July 1918, no. 32, as Anne.

1919 An Exhibition of Oil Paintings by George Bellows, N.A. and Mural Paintings and Drawings by Violet Oakley, Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, December 1919, no. 11.

1919 Exhibition of Paintings by George Bellows, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, March-April 1919, no. 2 or no. 18, as Anne.

1919 Paintings by George Bellows, Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, September-October 1919, no. 11.

1919 Paintings by George Bellows, Art Institute of Chicago, November-December 1919, no. 11.

1919 Springfield, Illinois, 1919 [according to the artist's Record Book].

1919 Thirteenth Annual Exhibition of Selected Paintings by American Artists and a Group of Small Selected Bronzes by American Sculptors, Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, May-September 1919, no. 2, repro., as Portrait of Anne.

1919 Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1919 [according to the artist's Record Book].

1920 The Twenty-Second Annual Exhibition of Paintings by American Artists, The Art Club of Erie at the Public Library, Erie, Pennsylvania, 1920, no. 11 [incorrectly listed as 1919 in the artist's Record Book].

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1942 Paintings by George Bellows, H.V. Allison & Co., New York, 1942, unnumbered checklist, as Anne with a Parasol.

1962 George Bellows, H.V. Allison & Co., New York, 1962, no. 13.

1964 George Bellows, H.V. Allison & Co., New York, 1964, no. 11.

1986 Gifts to the Nation: Selected Acquisitions from the Collections of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1986, unnumbered checklist.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1929 Bellows, Emma Louise Story. *The Paintings of George Bellows*. New York, 1929: 72, repro.
- 1965 Morgan, Charles H. *George Bellows. Painter of America*. New York, 1965: 203, 234, 258-259.
- 1971 Braider, Donald. *George Bellows and the Ashcan School of Painting*. New York, 1971: 124, 133-134.
- 1992 *American Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1992: 31, repro.
- 1992 Quick, Michael, Jane Myers, Marianne Doezema, and Franklin Kelly. *The Paintings of George Bellows*. Exh. cat. Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Columbus (Ohio) Museum of Art; Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, 1992-1993. New York, 1992: 213-214, repro, fig. 40.
- 2009 Peck, Glenn C. *George Bellows' Catalogue Raisonné*. H.V. Allison & Co., 2009. Online resource, URL: <http://www.hvallison.com>. Accessed 16 August 2016.

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