NINETEENTH CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS AND SCULPTURE

SUMMER EXHIBITION
April 20th through June 26th, 2004

Exhibition organized by Robert Kashey and David Wojciechowski
Catalogue by Elisabeth Kashey

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TECHNICAL NOTES: All measurements are in inches and centimeters; height precedes width. All drawings and paintings are framed. Prices and photographs on request. All works subject to prior sale.

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CATALOGUE
Wax relief on slate. Squared in graphite on slate. 13 5/8" x 23 3/4" (34.6 x 60.3 cm). Signed in the wax at lower right: THOMIRE. On verso various fragments of print on paper; preserved from old backing a Sotheby's label, illegible; also a printed label: J. BOYER, RUE FONTAINE, 38 / ...ENCADREMENTS...

Note: Trained as a sculptor by Augustin Pajou and Jean-Antoine Houdon, Thomire opted for the profession of a bronzier, following his father’s footsteps. Among the highlights of Thomire’s career is a clock he made for Marie-Antoinette (1788; Paris, Museum of Decorative Arts), the Marriage Vase for Napoleon and Marie-Louise (1812; Versailles, Château), and the bronze mounts after designs by Prud’hon for the two cradles of Napoleon II, King of Rome (Vienna, Schatzkammer; Paris, Louvre).

Thomire’s involvement with porcelain manufacturers (Sèvres), clock makers and furniture makers leaves a wide field to search for the purpose of the present wax model. The processional line-up and the treatment of the horses echo a set of bronze mounts Thomire made in 1808 for two consoles, designed by Jacob-Desmalter for Josephine Bonaparte’s grand salon in the Palais de Fontainebleau. These consoles, made of gilt wood in a rectangular form, carry a bronze doré frieze along the top, depicting The Triumph of Trajan. While the present relief seems to depict a chariot race, the center of Triumph of Trajan displays a group of horses stylistically similar to the horses in the present piece.

Reference:
DECAISNE or de CAISNE, Henri
1799 - 1852
Belgian School

SELF-PORTRAIT, 1820

Oil on canvas. 21 1/2" x 17 9/8" (55.2 x 45.4 cm). Signed and dated: DECAISNE / 1820.

Note: Although Decaisne was active mostly in Paris, his work is often seen in the context of Belgian Romanticism. Born in Brussels, he went to Paris at age nineteen and entered first the studio of Girodet, then that of Baron Gros. His preference of cool colors and linear composition, as evident in the present portrait, might derive from this early experience. Decaisne eventually made his career in both France and Belgium, showing at the Salons in Paris (1824-52) and Brussels, producing works of great diversity. His most ambitious painting, La Belgique couronnant ses enfants illustres (1839, 6 m x 5 m) earned him great honors. It was housed during World War II in the Palais of Justice and has presumably been destroyed. However, Decaisne’s lasting renown rests with his portraits, which include that of the Queen of the Belgians (1839), the Duc d’Orléans, Alphonse de Lamartine, and the singer Maria Felicita Malibran.

The present painting appears to be a self-portrait. Two later self-portraits depict the artist as a bearded man with the same turn of the head, strong nose, and most of all a distinct frown and intensive stare. “Le beau Flamand” he was called in the Parisian studios, an epithet which would fit the present portrait. The significance of the chain, however, remains enigmatic.

Reference:
Schilderkunst in België ten tijde van Neri Leys (1815-1869), Antwerp, 1969, p. 59 ill. of a later Self-Portrait.
Caroline Vallée, née Deby, born in 1803, lived at rue de l’Odéon, the daughter of Pierre Nicolas Honoré Deby and Suzanne Jeanne Aubert, owners of a papeterie. Caroline was married in the church of St. Sulpice on December 31, 1825, to Alexandre Vallée, 3 rue Christine, 26 years old, the son of Clément Jacques Vallée and Marie Rose Aubry.

The older one of the two sitters is Caroline Vallée’s sister, Philippine Deby, born 1812 and married December 1834 at St. Sulpice to Louis Adolphe Garnier, 34 years old, son of Jacques Garnier and Anne Adelaide Topino. The younger sitter is Clementine Rousseau, born 1813, daughter of General baron Rousseau.

The mood of the painting is defined by the book’s indistinctly inscribed title, Paul et Virginie. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre’s beautiful and pathetic tale inspired numerous painters, sculptors, musicians and illustrators especially in the early decades of the nineteenth’s century. It is the story of two fatherless children, growing up on the Isle of France (Mauritius) in poverty and ignorance. They fall in love, and when a long-forgotten aunt summons Virginia to Paris, she is loath to leave Paul. She does go, however, remaining away for two years. Unable to adjust either to her aunt or to civilization, Virginia returns. A storm sinks her ship and she dies within the sight of Paul, who dies of grief. The nostalgic evocation of a lost paradise and the sumptuous description of nature have assured this work enduring success.
BOY'S HEAD, 1824
STUDY FOR AN ANGEL

Graphite and point of brush on mediumweight off-white wove paper. No watermark. 6 3/8" x 4 5/8" (16.2 x 11.7 cm). Dated in graphite at lower right: 25.7.24.

Note: Ludwig Emil Grimm was the younger brother of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the authors of Grimm's Fairy Tales. Ludwig Emil was more than ten years younger than his famous brothers, who assumed parental responsibility after the death of their parents in 1798. The brothers Grimm, together with the extended families of their poet friends, the Brentanos and Arnims, supported Ludwig Emil's education.

Ludwig Emil Grimm lived most of his life in Kassel, except for a short military service during the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon in 1814. He studied at the Munich Academy from 1809 to 1815/16 and afterwards travelled to Italy for two and a half months. After a three year engagement he married Marie Böttner in 1832, when he had finally procured a professorship at the local art school. The income was modest, but facilitated some family excursions across Germany, mostly to visit friends or relatives.

Ludwig Emil Grimm wanted to be a graphic artist from the outset of his studies. He was not interested in making prints after old masters, but engraved studies which he drew from nature. Ad naturam or ad vivam is inscribed in almost every plate. Being handed from family to family in his youth, he made portrait drawings and etchings of many Romantic poets and their friends, which are now Grimm's most endearing legacy.

The present drawing, which is recorded in Ingrid Koszinowski's catalogue raisonné of Grimm's œuvre, might be a study for an angel. The soulful expression and the incline of the head support this idea. I. Koszinowski "does not want to rule out" that the drawing is a variant of an angel in Grimm's etching Mary With the Sleeping Child.

Reference:
HENRY, Louise, née Claude 1798 - 1839

German School

SELF-PORTRAIT, circa 1838

Graphite on light brown wove paper. No watermark. 6 1/2” x 5 1/2” (16.7 x 13.9 cm). Verso at lower left in graphite: 6479. The drawing was formerly accompanied by an engraving (now lost) by Eduard Eichens, dated 1840, carrying the inscription: Louise Henry geb. Claude / Geb. d. 5. Apr. 1798 / Gest. d. 15. July 1839; inscribed in brown ink by the engraver: Ihrem Andenken - /Eduard Eichens (to her memory - Eduard Eichens).

Ex-collection: Kate Schaeffer, New York.

Note: Of the numerous Berlin women who drew and painted portraits between 1820 and 1850, Louise Henry is the only one who became a member of the Academy. Born in Berlin, a descendent of the French emigré family Claude, she gravitated to Berlin’s French community. Around 1827 she married a minister, the grandson of Chodowiecki. Before her marriage she lived with the emigré family Mathieu and studied with Felicitas Robert, an offspring of the Tassaert family. She was also a student of J. F. Bolt and of Gottfried Schadow. Members of the families Mathieu and DuBois-Reymond appear in several of her portraits. Between 1812 and 1839 she contributed regularly to exhibitions at the Berlin Academy, first with pastel portraits, drawings and copies, later with more independent compositions, such as Boas Finding Ruth Gleaning, with domestic genre scenes, and in 1839, the year of her death, she sent her self-portrait. The present drawing might be a study for that portrait.

Andresen records, that Andreas Eichens made a print after a self-portrait of Louise Henry in 1838.

DELACROIX, Ferdinand-Victor-Eugène
1798 - 1863
French School

TWO ARABS, August 30, 1837

Ex-collection: Gift of M. Chatemps to Mrs. Marguerite Nohowel.

Note: The stationery from the Ministry of the Interior and the precise date above the drawing beg the question, what was Delacroix doing on that day? Did he visit someone at the Ministry to discuss a project? Was it a project involving an Arab scene? Was he kept waiting and began to occupy his time? Delacroix’s journey to North Africa, Algiers, and Spain lay five years behind him, but Arab subjects were still on his mind. While he might have devoted much of his time around 1837 to the execution of The Battle of Taillebourg, a commission for Louis-Philippe’s Hall of Battles in Versailles, and to Medea (Salon 1838), he also worked on the Fanatics in Tangier (1837-38) and two other Arab subjects: Interior of a Moroccan Court (Salon 1838) and The Kaid, a Moroccan Chief (1837; Nantes).

The posture of the man on the left in this drawing is well defined; the two characters appear to be in conversation, and there is nothing tentative about the scene. This should eventually lead to an explanation for the intentions of the drawing.

The provenance for this drawing includes a French Minister, M. Chatemps.

Reference:
Ministère de l'Intérieur.

Paris, le 30 août 1837.
STUDIES AND RE-STUDIES OF A MALE FIGURE, circa 1825-45

Brown ink on mediumweight, off-white laid paper. Watermark as seen through verso at center: J. Bouchet. Approximately 9" x 14 1/4" (23 x 36.2 cm), edges irregular. On verso inscribed in ink: par Eug. Delacroix, followed by initials or paraph. On verso of backing inscribed in black ink: Eugène Delacroix / dessin original / A. Salle G. N. des V. juin 1967 / Mlle Cailac exp.

Ex-collection: David Bassine.

Formerly: Caas Canfield Collection at F. A. R. Gallery, New York.

Note: The even distribution of studies on the present sheet make this drawing more attractive than many of Delacroix’ more accidental notations.

A pen and ink drawing for The Sultan of Morocco (1832) depicts a seated figure, seen from the rear, with an outline of the head similar to the present drawing. The first sketches of this event (an audience granted to the Comte de Mornay by the Sultan of Morocco) date to 1832. Another comparison points to the sketches for Justice of Trajan (1840), depicting variations of a figure on horseback.

Reference:
ETTY, William 1787 - 1849
English School

FEMALE NUDE

Oil on board. 19” x 16 1/2” (48.2 x 42 cm).

Note: How William Etty could devote a lifetime to painting delicious male and female nudes without being burnt at the stake by Victorian guardians of family values remains a mystery, explicable only with the double-standards of the period. Naturally, there was criticism ("no decent family can hang such sights against their walls"), but the Royal Academy made Etty a member and he taught at the venerable institution. His colleagues shook their heads, when he sat with the students in the life classes, painting along with them. The present painting may well have been one of these studies. "Like the great French painters", wrote Hans Hess at the occasion of Etty's centenary, "he was in love with his metier. He loved painting as such, and in this respect he was more modern than his time."

Reference:
Exposed. The Victorian Nude, Alison Smith, ed., Tate Britain and other locations, 2001-02, p. 57.
BARYE, Antoine-Louis  1796 - 1875
French School

PYTHON SWALLOWING A DOE
Second Version, circa 1857-58

Bronze with dark brown patination on irregular oval self-base. Height, from bottom of base to curve of snake at top: 3 3/8" (8.5 cm); width, from left to right edge of base: 13 3/4" (35 cm); depth, from front to rear edge of base: 4 3/4" (12 cm). Signature incised at rear top of base: A. L. BARYE. On underside inscribed in white oil: B. V. C. / 3379; cloth label attached from Gallery Wildenstein, inv. no. 68.

Ex-collection: Eduardo Guinle, Brazil; Carlos Guinle.

Note: The first version of *Python Swallowing a Doe* dates from 1840. The present second version was offered from 1857-58. Barye has reworked the legs of the doe and replaced the plain oval base of the 1840 model with a more naturalistic variant.

This particularly fine cast was once in the Eduardo Guinle collection, distinguished for its holdings of nearly two-hundred high quality bronzes by Barye.

Reference:

WIERTZ, Antoine 1806 - 1865
Belgian School

THE FOUR SEASONS OF LIFE, circa 1841
Oil on panel. 6 7/8" x 10 9/16" (17.5 x 26.8 cm).

Exhibition: XVIII Salon of Ghent, 1841, no. 131.

Note: Wiertz is an unique artist within the Belgian School. Throughout his life he was obsessed with the ambition to rival Rubens, or even surpass him. In the pursuit of this goal, he painted huge canvases in a studio given to him by the magistrate of Brussels. In return for this favor, Wiertz pledged all his works to the city of Brussels.

However, he did not always keep his word. Small and medium-size paintings passed into the possession of friends and were sold during the artist's lifetime. To cover his private dealings, Wiertz did not sign these paintings which reached the art market.

In 1832 Wiertz won the prix de Rome, and in 1833 he went to Italy. He studied the old masters, especially Raphael, and he embarked on the first of his enormous compositions (The Battle Between Greeks and Trojans for the Corpse of Androclus). During this period he also enjoyed painting scenes from everyday life, although never as merely picturesque observations but always with a symbolic or more generalized theme in mind, as in the present painting.

The Musée Wiertz in Brussels owns three other versions of the Four Ages of Life. Two of them lack the figure of the little boy. The third one is a sketch and comes closest to the present version, both in its iconography and format.

André Moerman, curator at the musée Wiertz, discovered that the present version was exhibited at the Salon of Ghent in 1841. An inventory of the Musée Wiertz, edited by Charles Potvin, mentions in the notes for the sketch, which belongs to the museum, a painting “not in the museum, exhibited in Ghent in 1841”. This is the present painting.

References:
Maison de la Culture Dinant, Antoine Wiertz, œuvres connues et inconnues, 5 Jan. - 10 Febr., 1980, cat. no. 26, ill. of a variant without the little boy.
THE DUKE OF CHARTRE SAVES THE ENGINEER SIRET FROM DROWNING IN AUGUST OF 1791 IN VENDÔME, 1847

Oil on canvas. 20 1/4" x 24 1/4" (51.5 x 61.5 cm). Signed and dated at lower right: H. Vernet 1847. On verso of canvas stamp of a royal collection: Initials (LP ?) surmounted by a crown.

Note: In 1845 Horace Vernet lost his beloved daughter Louise, wife of the painter Paul Delaroche. Expressions of sympathy from France’s intellectual elite supported the aging artist, but most of all the concern of the royal family of Louis-Philippe helped to restore Horace Vernet’s energies.

The present painting commemorates an event from Louis-Philippe’s youth, and if it was an official commission, is was well timed and well intended. It did not hurt, that it also shored up the king’s shaky popularity. Vernet’s painting was finished in 1847, one year later the revolution swept away the king and much of the Royal collection.

The eighteen-year old Louis-Philippe, then carrying the title duc de Chartres, joined his regiment in the garrisons of Vendôme in June of 1791. He was well-likied by his troops, showing “great restraint” when the flight of Louis XVI caused tensions. When he saved a drowning man, the city of Vendôme rewarded him in a solemn act with a couronne civique (civil crown). Vendôme on the Loire is characterized by a steep castle-crowned hill and the church of La Trinité, both recognizable in Vernet’s painting.

The present painting bears the stamp of a royal collection. However, it must have left the collection early on, perhaps during the turmoils of the revolution, or it might never have been displayed. The painting is not included in Eudox Soulié’s comprehensive catalogue of the Museum at Versailles of 1854-55. Two copies are listed today at the Musée Versailles, one by Elie Lecomte (inv. no. MV5 180, 1.02 x 1.31 m).

VIEW OF MOUNT ROSE AT SUNSET, circa 1843-46

Oil on carton. 9" x 12" (22.8 x 30.5 cm). On verso inscribed in old hand: Vue du Monte-Rose à la Soir / peinture à l'huile sur carton / 0, 305 x 0, 228.

Note: In 1840 Calame took a trip to Zermatt, and from there hiked with a friend to a height beyond 3000 metres, a pivotal experience for the painter. For the first time he saw the vast expanse of the High Alps, stretching far towards a distant horizon. This was the opposite effect of the mountains seen from below as vertical, road-blocking massive rocks. Calame made drawings and some sketches and worked up in his studio the painting View of the Sun in the High Alps of Valais with Mount Rose (1843-44, Neuchâtel), usually called Mount Rose. It became an icon of Alpine landscape painting, showing for the first time the mountains from above, without vegetation or staffage, thus pointing the way for later artists such as Ferdinand Hodler or Giovanni Segantini.

The painting became very popular and Calame painted several versions of it. The catalogue raisonné by Valentina Anker lists four large versions (Neuchâtel, Leipzig, private collections) and two smaller studies, like the present one, in private collections.

Reference:
GÉRÔME, Jean-Léon 1824 - 1904  
French School

ITALIAN WOMAN CARRYING INFANT IN BASKET ON HER HEAD, circa 1844

Graphite on paper with a line drawn around the image. No watermark. Image: 7 5/16" x 5 11/16" (18.6 x 14.5 cm) on paper: 9 1/4" x 6 3/4" (23.5 x 17.2 cm). Inscribed below image: croquis de Gérome. On old backing, label inscribed in ink: Ce dessin... (illegible) a été fait dans la Campagna par Gérôme et donné par l'artiste à M. Cyriet; at center blue bordered label, inscribed in ink: Vent Dumond / Meaux 1924; circular sticker, printed: BRUNO DE BAYSER EXPERT / PARIS.

Ex-collection: Cyriet (gift from the artist).

Note: Most drawings by Gérôme are stylistically different from the two drawings in this exhibition. Gérôme’s preparatory studies for paintings usually show long parallel hatching, hard outlines, a general hastiness to denote an image, without the patience to dwell on details. In contrast, the present drawings are carefully executed, with estompe rather than hatching, and very soft outlines. The volumes of the figures are well defined as in a painting.

This and the Italian subjects date the two drawings to an early period in Gérôme’s life when his work still reflected the influence of his teachers. Gérôme attended the atelier of Delaroche, who led the studio where once David and Gros had taught. It was the most reputable atelier in Paris in the 1840’s. In the fall of 1843, Delaroche took Gérôme on a trip to Italy, turning over his teaching obligations to Charles Gleyre.

The year in Italy was for Gérôme, as he later remembered, “one of the happiest and best employed in my life.” He made excursions on foot, with a backpack, to the Campagna, accompanied by his fellow-artist Charles-François Jalabert (1819-1901), who remained an intimate friend for the rest of Gérôme’s life. Gérôme returned to Italy many times in his later career, but it is doubtful that he found the time to roam the countryside. Typically, the Portrait of an Italian Girl of 1850 (cat. no. 14) was made in Rome.

Gérôme’s travel companion of 1843/44, Jalabert, painted a watercolor, dated 1846, which depicts an Italian Mother With Her Child (Montpellier, Musée Fabre). The woman in the painting, carrying a jug on her head, has the same stern face and dark-ringed eyes as the model in Gérôme’s present drawing from the Campagna. Even if the two women are not the same person, the images reflect a mid-century way of viewing Italian country folk as women with classical nobility.

Reference: 
Charles-François Jalabert, 1819-1901, Ville de Nîmes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1981, cat. no. 245 (Italian Mother, ill.).
14 GÉRÔME, Jean-Léon 1824 - 1904
French School

PORTRAIT OF AN ITALIAN GIRL, 1850

Graphite on mediumweight wove white paper. No watermark. 9 1/2” x 6 7/8” (23.6 x 17.5 cm). Signed and inscribed at lower right in graphite: JL Gérôme / Gigunda (?) / Rome / 1850. Label from old backing, printed: WADSWORTH ATHENAEUM / HARTFORD, CONN.; inscribed: Given to Henry C / Robinson by / Mr. Colt; printed: Artist (inscribed): Gérôme; printed: Owner: (inscribed) John T. Robinson / 1283 Asylum Ave. / Hartford; name and address crossed out, superscribed: G. R. Bourne.

Ex-collection: Mr. Colt; Henry C. Robinson, Hartford, CT; G. R. Bourne.

Note: See previous catalogue entry.
GIRL FROM NICE, SPINNING, circa 1859

Graphite on off-white wove paper. No discernible watermark. 13 3/4" x 8 5/8" (35 x 22 cm).

Note: In the 1850’s, in his mid-thirties, Valério found the focus and passion of his artistic ambition. He abandoned history painting and genre scenes and concentrated on his travels and ethnographic studies. He travelled alone and in the wake of Omar-Pasha’s army, bringing home watercolors and drawings of exotic people from remote places in the Balkans and Near East. The present drawing comes from an area closer to home: The Mediterranean colors and costumes of Nice must have attracted his eye. An oil study, Woman from Nice, dated 1859, was exhibited at Shepherd Gallery in Spring 1984 (cat. no. 56, ill.) The present drawing depicts a girl in similar dress and sun hat, and may be safely dated to the same time as the oil sketch. At the Salon of 1859, Valério also exhibited a "souvenir de Nice", Young Mother.
SKETCH FOR “THE PEST IN ROME”, circa 1859-69

Oil on canvas. 18 1/4” x 21 5/8” (46.3 x 55 cm).

Note: The Pest in Rome (Musée d’Orsay) is perhaps Delaunay’s most famous painting. He began it shortly after he arrived as a pensionnaire in Rome in 1857 and finished a first version in 1859 (Musée de Brest). It was exhibited in Paris in 1861 and severely criticized for its dependence on Poussin’s stylistic traits. In the following years Delaunay worked on several large commissions and ten years passed before he could exhibit the final version of the Pest at the Paris Salon of 1869. This time, the work was highly praised and bought for the Musée Luxembourg from the Liste Civile. It is now in the Musée d’Orsay.

Given the long gestation period of the painting, there naturally exist numerous studies of various stages, most of them drawings. The present oil sketch, captivating in its assured, unwavering immediacy, is very close to the final version in the Musée d’Orsay. An oil sketch in the Minneapolis Institute of Art is similar to the present one, but more developed in details.

It is worth noting that the final painting is small (1.31 m x 1.76 m), compared with the dimensions of typical Salon paintings with a historical subject. This was an interesting choice, as smaller formats were usually associated with genre paintings. Delaunay might have aimed at the “modern” aspect of a historical subject. The subject, too, was somewhat outside the usual classical or biblical sources. The story of a good and a bad Angel of Death derives from the Golden Legend by Jacobus de Voragine, a compilation of stories from the lives of the Saints. They fell into disrepute during the Renaissance for being implausible and superstitious. In mid-nineteenth century, the renewed interest in the Middle Ages and its anecdotal literature made the text attractive again.

Reference:
Jules-Elie Delaunay (1828-1891), Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, 1988, pp. 109-114, ill. of both versions and related drawings.
PHRYNE. AFTER LÉON GÉRÔME’S PAINTING “PHRYNE BEFORE THE AEROPAGUS” (1861), 1867 or after

Bronze with gilt patination on circular gilt bronze base, mounted to square green and white marble base. Overall height: 8 1/2” (21.5 cm). Signature incised on top of bronze base: FALGUIÈRE. Foundry mark at rear of base: Siot Paris, stamped: 32 J.

Note: Léon Gérôme’s painting Phryne Before the Aeropagus (Hamburg Kunsthalle) was exhibited at the Salon of 1861, and was received with mixed reviews. While Degas thought that Phryne should not hide her head in shame but proudly show her beauty, a critic named Albert de la Fizelière wrote: “[this] ugly woman, with her unsightly great feet!...This skinny, knock-kneed Phryne whose flat hips still bear the mark of the corset, and who is nothing but a brazen wench.” (quoted after F. Rionnet, see below).

Adolphe Goupil, Gérôme’s father-in-law, a successful art-dealer and publisher of photo engravings after Salon paintings, was not deterred by such criticism. In 1867, when Gérôme’s painting was re-exhibited at the Universal Exhibition, Goupil came out with a bronze statuette after the figure of Phryne in the painting, commissioned from Alexandre Falguière. The already popular young sculptor had just won a medal at the 1867 Salon for the plaster model of Tarcisius.

Florence Rionnet observed, that Falguière did not merely copy the figure, but slightly “corrected” it, to evade the earlier criticism. “He smoothed out the volumes, fined down the body, accentuated the girl’s modest gesture by moving the left leg to cover the right knee, then restored the balance of this gesture by a contraposto, which gave the figure a twist which it did not have in the painting. By modelling it in this way, Falguière managed to idealize the figure, giving it an ethereal grace which pleased people with a fondness for statuettes and removed all hint of scandal.” (p. 49)

Gérôme, who began showing his own sculpture in 1878, seems to have approved, because Falguière’s Phryne was offered by his father-in-law in various sizes and materials throughout the nineteenth century. Most casts bear the mark Goupil, who was the editor, not the founder. The present cast is marked Siot Paris, which adds another twist to the neat way of keeping the production “in the family”. Mme. Siot was known to have been Gérôme’s mistress and the model for the nude figure of The Ball Player.

DeCourcy E. McIntosh researched the sales books of M. Knoedler & Co. through 1879. He found that eight editions of Phryne were imported to New York in about ten years, five in gilt patination, two in patinated bronze, and one marble (courtesy of the author.)

Reference:
VIRTUE TRIUMPHANT, circa 1863-64
Oil on panel. 52 3/8" x 39 3/8" (133 x 100 cm). Signed at lower right: J. VAN LERIUS.

Exhibitions: Antwerp, 1864
Amsterdam, Tentoonstelling van Schilder - en andere Werken van levende kunstenaars, 1865, cat. no. 299
Amsterdam, Exposition Universelle, 1865 (gold medal)
Paris, 1865

Note: Van Lerius studied in Brussels and later taught at the Academy of Antwerp. Among the Belgian Romanticists he was known as "the painter of women", whom he painted, with a classical precision, as historical personages, mythical or fictional beings, or as portraits of glamorous ladies of his epoch. It is said, that he had a notoriously tumultuous love life, possibly killing himself for one of his models.

The present painting was reviewed in the Gazette des Beaux Arts with great enthusiasm:
"The Triumph of Virtue" is the subject of a painting by van Lerius, in which he presents himself as a thorough draughtsman as well as a highly qualified colorist. Given the title, one might expect a complicated allegory in the German vein, using the heavens as a stage, angels and demons as actors and stand-ins. However, the scene takes place in a miserable garret. A young girl, barely covered with a poor, half-torn shift, has just stabbed a young rake, dressed in a splendid gala suit, who is still holding her around the waist, while an old woman, unmoved and detached from the ongoing drama, secretly counts the money gained from her mean bargain. The head of the young girl is superb in its indignation and terror, her wild-looking eye, her quivering nostrils, her tense mouth, her panting throat, speak splendidly of the revolt of her decency, mixed with the horror of her just vengeance. The glare of the seducer's white body stands out against the shimmering crimson and golden fabric of his costume; the carefully rendered and well defined figure of the old woman makes one almost forget how despicable her business is.

Van Lerius complements his temperament as a colorist with a profound knowledge of drawing; the School of Antwerp can be proud of this artist; why is he so modest and does not exhibit elsewhere? There can be no doubt that he would be very well received in Paris."

The painting was actually exhibited one year later in Paris and in Amsterdam, where the artist was awarded a gold medal and elected honorary member of the Academy. His work became particularly popular in England where it entered the Queen's collection (Windsor Castle) as well as many private collections.

Reference:
SAPHO, 1864 or after

Bronze with brown patination on circular self-base, mounted to red marble base. Height, from bottom of base to top of head: 9 3/4" (24.8 cm). Incised along rim of base: J. CLÉSINGER / SAPHO / Maison MARNY-HAC, 1, rue de la PAIX.

Note: From antiquity through the nineteenth century, legends about Sapho attracted writers and artists. She was a persona who united the successful woman poet, the woman suffering from thwarted love, the liberated woman stepping beyond moral standards, and the tragic woman who drowned herself in the sea. Clésinger treated the subject five times.

In 1858 he presented three different Saphos: Sapho After her Last Song, Sapho’s Youth, and Sapho Victorious. The latter was a polychromed marble which raised eyebrows among traditionalist critics. The Sapho of 1864 was followed by another polychromed marble, Sapho, in 1867. This last version served for the bronze edition of which the present statuette is an example.

In a sale catalogue of Clésinger’s sculptures the subject is described as “Sapho at the moment when she threw herself into the waters.” The rich draperies reflect Clésinger’s development from classically based compositions (as in Sapho’s Last Song) towards an interest in neo-Baroque dynamic folds and flowing lines.

Reference:
Sale Auguste Clésinger, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 6, 1870, no. 17, ill. (marble).
Estignard, A., Clésinger, sa vie, ses œuvres, Paris, 1900 (ill. of Sapho sur le rocher de Leucade and Sapho, le dernier chant).
MONK CONTEMPLATING A SKULL,
circa 1875

Oil on canvas. 39 1/2" x 32" (100.3 x 81.2 cm). Signed with initials at lower left: T. C. On verso canvas stamp: toiles et peintures fabriqué des couleurs fines de Forge-Carpentier / 6 rue Halévy / 62 rue...Paris. Tableaux Encadrements.

Ex-collection: Family of the artist; Henry Rittenberg, American painter, b. 1879; his family by descent.

Note: This melancholy painting reflects Couture’s state of mind during the last decade of his life. He had bought a house in Villiers-le-Bel for his retirement, but one year later, in 1870, the German army moved in. Over one-hundred of his paintings, numerous drawings, furniture, and almost all his correspondence were burnt in a bonfire built by the occupying forces. At age fifty-six, the erstwhile agile and lively artist had become an old man. He did eventually paint again, his spirits raised by a host of amiable American girls, sent by his former students. They settled in the village and, with great enthusiasm, studied with the master.

In his œuvre catalogue of Couture’s work of 1880, R. Ballu wrote about the present painting: “If you thought that he had fallen below his own standards, only look at the masterly facture and almost terrifying stillness of his Monk Contemplating a Skull, a work worth a place in a gallery of Spanish painters, whose mysterious and somber compositions seem to be inspired by the flaming stakes of the Inquisition...Couture has, with this painting, confirmed his artistic powers.”

Reference:
R. Ballu, Catalogue des œuvres de Thomas Couture, Paris 1880, no. 81, p. XXV.
21  MEUNIER, Constantin  1831 - 1905  
Belgian School  

THE PRAYER, after 1880  

Bronze with black patination, rubbed to create highlights; hollow in the back as in a high relief. Signature incised at left: C. Meunier. Height: 5 7/8" (15 cm); width: 5 7/8" (15 cm); depth: 3 1/2" (9 cm).

Note: This sculpture is a departure from Meunier’s devotion to heroic images of laborers and miners. However, religious subjects are present in both his paintings and sculptures, usually depicting images of suffering, such as the painting Pieta or the sculpture Ecce Homo.

The present image is personal and intimate, perhaps because a good friend sat for the work. The wife of Meunier’s friend Jean Vanden Eeckhoudt, a luminist painter, modelled for the present sculpture as well as for Meunier’s Ophelia. Vanden Eeckhoudt in turn painted a portrait of Mme. Meunier.

Another cast of this sculpture, with the same dimensions, with a signature and also without foundry mark, is in the collection of the Meunier Museum in Brussels.

We are grateful to Gilles Marqueenie for sharing information about the present sculpture.
VOLLON, Antoine 1833 - 1900
French School

HELMET OF HENRI I, DUC DU MONTMORENCY COMTE DE DAMVILLE, 1876

Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 x 30 7/8" (60.3 x 78.5 cm). Signed and dated in black oil at lower left: A. Vollon. Inscribed in old hand on verso of stretcher, partially covered by label: Casque ayant appartenu à Henri Ier.....Montmorency Comte de Damville né en 1544. On verso of stretcher label of Galerie Jonas, Paris.

Note: A painting Helmet of Henri II was exhibited at the Salon of 1878. Henri II, Duc du Montmorency, lived from 1595 to 1632. This painting is listed in Bellier-Auvry with the note that the helmet belonged to the Musée d'Artillerie, and the painting to M. Fau. It is at present in a private collection in New York.

The present painting, inscribed as the Helmet of Henri Ier, Duc de Montmorency Comte de Damville, is a pendant to the former painting. It depicts the helmet of Henri I, duc de Montmorency, the elder, 1534-1614. The birth-date of 1544, as inscribed on a label on the verso of the painting, is an error.

We thank Carol Tabler for her information about the pendant to the present painting.
23 BARGUE, Charles  1825 or 26 - 1883
French School

ARTIST PAINTING OUTDOORS

Red and black chalk on papier calque laid to cream colored paper. 4 7/8" x 6 1/4" (12.5 x 16 cm). Estate stamp in red at lower right: VENTE BARGUE / 1883; Inscribed in graphite beneath stamp: 44 E. On verso of old backing label, typed: JOHN WASHEBA / MEDFORD MASS./ "Artist in the Meadow" by BARGUE; second label, printed: A GENERATION OF DRAUGHTSMEN / April 25 - May 29, 1962 / THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MUSEUM OF ANN ARBOR.

Ex-collection: John Washeba, Medford, Massachusetts.


Note: A student of Léon Gérôme, and later his collaborator in Le Cours de Dessin, Bargue never exhibited at the Salon. He built his splendid reputation on the loyalty of his collectors, especially from America, and on the wide influence of his drawing course. Bargue’s analytical studies of the nude had a wide appeal among artists. Vincent van Gogh studied the course more than once, Picasso copied Bargue’s plates at the Barcelona Academy (Ackermann, see below), and Toulouse-Lautrec is said to have followed Bargue’s advice.

Reference:
24A HENNER, Jean-Jacques 1829 - 1905
French School

THE VALLEY OF MUNSTER AFTER A STORM, circa 1879

Oil on canvas. 14 1/8" x 20 5/8" (36 x 52.5 cm). Signed at lower right in light brown oil: JJ HENNER. On verso of canvas and stretcher two identical collection stamps: Collection C. Chevalier (not in Lugt); inscribed in graphite: Musée du Petit Palais; in black felt tip: 6263.

Ex-collection: C. Chevalier.

Note: We published this landscape painting three years ago in our catalogue of Summer 2001. Only recently did we acquire the drawing related to the painting. We could not resist republishing both works as a pair.

Henner was deeply affected by the outcome of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71, after which France lost the territory of Alsace, where Henner had grown up. Themes of death and mourning prevail in his paintings (e.g. Jesus in the Tomb, 1879, Paris, Musée d’Orsay), and even in a landscape as the present one, the melancholy twilight after a storm is associated with a location in Alsace, the valley of Munster in the southern Vosges (not to be confused with the German town of Münster).

The Musée Henner in Paris owns three paintings of the same subject, Twilight after a Storm in the Valley of Munster. They are all tentatively dated 1879. An almost identical variant is in the Musée du Petit Palais, recorded without a date.


24B HENNER, Jean-Jacques 1829 - 1905
French School

LANDSCAPE WITH POND, circa 1879

Black chalk on laid paper. No discernible watermark. 3 3/4" x 6" (9.5 x 15.3 cm). Signed on old mount in brown ink: J.J. Henner.
PORTRAIT OF LADY ASHBURTON, after 1858

Oil on panel. 15 3/4" x 12" (40 x 30.5 cm). On verso stencilled: BL 996; circular sticker, typed: #138. Clipping of catalogue entry taped to verso, illustrating the present painting. printed: GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, R. A. / 86-PORTRAIT OF LADY ASHBURTON.

Sale: Blakeslee Galleries, Plaza Hotel, Mar. 6-10, 1917 (no. 86), sold to Ed. Lessman.

Note: Watts's vast and varied œuvre reaches from frescoes to sculpture, and from Pre-Raphaelite concepts to Symbolism. Throughout his life, he also painted portraits of the most important people of his time. An exhibition of his portraits in London was appropriately called Hall of Fame. The present striking image of Louisa Lady Ashburton (1827-1903) shows in the golden and blue colors as well as the rich fabric and jewelry of the sitter Watts's infatuation with Venetian painting.

Louisa Lady Ashburton, née Louisa Stewart Mackenzie, became the second wife of Lord Ashburton in 1858. Six years later, Lord Ashburton died, and Louisa, at age thirty-seven, inherited a great fortune, which she generously spent on the decoration of her many residences. Enthusiastic and impulsive, she was admired by artists. One of them was Harriet Hosmer, the American sculptress, who described her “square-cut and grandiose features” as if in reference to the present portrait.

Reference:
BLANCHE, circa 1875

Oil on canvas. 27" x 19 3/4" (68.5 x 50 cm).

Ex-collection: Charles H. Rickards, Sale Christie’s 2 April 1887, lot 52; W. G. Rawlinson by 1904; Mr. Carver, Bitteswell, Leicestershire; Misses Belcher, Bitteswell, Leicestershire.

Exhibitions: Royal Academy, 1875, cat. no. 266 Grosvenor Gallery, Watts Exhibition, 1881-2, no. 128 Manchester, Watts Memorial Exhibition, 1905, no. 102.


Note: Blanche Clogstoun was the orphan niece of Mr. and Mrs. Thoby Prinsep, and Watts became her legal guardian. In 1883 she married Herbert Somers Cocks, and died in 1895. Watts rarely painted children, but in the case of Blanche Clogstoun, a child he obviously knew well, he has produced a picture of great charm and tenderness.

Mrs. Watts, who published the first comprehensive catalogue of her husband’s work, wrote about the present painting: “This is the first portrait Mr. Watts painted of little Blanche Clogstoun, who is seated in an armchair and wears red stockings.”

Reference:
LEANDER’S BODY WASHED ASHORE, 1884

Oil on canvas. 47 1/4” x 70 1/2” (119.3 x 179 cm). Signed and dated at lower right: Axel Anderson 1884. On verso partially destroyed paper label, typed: Härmet intygas att Ackes tavla “Hero och Leander” genom köp övertagat...Dr. Robin William-Olsson ägo och ott full liq uid erlagts,...”Fritija d. 14.1.1966...Ahlby.

Second partially destroyed label, printed: ...LMUSEUM, inscribed in ink: ...or Ekström-Ahlby/Fittja/telefon 467300....26/4/1960...3 000.- (or 8 000?)


Note: Axel Anderson changed his name in 1904 to Axel Acke. Under this name he is known today as one of the leading art nouveau artists in Sweden. He had a traditional upbringing at the Royal Academy of Sweden (1876-81) and then followed the path that almost all major talents of his generation sought: he went to Paris. He apprenticed with F. A. Milius to learn the art of etching, and simultaneously absorbed what Paris had to offer. Bastien-Lepage was one of Acke’s heroes. The light palette and the treatment of the seascape in the present painting show this influence.

The present painting sums up Acke’s experience in Paris in 1883/84. In technique and palette he follows the French masters, but the mood of his painting is born of the mind of a Northern Symbolist. In spite of the Greek subject, the light of dawn over the misty sea are typical concerns of a Scandinavian painter. The beauty of the youth, and the rigged ship on the horizon in contrast to the debris in the foreground touch on a favorite idea of Romantic artists, the heroism of dying for love. Leander, who attempted to swim the Hellespont to reach his beloved Hero, is not painted as a victim of the stormy night, but as its crowned hero.

This, to our knowledge, the earliest known painting by Axel Acke. It belonged to the family of Ekström-Ahlby, who sold it in 1966 to Dr. Robin William-Olsson.
NUDE YOUTH. PREPARATORY DRAWING FOR THE ETCHING “INTEGER VITAE” (1885-1900)

Black ink and white heightening on heavyweight tan wove paper. Watermark as read through verso along upper edge: MONTGOLFIER...ANNO. Approximately 19 1/2” x 12 3/8” (49.5 x 31.4 cm), edges slightly irregular. On verso fully developed drawing of a seated male nude, black ink with white heightening, study for the allegorical figure of Time for the etching Integer Vitae.


Note: The present drawing is a preparatory sketch for the opening plate in Klinger’s cycle of etchings, On Death Part II (1898-1909). The etching is loaded with allegorical and symbolist imagery, one of them being the figure of Time, which appears on the verso of the present sheet. Klinger worked on the cycle on and off for fifteen years. The model for the present drawing appears also as the long-haired youth standing in the center of the etching And Yet, a transitional plate in the same cycle On Death Part II.

Reference:
MENZEL, Adolph  1815 - 1910
German School

SEATED WOMAN HOLDING A PLATE AND KNIFE, RESTUDY OF HEAD
STUDY FOR “DECORATING AN ALTAR” (1885), 1885

Black chalk and estompe on mediumweight off-white laid paper. No watermark. 7 7/8” x 4 13/16” (19.7 x 12.2 cm). Signed with initials and dated at lower left: A. M. / 85.

Ex-collection: David Daniels, New York (acquired at Sale Neumeister, Munich, June 20, 1990, lot # 759).

Note: Ursula Riemann-Reyher, editor of Werner Hofmann’s Adolph Menzel, suggests that the present drawing is a study for the woman arranging flowers in Menzel’s gouache Decorating the Altar (Altarschmückung) of 1885 (British Museum, London). If the study was indeed used for Decorating the Altar it is interesting to note that Menzel transformed the peasant woman with saucer to a fine lady arranging flowers. A variant of the present drawing is in the collection of Georg Schäfer, Schweinfurt.

It is a particular attraction of the present drawing that one can observe Menzel’s skillful hand in the enlargement of the woman’s face. Following the line defining the right contour of the three-quarter-profile gets the viewer as close as one can get to the artist’s hand moving across the paper.

Reference:
H. Knackfuss, Adolph Menzel, Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1907, ill. no. 117 (Decorating the Altar).
SHOTPUT PLAYER, 1897 or after

Bronze with black patination on circular bronze base, mounted to red marble base. Height, from bottom of base to top of head: 16 1/4" (41.3 cm). Incised on top of base: W. Schott fec. Foundry mark at rear of base: Aktien-Gesellschaft Gladenbeck. Berlin.

Note: Walter Schott’s career began with a Bust of Prince Wilhelm, the later Wilhelm II. It opened the door to Schott’s privileged position during the reign of Emperor Wilhelm II. In 1888 he received a commission to decorate the New Palais in Potsdam with six over-life-size groups, six figures, twelve trophies, eighteen groups of children, and about twenty vases. More commissions followed.

The Shotput Player is considered Schott’s most important work. It leaves Reinhold Begas’ neo-Baroque style behind and approaches Adolf Hildebrand’s preference for uncluttered, clean, linear forms, which eventually led to modernism. The sculptor and collector Waldemar Gzrimék wrote: “It is the remarkable phenomenon of a perfect work of art within an otherwise rather average œuvre.”

Schott made the first model for the statuette in 1897. In his memoirs, the artist wrote that he was inspired by watching children playing marbles. He also commented on his trouble with the movement of the arm, catching the sliding-off robe. At the Grosse Kunstausstellung of 1897 in Berlin, Schott exhibited two versions, one nude and one dressed with a “thin veil”. The latter version is now in the collection of the National Gallery of Berlin. The foundry of Gladenbeck edited the work in three sizes, the present one being the middle one.

Reference:
Ethos und Pathos, die Berliner Bildhauerschule 1786-1914, Berlin 1990, cat. no. 248, ill.
Émil-René Ménard grew up in a sophisticated family. His father, René-Joseph Ménard was director of the Gazette des Beaux Arts, held a position at the Ecole des Arts décoratifs, and exhibited landscape paintings at the Salon (1853-1875). René-Joseph’s brother, Louis-Nicolas, published works on mythology, art history and philosophy, and also taught at the Ecole des Arts décoratifs. The two brothers became accomplished landscape painters with the help of their friends in Barbizon, especially Diaz, Rousseau, and Troyon. Young Émil-René spent his summers with the painters in the forests of Fontainebleau.

Never a student at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Ménard received training and advice from William Bouguereau and Paul Baudry. He enrolled in the Académie Julian (where the Nabi movement originated) and exhibited for the first time at the Salon in 1883, at age twenty-one. Intensive literary studies of classical texts, and a keen awareness of kindred artists (Poussin, Puvis de Chavannes) informed his subject matter and technique. Arcadian and archaic landscapes, populated with mostly classical figures, are depicted with an intensity that evokes timelessness.

A pastel painting Heracles Tueur de Lions, signed and dated 1914, was exhibited at the gallery Tanagra in Paris in 1976, and subsequently sold at the Nouveau Drouot in Paris in 1981. Both in the exhibition and at the Sale, a pastel of Heracles et le Taureau was offered (of the same dimensions), suggesting that Ménard had perhaps a series of paintings of the Labors of Hercules in mind.

The proportions of the pastel and the present oil painting differ in height. The lower sky of the oil painting might have helped to increase the power of the storm, which is much more developed in the present painting than in the pastel.

Reference:
Galerie Tanagra, Paris, E. R. Ménard, 1862-1930, Symbolisme Intime, 1975-76, cat. no. 24, ill. of the pastel (32.5” x 47.5”).
PORTRAIT PLAQUETTE OF ELEONORA DUSE; circa 1910

Oval bronze relief with medium brown patination. 5 7/8" x 5" (15 x 12.7 cm). Monogram incised at neck truncation: AH (superimposed); title incised at lower left: ELEONORA DVSE.

Ex-collection: The artist’s family.

Note: Adolf von Hildebrand had always admired the famous actress Eleonora Duse (1859-1924). She was introduced to the sculptor by her friend and banker Robert von Mendelssohn, who was also a collector of Adolf von Hildebrand’s work. In 1909 Eleonora Duse retreated for some time to her home in Florence, and as Hildebrand kept a studio in a former monastery outside Florence, a visit was arranged and the actress sat for the artist. Initially, there was talk about a bust, but Hildebrand made a clay relief instead, which later served as a model for the reduced bronze plaquette.

In 1914 the actress and the sculptor met again, and this time Hildebrand created an en face high relief of Eleonora Duse in terra cotta (Kassel, Neue Galerie; Angela Hass, no. 210). Reference: Angela Hass, Adolf von Hildebrand, das plastische Portrait, Munich, 1984, cat. no. 182 b, p. 177, ill.
SELF-PORTRAIT WITH ALLEN TANNER, circa 1924-28

Black ink and wash on lightweight light beige paper. No watermark. 9 3/8 x 8 1/8" (23.8 x 20.6 cm). On verso of backing label printed: MIDTOWN PAYSON GALLERIES, typed: Artist, title, dimensions, medium.

Ex-collection: David Daniels, New York.

Note: Pavel Tchelitchev, born in Moscow and educated in Moscow and Kiev, came via Odessa and Sofia to Berlin in 1921. In 1923 he was commissioned to design sets and costumes for Rimsky-Korsakov's Le Coq d'Or at the Berlin State Opera. The poor reception of the production and an attack in the street for speaking French contributed to the artist's decision to move to Paris.

Allen Tanner, a pianist from Chicago, shared Tchelitchev's life in Berlin and Paris between 1923 and 1934. The two men separated after Tanner had organized an exhibition in the Chicago Arts Club to launch Tchelitchev's career in America. They continued to exchange letters, and Tanner resumed his musical career, living in New York in the 1950's and 1960's, and later in Belleville, Illinois, where he died in 1987.

The present drawing dates from the early twenties in Paris, where Tchelitchev came into
his own as a portraitist whose wild eccentricity brought him close to Surrealism. Lincoln Kirstein wrote about this period:

“After making trial-sketches of himself, Tchelitchev felt free to ask friends to sit. He would become one of the most varied and memorable portraitists of his epoch. Some one-hundred portraits include, among the most memorable, those of James Joyce, Edith Sitwell, Gertrude Stein, Charles and Ruth Ford, Peter Watson etc.” In 1924 the artist exhibited in Paris a large portrait painting of Allen Tanner, depicting the pianist in a straightforward pose en face, at roughly the same age as in the present drawing. A Self-Portrait by Tchelitchev, undated, illustrated in Kirstein’s monograph, leaves no doubt that the person with the sketch pad in the present drawing is indeed the artist himself.

Reference:
34  WIMMER, Eduard Josef  1882 - 1961  
Austrian School  

DESIGN FOR A HERDSMAN’S COSTUME, 1920  


Note: Eduard Wimmer played a major role at the Vienna Workshops, both as a designer and director of its fashion department (1910-22). In 1923 he came to America where, for two years, he taught at the Art Institute of Chicago.  

The musical Liebesrausch (Love’s enchantment) premiered in Vienna on June 2, 1920. After one-hundred performances all costumes were newly designed by Eduard Wimmer. This new production, for which the present drawing was most likely made, opened in October 1920 at the Carl Theater.  

Reference:  