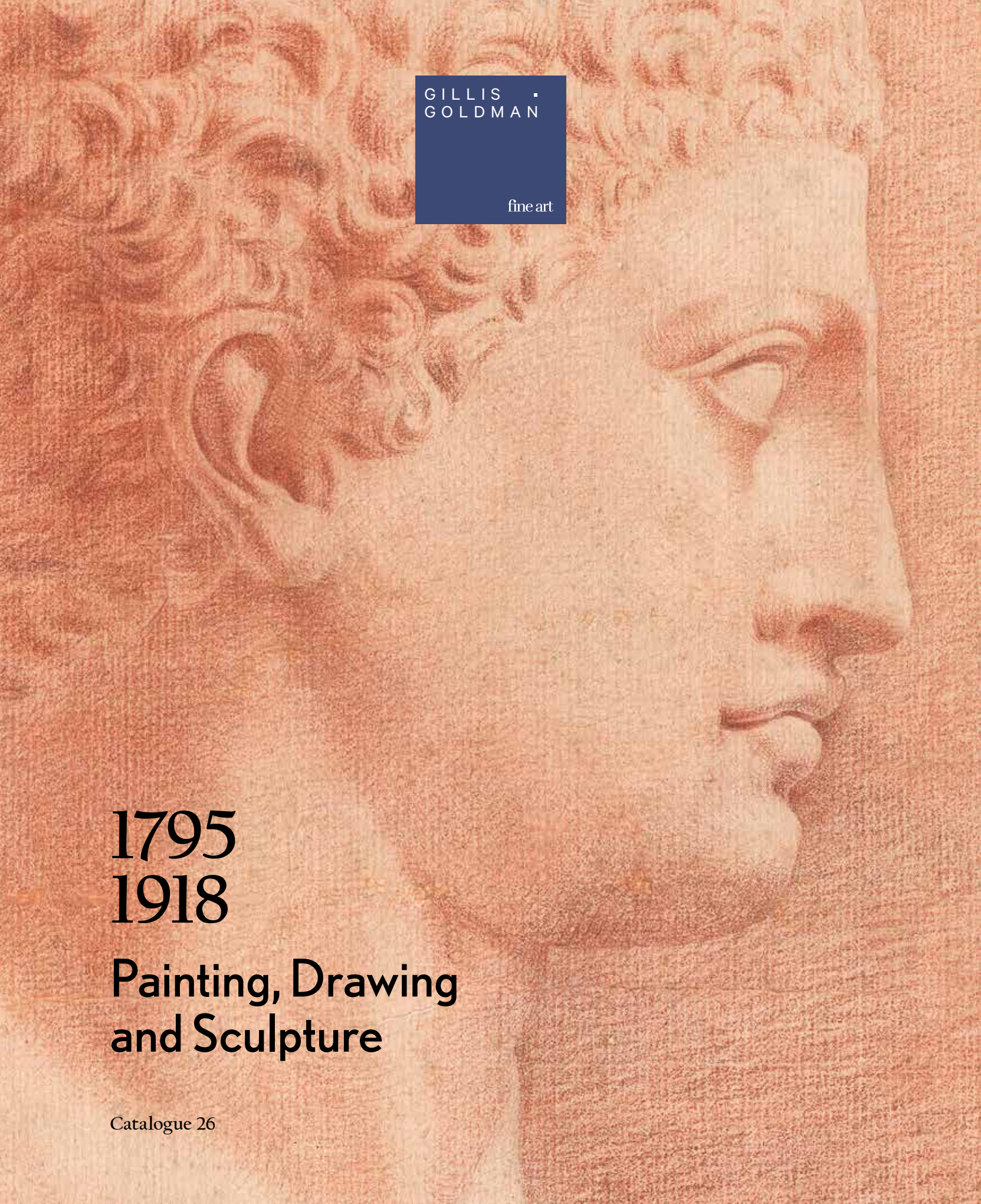




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fine art

1795
1918

Painting, Drawing
and Sculpture

Catalogue 26



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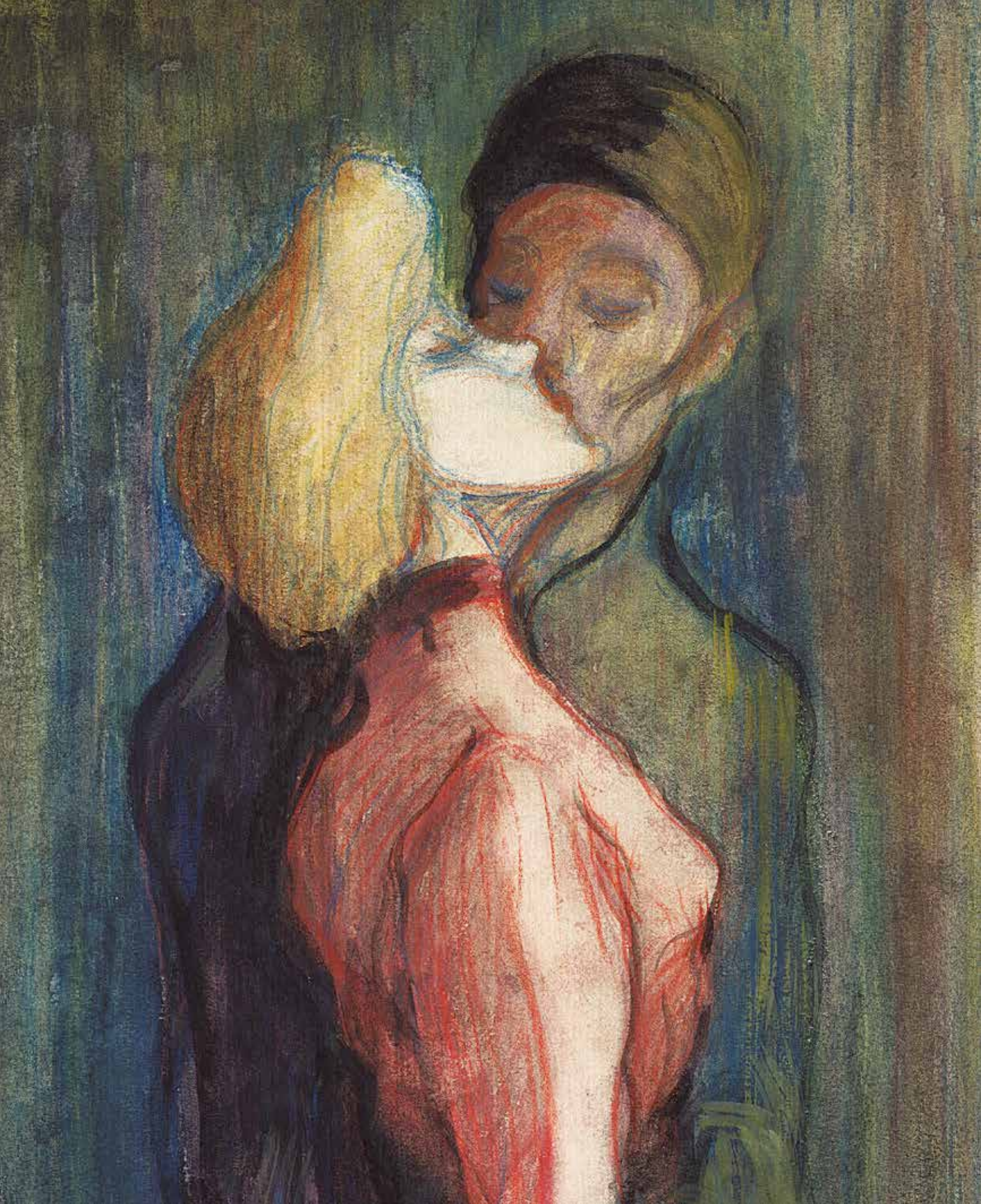
1795
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GILLIS GOLDMAN FINE ART

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September 2021



*The ancient Greek definition of happiness is the full use of
your powers along lines of excellence*

John F. Kennedy, 1963

*The study of what is excellent is
food for the mind and body*

Leonardo da Vinci (in *Treatise on Painting*, 1651 edition)

Dear Friends,
Dear Lovers of art,

We can't tell you how many times we commented on the richness of 19th century art while putting together this particular selection. It boggles the mind that so many great museum-quality pieces – combining such profound sensitivity with such well-balanced aesthetics – are still within reach. The artists from this time firmly believed that creating with the hand what was captured by the eye was the best way to understand the world around us. Whenever we gaze upon any 19th century painting, drawing or sculpture, the lines these artists left behind certainly speak volumes about who they were and how they perceived their environment. Isn't it what we could call *excellence*?

And with excellence top of mind, here are just a few of the many highlights that particularly inspire us. Firstly, one of Ingres's earliest drawings. A sanguine *Study after the antique* (no. 1), and a sublime illustration of the young artist's decisive neo-classical stamp – made long before he became the guardian of academic orthodoxy in the first half of the 19th century. Secondly, Felix Bracquemond's *Landscape with mountain and river fall* (no. 7) – a magnificent explosion of colours presented in the form of a large water lily-shaped plate brimming with Japonism. A rare gem indeed; it is one of only seven models recorded. It's also, in our view, the quintessence of *Céramique impressionniste*, and a key moment in the history of ceramic-making.

And finally.... the great Jean-François Millet. A name whose legend grows by the day as quality works slip into oblivion. Not only is the first time we have had the chance to present a Millet drawing, but to offer one of such importance is beyond our words. *Woman at the Well* (no. 5) marks the genesis of a model that was highly praised during Millet's lifetime – and one he would go on to represent several times during the 1860s. The ultimate personification of Millet's lifelong fascination for the rural setting in which he grew up.

As we are fond of saying, the pursuit of excellence is at the heart of our adventure. We hope you will celebrate and cherish this collection as much as we enjoyed compiling it for you. Enjoy art and life.

Eric Gillis & Noémie Goldman

1 **Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres** 1780 Montauban – Paris 1867
Bust, after the Antique

Sanguine on laid paper, ca. 1793-94	
Signed lower right in sanguine <i>par Ingres fils</i>	
Sheet	315 x 456 mm
Watermark	Brunch of grapes (characteristic of large sheets of paper from the end of the 18 th century, produced in the Limousin; see Georges Vigne, <i>Catalogue raisonné des dessins du Musée de Montauban</i> , 1995, p. 810, for a similar watermarked papers used by Ingres)
Provenance	Private collection, France

The present drawing *à la sanguine* by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres is one of the earliest known by the master, when he was in Toulouse as a young student, eager to improve his *métier* between 1791 and 1797, after he left Montauban and before he went to Paris. It belongs to a very small corpus of drawings from the Ingres undergoing training, and it gets a great importance as illustrating the neo-classical stamp yet decisive on the works of the young Ingres.

In 1791, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, affectionately called “Ingrou” by his parents, left his native town of Montauban to join the *Académie Royale* of Toulouse. He attended the classes of the painter Joseph Roques and of the sculptor Jean-Pierre Vigan, where he got accommodation. The archives of the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* of Toulouse keep records of his very early successes and encouragement prizes¹. As most of the students at the time, he pursued his training by working first from old engravings, soon after from sculptures in the *ronde-bosse* and finally by sitting in front of life models.

Ingres said to Théophile Sylvestre² in 1856 : “J’ai été [...] élevé dans le crayon rouge: mon père musicien et peintre, me destinait à la peinture, tout en m’enseignant la musique comme un passe-temps. Cet excellent homme après avoir remis un grand portefeuille qui contenait trois ou quatre cents estampes d’après Raphaël, le Titien, le Corrège, Rubens [...] – il y avait de tout – me donna pour maître M. Roques, élève de Vien, à Toulouse”. “I was raised in the red pencil”, Ingres said. The general manner of the present drawing seems indeed inspired by the prints made from the pieces of Edmé Bouchardon. It was one of the main styles at the time, very popular, and also similar to the style in sanguine of Hubert Robert, which was also a standard in any academy at the time. Ingres’s father, Joseph even won a prize with a large sheet in sanguine titled *Fleuve*, in ca. 1785³.

In the centre of the present sheet *à la sanguine*, a profile of a man *à l’antique* comes out a carefully hatched background; the bust appears as suspended in the air as Ingres did not give it a pedestal. The curls of the hair are



detailed to emphasize the effects of the hollows and the bumps of the light. The model, most likely a print or a sculpture provided to the students of the Academy, is not identified. An interesting trail leads to a possible bust of Brutus or Nero. In the same years, ca. 1792, there is an antique head profile by Jean-Jacques Lequeu, titled by the artist *Profil qu'on croit celui de Brutus*⁴, and possibly from the same model. Both works offer a dry and brutal profile, where the bridge of the nose follows the line of the front without breaks. Revolutionaries in France celebrated Brutus as a virtuous republican who put his convictions in support of the state ahead of his love for his father. The profile somewhat dry and breakless of the present model prefigures the one of Achilles in the painting for which Ingres was rewarded the *Prix de Rome* in 1801.

The corpus of the early drawing, i.e. from his training, is rather small in comparison to the six years he spent in Toulouse. It has always surprized specialists because the list of his early successes and encouragement prizes is not small (see footnote 1). Either Ingres him-self did not judge his early works worth enough and he did not keep them, or directors and teachers at the time did the same. On the other hand, like all French academies, the *Académie royale de peinture, sculpture et architecture* of Toulouse was dissolved in 1793 but its teachers continued to teach voluntarily during the Revolution. It is thus possible that many drawings and sketches were not then preserved in this context. Anyway, the interest to the few early Ingres drawings still kept came out only and progressively after the 1970s. They are all rather different to each other and illustrated how the education of the young Ingres was subjected to various influences, as it would be the case for any student at the time in the royale academies and *école des beaux-arts*. We have been trying to list them chronologically:

- First, Montauban keeps a pencil drawing, *Tête de Niobé*, signed *Ingres* and dated 1789, when Ingres was nine years old⁵.
- The second one, a sanguine, is a portrait of Jean Moulet, dated 1791, and with the first example recorded of the mention *Ingres fils*⁶. Most probably because his father had been a pupil of the same school in Toulouse, Jean-Auguste-Dominique started signing his works “Ingres fils.”
- Then comes an album kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France⁷, with light pencil sketches after some prints after Poussin or some Italian masters, dated most probably in the first year of this training in Toulouse, in 1792, given the influence of the style of his master Joseph Roques.
- We can add to this style a sheet depicting a Saint Jerome, also dated in 1792⁸.
- The fourth sheet, which depicts a soldier naked and seen from the back, is dated 1793 and signed *Ingres fils*⁹. The style of the signature has totally changed, and it would remain changing until he entered the studio of Jacques Louis David in 1797, however always with a lower-case “i” to start, and *fils* to finish.
- Then come two sheets, studies from antique sculptures in the *ronde-bosse*: the present sanguine, and a *Buste d'homme barbu d'après l'Antique*, a pencil drawing and signed much later *Ingres* in ink, in the style of his signature after 1800¹⁰. Both can be dated ca. 1793-94. We know from Henry Lapauze that Ingres won in 1793 a prize of *ronde-bosse*, with even a payment of 30 livres to the artist¹¹. Both sheets offer a quality level higher than the first unmaturred sheets we know of him. It already displays Ingres preferences for an antiquity mixing archaism and classicism.
- Then comes three pencil drawings, all most probably dated 1796, a portrait of a man (dated 1796), a woman with a hat, and another portrait of a man, all signed *Ingres fils*, the first one with ink, the other two with pencil¹².
- A group of four *médailon* portraits of a man could then be placed just before he left Toulouse for Paris, i.e. late

1796 or early 1797, and signed *Ingres fils* for the first two (Harvard and Private coll.), Ingres for one (Louvre), and with no signature for the last one (Oxford)¹³.

– Then, a pencil drawing, depicting *M. Brochard en costume classique*, is signed *Ingres fils* and dated ca. 1797, but was made most probably earlier¹⁴.

– And finally, two sheets, completely different in style again, both after masters and signed *Ingres fils*, a *Philemon et Baucis* after Jean Bernard Restout, and *Bélisaire recevant l'hospitalité* after Pierre Peyrons¹⁵.

So, a total of fifteen sheets, including ours, plus the Paris album. This short list shows that the young Ingres is all but linear, and he moved in many directions. However, it is worth mentioning an interesting point about the early portraits, including the present sheet, what might result from a classical learning: most of them are in full profile, and the part of the sheet in front of the face is always lighter than the space on the back of the head.

However, antiquity was the taste of the time and the young artist aimed to move to Paris. At the time, the painter Jacques-Louis David appeared as the uncontested leader of the neoclassicism movement in France. Confident into his Toulouse training, the young Ingres then joined in Paris the Ecole des beaux-arts and the workshop of David, who would be his new master in Paris, from 1797 until 1801. In the meantime, the father Joseph Ingres, proud of the successes of his son, started signing his own works *Ingres père*, while Jean-Auguste-Dominique will be Ingres for the rest of the nascent century. A perfect illustration of the Socrates saying: “The glory of the fathers is to be overtaken by their sons.”

1. Henry Lapauze, *Ingres. Sa vie et son œuvre (1780-1867)*, Paris, 1911, Imprimerie Georges Petit, pp. 20-23
2. Théophile Sylvestre, *Histoire des artistes vivants français et étrangers. Etudes d'après nature*, Paris, 1856, Blanchard pp. 5
3. Musée Ingres-Bourdelle, Montauban, MI.20.0.11
4. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Estampes et de la photographie, in RESERVE HA-80 (C, 7-8)-FOL. See: Laurent Baridon, Jean-Philippe Garric and Martial Guédron, *Jean-Jacques Lequeu: bâtisseur de fantômes*, Bibliothèque nationale de France and Éditions Norma, 2018, no. 22
5. Musée Ingres-Bourdelle, Montauban, MI.2007.1.1
6. Musée Ingres-Bourdelle, Montauban, MI 867.335
7. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Réserve DC-518-4
8. Musée Bonnat-Helleu, Bayonne, 2222
9. Private collection, Paris. See: *Ingres and Ingres*, exh. cat. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans, 2021, ill. 5, p. 25
10. École des beaux-arts, Paris, EBA 1118
11. Archives Départementales de Haute-Garonne, IL 1017, pièce 103
12. National Gallery of Washington, Washington, 1954.12.82; Private collection; Musée Bonnat-Helleu, Bayonne, 2269
13. Harvard Art Museum, Harvard, 1961.8; Private collection, London; Musée du Louvre, RF 30743; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, WA 1986.43
14. Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, 1871.459
15. Both Private collections, Paris

2 **Pierre-Luc-Charles Cicéri** 1782 Saint-Cloud – Saint-Chéron 1868

A Portrait of a Well-Dressed Man

Watercolor on cream wove paper, ca. 1805-15
Signed in the lower right corner in ink *Cicéri*
Sheet 205 × 122 mm
Provenance Private collection, New York

This lovely caricature is signed by the Pierre-Luc-Charles Cicéri, the renowned stage-designer with his sceneries for over three hundred ballets and operas, during a career of forty-four years and under several political regimes: the Napoleonic Empire, the Bourbon Restauration and the July Monarchy. It is well known that Cicéri, besides his official works also enjoyed making caricatures, although they are now quite hard to find, and we still lack information about his activity as a caricaturist. Most probably Jean-Baptiste Isabey may have contributed to his appropriation of the genre when Cicéri worked under Isabey’s direction in 1810. The trace of Vernet’s artistic heritage is here perceptible.

The discovery of the present drawing is a rare occasion to see this part of the artist’ work. This elegant portrait depicts a well-dressed man, wearing gloves and holding a top hat, walking in what seems to be a gallery with columns on high bases. On the lapel of his costume, the man bears a purple and still unidentified medal.

In “*portraits-charge*”, the features of the portrayed are almost always emphasized and exaggerated. Because of his atypical jaw and his baldness, one could think of Pierre Fontaine, an acclaimed neoclassical architect, and the background columns might be those of the Grande Galerie in the Louvre. Together with Charles Percier, Fontaine is considered to have invented the Empire style. Before he was appointed architect to the Invalides, the Tuileries and the Louvre, he worked as *directeur des décorations* at the Opera and Cicéri must have been an acquaintance of him. Be as it may, this identification should be taken with caution.

Whatever, this brilliant caricature eloquently illustrates the mastery of Cicéri. Furthermore, it also enlightens the caricature genre in the early 19th century, during which it was at its height. Artists such as Daumier, Granville, Philipon, or Doré have later distinguished themselves and confirmed caricature in its legitimacy.



3 **Jean-Victor Schnetz** 1787 Versailles – Paris 1870

Young Shepherd

Pastel on wove paper, 1850
Signed, dated *J Vor Schnetz 1850*
Dedicated lower right *a son cher neveu Charles Alexandre Simon de J Vor Schnetz 23 avril*
Sheet 320 × 260 mm
Provenance Private collection, France

Born into a family of Swiss origin, Jean-Victor Schnetz was first admitted in the workshop of Regnault, and after in the one of David from 1812. As did his predecessor Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres at the Villa Medici, Schnetz divided his career essentially between Rome and Paris. His first stay in Rome dates from 1817 with his friends Leopold Robert and Théodore Géricault, but he concentrated his attention more on the human face than on landscapes. He shared this human cantered approach with his two friends. The trio made trips on many roads and across villages surrounding Rome, paying attention often to the same models. It could be a graceful shepherdess, an age-marked old woman, an obscure brigand or a young shepherd of goats; one can find the same physiognomies, often sketched at the same dates by the three painters.

As soon as he went back to Paris, Schnetz combined two of these physiognomies into a painting called *La Discuse de Bonne Aventure* (the fortune teller), exposed at the Salon of 1820 (now in Clermond-Ferrand). Thereafter, the painter collected successes and honours for his religious and military subjects, without neglecting the *genre pittoresque* for which he produced numerous small formats, in oil, watercolour and pastel. His fame was such that even Stendhal considered him as one of the most promising

artists of the French painting, who explores alternative venues between the then breathless neoclassicism and the excesses of the nascent Romanticism

After a new stay in Rome, as director of the Villa Medici, from 1841 to 1846, Schnetz took inspiration in his souvenirs of travels to make the large, idealised pastel we present here. It was inspired by Italy, depicting a young boy, sitting on a stone, who caresses a goat, requiring its affection. With a delicate gesture, he retains the animal while looking at something outside the sheet, in the faraway. The boy looks pensive, even melancholic, deeply absorbed in thought that remain unprecise. The painter made a detailed description of the boy, his clothes and the strings of his shoes, the rope around his waist and the heavy coat on his shoulders. With the point of his sanguine stick, Schnetz precises the features of the arm and the hand, rendering faithfully the skin reddened by the sun. The goat, more sketched out, is relegated in the background as a simple object. It is very suggestive of a romantic vision of the now faraway Italy, left by the painter, without knowing beforehand that he will return to it, three years later for a last visit. The pastel is dated 1850 and dedicated to the nephew of the artist, Charles-Alexandre Simons who was 14 and who may have been the model of the young shepherd



4 **Paul Huet** 1804 – Paris – 1869

Study of clouds

Pastel on wove paper, ca. 1845-50
With the posthumous sale stamp in the lower left corner (Lugt 1268)

Sheet	180 × 310 mm
Literature	Listed in the archives of Elisabeth Maréchaux Laurentin for the publication of her forthcoming <i>catalogue raisonné</i>
Provenance	Workshop sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, Ch. Pillet & Brame, 15-16 April 1878

This most beautiful and (very) rare view of a tormented sky captured on the spot has been made by Paul Huet, the master of the French romantic landscape. Though neither its location, nor its date are known, this sketch shows powerfully the beauty and delicacy of execution mastered by the artist in his maturity years. When confronted with other works by Huet, our pastel could indeed be dated around 1845-50. In our pastel, Huet skillfully associates vibrant colors plays with white areas of the paper, here « left in reserve ». Perhaps, to give importance to the sky and texture to the clouds, he sets the horizon very low, above what seems to be a green clearing. In the lower right corner, he displays a red color essay which gives a fierce rendering to this drawing.

In 1820-22, still a teenager, Paul Huet used to spend time on the Île Séguin, near Paris, where he completed melancholic sketches with various techniques: pastel, watercolours and oil. As for his training, he left both workshops of Pierre-Narcisse Guérin and Baron Gros and chose to depict the changing nature of the landscapes in the whereabouts of Paris. While attending the Ecole des Beaux Arts under the direction of Baron Gros,

Huet met Richard Parkes Bonington and became familiar with English landscape painting. He was also influenced by Turner and Constable whose paintings have been introduced in France at the Salon of 1824. Paul Huet started to exhibit himself at the Salon from 1827 onwards. His other major sources of inspiration would be the romanticism *envois* at the Salon, such as the *Radeau de la Méduse* by Géricault. History says that Eugène Delacroix saw once one of Huet's sketches and asked to meet him to congratulate. Putting aside the stylized Neoclassical landscapes that remained popular in the academies, Huet favored natural landscapes where the elements such as rain, trees or clouds would be the main subject.

Genuinely modern, Paul Huet is an artist that is difficult to classify: his works are indeed split between the Musée d'Orsay and the Musée du Louvre. The painter would later influence the Barbizon school and the Impressionists, amongst them Boudin or Monet. During his career, Huet has been distinguished on many occasions: King Louis-Philippe gave him a present in 1844: two Sevres vases; he received a gold medal at the Salon of 1848; and he was awarded a medal at the *Exposition universelle* of 1855.



5 **Jean-François Millet** 1814 Gruchy – Barbizon 1875

Woman pouring water into milk cans

Also known as Woman at the well

Charcoal and white highlights on grey paper, ca. 1854-57

Signed lower-left J.F. Millet

Sheet 288 × 219 mm

Provenance Georges Bernheim, Paris; Private Collection, Switzerland (until 1953); thence by descent; Christie's New York, October 13, 1994, lot. 95; Private collection, France

This is an exceptional work by Jean-François Millet, magnificently preserved, and of one of his most iconic compositions. Rediscovered in the early 1990's and studied by the art historian and expert on Millet, Alexandra R. Murphy, on that occasion, the present drawing is now considered to be the earliest known version of the famous model, that Millet later translated into two oil paintings, a *diché-verre* print, and three pastels. The first life-time description of this paradigm was about a painting that unfortunately disappeared, but which had been exhibited in 1860 at the Galerie Martinet, Boulevard des Italiens, and of which remains today a precise description in the work of Zacharie Astruc *Le Salon Intime*: "This well is in the course of a farm separated from the road by a fence wall where a door opens. A young girl in a short petticoat has just taken her bucket from the well. She lifts it up with a delicate gesture – flirtatious even with inanimate nature, and pours its contents into copper pots. The weather is mild. The sun shines on this peaceful life. Against the door, over there, three geese flee, nodding, like departing ships. This painting is complete. The Flemish haven't done anything more lovingly petted!"

In 1975, the large exhibition dedicated to Millet at the Grand Palais exhibited a pastel of 1866 and kept at the Musée d'Orsay², and considered as a copy by Millet himself of another pastel from the collection Vever, now also lost, but known from photographs.

The theme of a woman rinsing her milk cans with water from an old stone well, appears for the first time, after a new stay of the artist in Gruchy in Normandy and in the summer of 1854, during which Millet produced several sketches (Musée du Louvre), in particular of the

family house and its surroundings, as if to translate his childhood memories together with his artistic evolution towards naturalism. This combination made him one of the greatest representatives of the Barbizon school. A landmark of particular significance to Millet, and that we see in those sketches and in our drawing, are the well and the conical stone wall abutting the family's barn. The Norman coif of the woman and the brass milk cans, typical of the Cotentin region of Normandy, are also an important dating element for this drawing; as were the stylistic details of the woman in later versions reflecting the dress codes of the time when he was in the Barbizon region, in the 1860's. Stylistic elements also confirm the drawing's early date, notably the use of significant amounts of white chalk and Millet's effort to vary his stumping and hatching tomes to stimulate a strong color-istic range.

Millet had left his village of Gruchy in 1838 to live in Paris, then moved again with his family to Barbizon in 1849 to escape the cholera epidemic that was raging in the capital. As early as the 1850's, contrasting with the massive industrialization of Paris, Millet's style turned to picturesque genre scenes reflecting the life of the peasants. Without ever falling into sordid realism of their condition or into the sentimentalism of representation, the faces of the figures are not very detailed, as if to translate the universal character of each peasant and to promote rural work, in what is simpler, more worthy and more beautiful.

1. Zacharie Astruc, *Le Salon Intime*, Paris, 1860, pp. 66-67.

2. Michel Laclotte, *Millet*, Paris, Musées nationaux, 1975, no. 175.



6 **Gustave Doré** 1832 Strasbourg – Paris 1883
Self-Portrait

Chalk on paper, ca. 1855
Stamped with Doré’s estate stamp at the lower right
Sheet 260 × 230 mm
Provenance Artist’s estate (Lugt 681a); Private collection, France

Gustave Doré sketched himself with his head slightly turned away from the beholder. An earlier attempt on the same sheet shows the outline of his likeness en face with one eye staring at the beholder. The artist’s right eyebrow is slightly lifted which appears to express curiosity or it shows how he is concentrating on his own appearance in the mirror. The applied drawing technique reveals Doré’s fast approach that did not aim to capture detailed features but an evanescent idea as the face seems to materialize from the dark areas around it. By pointing his pipe in the spectator’s opposite direction Doré created some extra depth in his composition. The pipe in the left corner of his mouth has a compelling influence on the effect the composition while raising questions as to its meaning in this context.

The present drawing shows some similarities with a self-portrait by Gustave Courbet (Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Fine Art), which is probably no coincidence. Courbet was one of the most famous contemporary artists in France and abroad. The young Doré, an international rising star, was inspired by his work and the two knew each other. The clay pipe in Courbet’s portraits had an important function. Pipes existed in different shapes and materials. The pipes made of clay were the cheapest and the most fragile ones. Those pipes were used only by the working class, the elite would smoke more sophisticated ones. Courbet, who had difficulty to assimilate himself in the Parisian cultural society, consciously displayed himself with a clay pipe to emphasize that he was proud

of his provincial roots and his affinity with common people¹.

Gustave Doré was one of the most inventive and ingenious artists associated with the Symbolist movement in France. Largely self-taught, his versatility enabled him to alternate between subjects, techniques and genres and he forged a highly successful career as a painter, watercolorist, draughtsman, printmaker and sculptor. His repertoire spanned historical, religious, literary and genre themes. He was also one of the leading landscapists of his generation and a painter of mountain scenes. Probably he is best-known for his skills as a draftsman. He achieved wide popularity as a book illustrator. His illustrations document the closeness of his working relationships with significant literary figures of his time. Like many of his contemporaries his art was subject to harsh criticism by more conservative voices. But he was very favorably reviewed by such important critics as Théophile Gautier and Emile Zola. Doré was one of the most successful and most widely fêted artists of the period both in Europe and overseas. His popularity enabled him to set up a gallery The Doré Gallery in London, where selling exhibitions were staged. His illustrations for what was known as the “Doré Bible” made him a household name in the United States, where an important market for his work developed.

1. Niklaus Manuel Güdel, *Courbet: Les Dessins*, Les Cahiers Dessinés, Paris, 2019, p. 143.



Landscape with mountain and river fall

Enamelled ceramic produced by Haviland, ca. 1874
Monogrammed on the front B; signed and numbered on the back, GIII
Size 50.5 cm
Literature Jean and Laurens d'Albis, and Jean-Paul Bouillon, *Céramique impressionniste: l'atelier Haviland de Paris-Auteuil, 1873-1882*, exh. cat., Hôtel de Sens, Paris, Les Presses artistiques, 1974, pp. 3-14; Laurens d'Albis, *Céramique Impressionniste*, exh. cat., Musée Fournaise, Chatou, April-Nov. 2001, pp. 14-15; Audrey Gay-Mazuel (ed.), *La céramique impressionniste / Emaux atmosphériques*, exh. cat., Musée de la Céramique, Rouen, 2010, ill. p. 40, 41 (detail) and p. 98, no.16
Provenance Private collection, France

In 1872, the same year that Claude Monet started his *Impression Soleil levant* (Musée Marmottan, Paris), Charles Haviland opened an experimental ceramics workshop in the rue d'Auteuil in Paris, in order to modernize the porcelain production of the Haviland manufacture and to explore new technics. It was a key moment in the history of ceramic-making, and since then often called by specialists as “La céramique impressionniste.” Three notable exhibitions have taken their title from it, in 1974 (Paris), 2001 (Chatou) and 2011 (Rouen).

To meet his ambitions, Haviland took on the painter and ceramist Félix Bracquemond as his artistic director. Bracquemond was already famous at the time in this field. After working with Theodor Deck at Sèvres, he had also designed the successful *Service Rousseau*, presented at the *Exposition Universelle* of 1867, ordered by François-Eugène Rousseau. It was among the very first attempts by artists to impose Japonism to the *arts décoratifs*. For that ensemble, Bracquemond elaborated exceptional technical processes, in order to transfer original prints on the porcelain.

For the present piece, Bracquemond made Haviland to buy the patent of an innovative technic called the *barbotine*, from the Laurentin Manufacture, and in which earthenware was painted in brightly colored slips. Bracquemond and Ernest Chapelet perfected it to its peak, allowing great pictorial effects: It allowed artists to directly paint the composition on the support, with colors made of metal oxides mixed with liquid clay. It was not the filling of a drawing previously traced by a *decorator*. This new approach differentiated itself from the one used in the *Service*, because it was necessarily applied

on unique pieces, and required a safe and fast hand in execution. Above all, Bracquemond saw in this a way to use strong colors and to incise in the material a pictorial thought. The composition must be playing with the technical constraints related to the impossibility of mixing the pigments, and then juxtaposing wide ranges of colors. This style is actually closer to the forthcoming painting of Gauguin and the Nabis than to the Impressionists.

Until the end of their collaboration in 1881, Bracquemond and Haviland stunned the public and gained a lot of success with this production. It was given to minor artists employed by the Manufacture and who painted standard compositions. On his side, Bracquemond only produced himself seven models, and among them only two offer a few color variations, including the present one. It is an impressive ensemble of plates, in a nenuphar leaf form, and of course Bracquemond's compositions are deeply marked by Japonism. Two of them are dated on the back *9bre* [November] 1874, including one color variation of the present one. Of the present model, there are three copies recorded, with variations of colors. The one mentioned and in a French private collection¹; the one offered by the Robert Zehil Gallery, Monaco, in 2017 (and sold Christies in 2018), and the present one. The Zehil one and ours are both marked B on its front and G on its back, for Alfred Giraud, who worked at the Haviland manufacture and did the initial and blank ceramic base.

1. See Audrey Gay-Mazuel (ed.), *op.cit.*, ill. p. 40, 41 (detail) and p. 98, n. 16; and also exhibited in: Panasonic Shiodome Museum, *French Ceramics at the Time of Impressionism 1866-1886*, Tokyo, 2014.

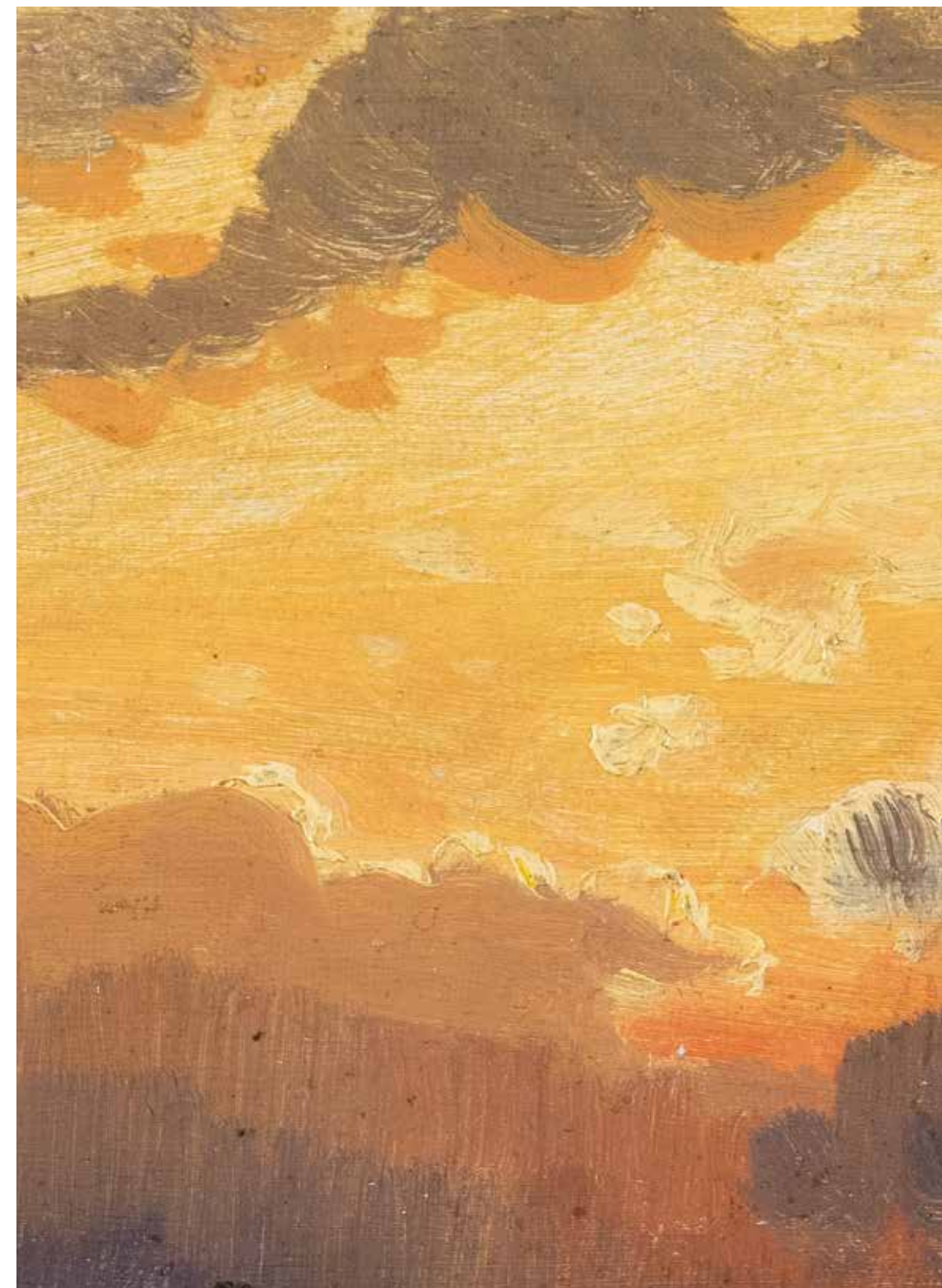


Anonymous *open-air* sketches

Northern Europe, late 19th century

The five works that follow are all late 19th century anonymous studies of landscapes in which the sky takes centre stage. Not one of them is French. In a way, it's not all that surprising. While the French were certainly among the pioneers of this practice from the late-18th to mid-19th century, it was the northern European artists who dabbled most in the genre come late 19th century. In fact, painting *en plein air* was an integral part of art education in Germany, Austria and Scandinavia throughout the 19th century. Many of these budding artists also studied in Italy before returning home to paint their native surroundings. One can see in these sketches the range of techniques used as the artists attempted to understand and capture the most transitory aspects of nature – including the most ephemeral of all: the sky, at varying times and weather conditions. How these artists tackled the challenge of working quickly and rendering evanescent colours and forms is particularly relevant. It brings to mind the image of intrepid painters trekking arduous trails to study the landscapes at breath-taking sites all along the Baltic coast and across the Swiss Alps.

Because they were mainly studies, few of these works were signed. As interest in these pieces has grown among collectors and institutions over the last 50 years, the matter of attribution has become a hot topic. For old master dealers, the word “anonymous” is – in theory – either a challenge or a nightmare. General thinking being that it's absolutely necessary to put a name on a work to appreciate its value. When it comes to intrinsic and aesthetic value, it's “all in the name.” We're not afraid to admit that we rather like this anonymous attribution. An invisible hand that guided the artist, as it were. If we don't beleaguer ourselves with researching names or attributions, it is certainly not out of laziness. We simply enjoy this whisper of mystery. Of course, a name will occasionally come to light, and that is always a thrill. But we also relish the tingling sensation of not knowing. We are especially tingling with excitement to share the following anonymous works with you.



(detail)



8 *Stormy sky*

Oil on canvas laid down on cardboard, ca. 1840-50

Sheet 193 × 367 mm

Provenance Private collection, Germany





9 *Cloud study*

Oil on paper, ca. 1880

Sheet 186 × 307 mm

Provenance Private collection, Germany





10 *Sunset*

Oil on paper laid down on cardboard ca. 1900

Sheet 228 × 307 mm

Provenance Private collection, Germany





11 *Storm over a lake in Salzkammergut*

Oil on cardboard ca. 1900

Inscribed or signed in pencil in the margin (not easily readable)

Sheet 114 × 170 mm

Provenance Private collection, Germany





12 *Landscape in a cloudy sky*

Watercolor and gouache on greenish wove paper, ca. 1900

Sheet 168 × 215 mm

Provenance Private collection, Germany



13 **François Clément Sommier, called *Henri Somm*** 1844 Rouen – Paris 1907
Sarah Bernhardt on stage

Watercolour on paper, ca. 1880
Signed lower-right *H Somm*
Sheet 317 × 202 mm
Provenance Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, London (exhibition in Oct.-Nov. 2001, cat. no. 25); Private collection, England

This is an exceptional watercolour by Henri Somm of Sarah Bernhardt, recognizable by her red hair in this staging both literally and figuratively, and arguably the most famous celebrity of her day. As far as we are concerned, it is the most beautiful watercolour we have ever seen of the artist. This watercolour is apparently one of the two known images Somm made of the great actress, another one is in The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City.

In a way, it is also the Parisian theatral life that is here depicted, with bright colours of the curtains and the stage's bluish ground. It exacerbates the actress's legend, and whose white dress illuminates both the composition and the role she embodies. Alone in front of this large red curtain, Sarah Bernhardt seems to leave the stage after the last act; her posture and her attitude perfectly treated by the artist like the details of her dress in a few quick brushstrokes, impose her status as the one and only *Empress of the theatre*, as if to respond to her nickname "La Divine" or to the expression of Jean Cocteau who qualified her as a "Monstre Sacré".

As a true muse, Sarah Bernhardt has inspired many artists who have sublimated her personality and the different facets of her talent, including the painting made by Gustave Doré in 1870 (Private collection), the one by Louise Abbéma in 1875 (unfortunately disappeared),

the one realized by Georges Clairin in 1879 now in the Petit Palais Museum of Paris, or the portrait by Jules Bastien-Lepage in 1879 in the Ann & Gordon Getty collection and on loan to the Legion of Honor Museum of San Francisco. It is also interesting to note a similar dress worn by the actress on a poster realized by Alfonse Mucha in 1896 for the play "La Dame aux Camélias" which took place in Paris, which is typical of the dress style that Sarah Bernhardt loved with its puffed sleeves up to the elbows and fitted to the forearms.

After two exhibitions alongside the Impressionists at Durand-Ruel in 1879 and 1889, Henri Somm first made a name for himself as an illustrator on the Parisian art scene. His talents as a designer, first revealed at the municipal drawing school in Rouen, were perfected when he arrived in Paris in the 1860's, working for many press reviews of the time such as: *Le Chat noir*, *Frou-Frou* or *La Cravache*. Passionated like many other artists of his generation by the Japonism in vogue in France during this period, Henri Somm's style changed when the War of 1870 prevented him from leaving to Japan. Then he turned towards the Parisian life which would make his success in the 1880's and 90's, and more precisely in the representation of women, these elegant Parisians sketched in fleeting moments and magnified by artists in their daily lives, that the critic of art Arsène Alexandre qualified in 1897 as "alluring by their very subject!"



14 **Marie Bracquemond** 1841 Argenton – Sèvres 1916

Iris in a vase

Oil on panel, ca. 1886	
Size	33 × 23.5 cm
Literature	Ingrid Pfeiffer & Max Hollein, <i>Woman Impressionists</i> , Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Hatje Cantz, 2008, p. 275
Exhibition	Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, <i>Catalogue des peintures, aquarelles, dessins et eaux-fortes de Marie Bracquemond</i> , 1919, no. 23 (<i>Fleurs dans un vase</i>); Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, <i>Marie Bracquemond. Hommage à Félix Bracquemond</i> , 1962, no. 18; Bilbao, Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, <i>Mujeres Impresionistas. La otra mirada</i> , no. 49, 2001-02; Frankfurt, Schirn Kunsthalle, <i>Woman Impressionists</i> , 2008, no. 54
Provenance	Artist's heirs, France; their sale, Hotel Drouot (Delvaux), Paris, December 10, 1997, lot no. 13; Private collection, Belgium

The present still-life by Marie Bracquemond is without any doubt one her most vigorous and vibrant works, if not the best one. The artist, who said “I want to work at painting not to paint flowers, but to express the feelings that art inspires in me” (see Pfeiffer & Hollein, p. 13) and who was relatively discreet during her lifetime, was also the one retrospectively named by Henri Focillon in 1928 as one of *the three great ladies* of Impressionism, together with Berthe Morisot and Mary Cassatt.

This work is loaded with meaning and layers, rich in colour applied in bold brushstrokes. First of all, it signals a new period in her painting style from 1880 onwards, in which Marie Bracquemond moved away from the influence of Ingres and a realistic style showing long brushstrokes in the style of the master, instead she created her own take on Impressionism in her work. Her most notable works such as *On the Terrace at Sèvres* (Musée du Petit Palais, Genève) and *The Three Graces* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris), both of 1880, were from this second period. Although she had been one of the closest figures around Manet, she was also deeply influenced by the works of Monet, especially those he exhibited in the 1886 Impressionist exhibition:

“I cannot describe how much Monet moves me, bringing me sensations I am delighted to feel and which I might not have been able to find in nature. He opens my eyes and makes me see better” (see Pfeiffer & Hollein, p. 238).

Bracquemond herself participated in the Impressionist exhibitions of 1879, 1880 and 1886. Her love of colour and outdoor painting put her at odds with her husband Félix Bracquemond, who she had met and married during her years with Ingres. In 1885 Félix published a book titled *Du Dessin et de la Couleur*, promoting the supremacy of modelling – i.e. the distribution of black and white values – and studio work. The couple would quarrel endlessly about this. As it is painted on panel just like the portrait that she did of her husband in his studio in 1886, the present work was probably created around the same time. Just three years later, Marie gave up painting professionally. Félix commented on Marie's œuvre: “She has never turned-out masses of work, preferring complete, properly finished pictures. And because she is sick and disheartened, her œuvre is small.” (Pfeiffer & Hollstein, p. 240) In fact, only about a 120 paintings, drawings and etchings survive, mainly in private collections.



15 **Vincenzo Gemito** 1852 – Naples – 1929

Woman's profile

Pencil and white lead on paper, 1887

Signed and dated on the lower right corner *Gemito.1887*

Size 300 × 210 mm

Provenance Private collection, Italy

A former child prodigy and sculptor, Vincenzo Gemito was widely admired for his lifelike statues. However, a prestigious commission for King Victor Emmanuele II led to him having a mental breakdown in 1880. Gemito abandoned sculpture for the next twenty-one years. Instead, his artistic talent found an outlet in drawing. He especially made notable portraits, which were reproduced in the Italian media and received critical acclaim. Working in a great variety of styles, Gemito paved the way for artists that came after him with his ground-breaking work.

The nature and spirit of his beloved Neapolitan people was one of Gemito's principal subjects. The woman profiled here could be a local fisherwoman or possibly, the Neapolitan Anna Cutolo, he married in 1882. The artist depicts the sitter's hair and shawl by a myriad of flowing lines. This work is one of those that led his first biographer Savioni to state that Gemito was "more of a sculptor in his drawings than in his statues"

(see Alberto Savinio, *Seconda vita di Gemito*, in *Narrate, uomini, la vostra storia*, Bompiani, Milan, 1942, p. 42).

Left at an orphanage as a baby, Gemito was adopted into the family of a Napolitan artisan who recognised his artistic talent at a young age. At 12 years old, Gemito started studying at the Naples Academy of Fine Arts. Although he later worked at the ateliers of the sculptors Emmanuele Caggiano and Stanislao Lista, Gemito is thought to have been largely self-taught, which accounts for the distinctive and highly realistic style of his works. The first statue exhibited by Gemito at only 16, *The Player*, caused a stir at the *Promotrice* in Naples and was bought by King Victor Emmanuel II. Gemito stayed in Paris in 1877-1880, where he successfully exhibited at various salons and befriended the painter and sculptor Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier. In old age, he would return to sculpture, exhibiting successfully at the *World Exhibition* of 1900. He died in Naples in 1929.



16 **Armand Guillaumin** 1841 Paris – Orly 1927

Self-portrait

Crayon Conté on wove paper, ca. 1888
Sheet 192 × 250 mm
Provenance Private collection, France

This is a superb portrait of one of the greatest impressionist painters, and yet still erroneously undervalued today.

Armand Guillaumin participated to the exhibitions of the movement from its origin and was its last representative. Born in Paris, from a modest family, Guillaumin grew up at Moulins in the Allier department before going to work in the shop of his uncle in Paris. His salary allowed him to pay for lessons on drawing where he went after his daily work. At the beginning of the 1860's, he joined the *Compagnie des Chemins de Fer d'Orléans*, a job that left him more free time. The young man registered at the *Académie Suisse*, met Pissaro and Cézanne, and took part in 1863 to the *Salon des refusés*. With his friends, Guillaumin travelled the length and breadth of the Parisian region in search of motives and went regularly to Pontoise where Pissaro had just settled. There he set himself and painted tirelessly the Seine river and its banks. Water became his favourite subject. In 1874, from April 15 to May 15, he presented his works in the studios of Nadar, located 35 Boulevard des Capucines in Paris, with twenty-nine other artists and among them Renoir, Monet, Sisley, Degas, Pissaro and Cézanne. An exhibition that would later enter Art History as *La première exposition impressionniste*.

If Guillaumin mainly painted landscapes, he also made portraits and self-portraits by various means: oil, pastel

or pencil. The present drawing is clearly the left-right inverse copy of a self-portrait painted ca 1888 and now in private hands. Squared around the shoulders, the painter looks at us, his face turned three-quarters towards the left of the sheet. He presents himself without self-concession: his puffy nose, strong arch of the eyebrow and large ears. His beard is trimmed in two thick locks descending under the chin. His hairs are cut short and high on his forehead. He is coated with a fur jacket with a heavy collar, his bust slightly turned to the right, so the man is reminiscent of a portrait of the Flemish Renaissance. Guillaumin chose to make his portrait with the tip of his charcoal crayon. Made with juxtaposition of hatched strokes and undulating ones, this drawing possesses a dynamism as seen in some sheets of Van Gogh. Indeed, the two men met each other, at that period, about the end of the 1880's and became friends. Théo Van Gogh, the brother of the artist, sold for Guillaumin some of his paintings.

The drawing will be included in the *catalogue raisonné* in preparation by the Comité Guillaumin.



17 **Edouard Vuillard** 1868 Cuiseaux – La Baule 1940
Self-Portrait

Purple ink on the left upper quarter of a letter paper with printed letter head, ca. 1890
With two stamped monograms lower-right and upper left *EV*
Sheet 105 × 135 mm
Provenance By heirs; André Salmon, Paris; Private collection, Germany

This is an extraordinary self-portrait by Vuillard, early – at the age of twenty-two –, very rare, and using a Renaissance *mise en scene*. As early as 1888 Vuillard, inspired by his own face, began a series of self-portraits in drawings sketched quickly notably in his notebooks, and in paintings, the first of which unequivocally testifies to his admiration for the old masters. He studied them at length and observed the portraits during his visits to the Louvre, and this played a decisive role in the Vuillard's artistic development and the sensitivity. Apart from the dignified and classic postures, it is the framing and staging of these first introspective works that truly fall within the tradition of portraits of the Renaissance. For example, the *Self-portrait in a mirror* ca. 1887-88 (Private collection), whose posture unmistakably is reminiscent of the *Portrait of a Man*, also known as *The Condottiere*, painted in 1465 by Antonello da Messina and exhibited in the Louvre Museum.

The paradox of this drawing, made at the same period as the avant-garde *Octagonal Self-Portrait* (Private collection) is its obvious modernity and at the same time it proves constant admiration of this founding member of the Nabis movement for the academic tradition of drawing in its faithful transcription of nature. Vuillard seems

to skilfully combine in this self-portrait, both the perception of himself and of the spectator, as well as his evolution in the confidence acquired over time in his artistic talents. The artist appears to us in an immediate image, tinged with discretion and frankness. In this direct and assumed confrontation of him with the spectator, Vuillard's gaze, which translates a certain form of assurance and appeasement in his introspection, echoes the Renaissance costume which is as much an allusion to his profession as painter, as a tribute to the old masters to whom he seems to be related.

Mathias Chivot, author of the forthcoming *catalogue raisonné*, pointed out about the present work: “this is the only time that Vuillard has been seen dressed as a Renaissance painter, shirt open and puffed sleeves, in the attitude of a pictor major. It is the most romantic self-portrait, in his scruffy and fiery physique, that we know of him. The purple ink is also quite exceptional; only two or three other works in ink of the same colour, all around 1890, are known to this day.”

The present work will be included in the supplement of the *catalogue raisonné* currently being prepared by Mathias Chivot.



18 **Max Jacob** 1876 Quimper – Drancy 1944

Self-portrait at the Latin Quarter

Chinese Ink, sepia crayon and pencil on laid paper, 1894
Dated and annotated along the lower border: *j'ai fait ça au quartier latin étant / étudiant vers 1894*; signed in lower right *Max*; inscribed on the verso *Monsieur Jacob/ Location d'une chambre du 1er avril au 1er mai 1897/ 25 francs [illegible signature]*

Sheet	165 × 100 mm
Literature	Marcelin Pleynet, Christian Parisot, Jeanine Warnod, <i>Max Jacob, dessins</i> , Paris-Brescia, 1978, p. 29 (ill.)
Provenance	Joseph Altounian, Paris; Galerie N.R.A., Paris; Didier Gompel, Paris; Private collection, Paris

A rare and expressive self-portrait of the poet Max Jacob, when he was only 18 years old. We only record five other self-portraits by the artist, and this drawing is the oldest one, showing a young man in a dandyish attitude.

This enigmatic self-portrait depicts Jacob at the time of his arrival in Paris in 1894, shortly after he successfully passed the *Concours général de philosophie* that would eventually lead him to a brilliant career in the French capital.

Born in Quimper, Max Jacob moved to Paris in order to study law. However, his affinity to the arts and his new acquaintances – such as the artists of Montmartre, Apollinaire, Braque, Matisse, Picasso or Modigliani – led him to another path. Legend says that he decided to become an artist after Picasso had told him: “*You are a poet, live as a poet*”¹. Although he is then best known for his poems – *Le cornet à dés* (1917) being his most renowned –, Max Jacob appeared to have been a gifted painter and draughtsman, whose main focus was primarily landscapes and circus scenes. He also loved to depict the sole love of his life Germaine Pfeipfer. The self-portraits of Jacobs compose a very interesting ensemble of works: each giving us keys to understand the poet’s personality. In this drawing, the psychologic tension that surges from the anxious eyes makes this portrait perhaps the most fascinating of them all. In a *Self-portrait* executed in 1932, the tenebrous and confident student depicted in 1894 has

given way to an old, wrinkled, and bald man living in poverty². Max Jacob’s piercing stare is also widely known thanks to his friends’ works picturing him, among them Moïse Kisling, Pablo Picasso, or Amedeo Modigliani and his famous *Portrait of Max Jacob*, dated 1916 (Düsseldorf, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein Westfalen). Later Max Jacob could be considered as a precursor of the Dada and surrealism, and he had a great influence on artists of these movements, like Jean Cocteau.

It is worth mentioning the earliest provenances. An Armenian by birth, Joseph Altounian moved to Paris and more precisely to Montmartre in 1908 where he learned the trade of an antique dealer. Nestled in the heart of a so-called artists’ district, he rubbed shoulders with and befriended some of them, such as Pablo Picasso, Guillaume Apollinaire, Amedeo Modigliani and Max Jacob. As one of Jacob’s cousins, Didier Gompel – who also owned the present drawing – spent his life studying and collecting the works of this prestigious family member. Shortly after the poet’s tragic death in 1944, Gompel felt the need to resuscitate the memory of his cousin which was then overlooked.

1. Pierre Andreu, « Max Jacob », *Centre de recherches Max Jacob*, n°3, 1980, p. 89.
2. Max Jacob, *Self-portrait*, 1932, gouache on paper mounted on canvas, 415 × 320 cm, private collection.



19 Unknown Scandinavian artist

Still life with painting tools

Pencil and black chalk on wove paper, 1892

Indistinct signature lower right, in pencil, dated 1892, and with a number C. 1/2

Sheet 350 × 420 mm

Provenance Private collection, Scandinavia

This very attractive still-life remains a mystery. It feels modern, and in the other hand it is dated of 1892; it looks like a corner of an artist studio, however the refine depiction of each object makes believe that the aim of the artist was elsewhere. Technically, this work testifies excellent draughtsman skills. Each texture is depicted with subtlety, and most of all, the game between light and shadows on each object creates a beautiful animation. The position of the brushes placed across the palette or on the different paint pots, such as the mahl stick against the wall, suggests a desire to present the whole equipment of a painter, and an aim for playing with adjacent light and drop shadows on the wall or brushes, giving the complete perspectives of the composition in different shades of grey. The realism of this drawing is supported by the inscription on the can of the brand “Nobles & Hoare”, an English company founded in 1787 and which manufactured varnishes, Japanese enamels and colors for the railways.

The inscription in the lower right mentions the date of 1892 as well as a C. 1/2 numbering. As for the unidentified signature, it is possible to read *Joh MS. Damsgaard*, and “Damsgaard” is a very common surname in Denmark. It is also the name of an area of Laksevåg district of Bergen in Norway, whose spelling “Damsgård” differs slightly.

It is anyway definitively a Scandinavian artist. However, we feel a lot of interactions with other Scandinavian styles and abroad. There were at the time a lot of artistic exchanges. Like the Norwegian Johan Christian Dahl and Marcus Grønvold from Bergen studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen; like many artists from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland who travelled to France, and where they drew their inspiration under the influence of the Impressionist and Realist movements. It is precisely the Realism that inspired some artists such as the Swedish Anders Zorn or the Norwegians Hans Olaf Halvor Heyerdahl, Erik Werenskiöld or Gustav Wentzel. The present still life’s aesthetic is also close in a way to the treatment of the American realism, like the artist William Harnett who made many still lives with musical instruments or various everyday objects, in the 1880’s. Although there was a large immigration from several countries of northern Europe to the United States at the end of the 19th century, we don’t know well about influences of American art in Scandinavia, even more that a large majority of American artists were also influenced by the French art scene. Nevertheless, the skilled artist was evidently impressed by these European artistic exchanges and the Realism pictorial code, initiated earlier in France by Gustave Courbet in search for reality and a raw representation of everyday life.



20 **Svend Hammershøi** 1873 – Copenhagen – 1948

Study of an Oak Tree

Pencil and watercolors on laid paper, ca. 1900-05
With an indiscernible inscription on the back of the frame ending by the name *Rigmor Lütken*
Watermark Van Gelder Zonen
Sheet 485 × 660 mm
Exhibition Possibly, Copenhagen, Georg Kleis, *Svend Hammershoi Udstilling*, 1919, cat. 31
Provenance Private collection, Denmark

A magnificent sheet showing Svend Hammershøi’s obsession for majestically representing the Nature. In the 19th century, the state of Denmark was a small country which had been shorn of a part of its territories with the loss of the Holstein and Schwelsig duchies in 1864. Danish art thus shifted away from foreign influences to focus on national art and on its own landscapes. Few decades later, Svend Hammershøi kept following that tradition and added a feeling of timelessness to his enigmatic and powerful representation of trees. The same oak tree in the present drawing was painted by Svend in 1901 from a different angle and in a beautiful landscape (The Skovgaard Museum, Viborg).

From 1890 to 1897, Svend Hammershøi studied first at the Royal Danish Academy of Art and then at the Kunstnernes Frie Studieskoler, both in Copenhagen. Svend is the young brother of Vilhelm Hammershoi, of nine years his junior. Considered nowadays as one of the most famous Danish painters, Vilhelm gathered a small group of friends and family around him, including his friend Carl Holsoe, his brother-in-law Peter Ilsted and of course his brother Svend. The Hammershøi brothers were close, as we can see in some paintings by Vilhelm for which Svend served as model¹. The Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris has recently studied for the first time the links between

the two brothers and exhibited their works alongside². Svend had the same approach for intimate and silent subjects as his brother Vilhelm, even though Vilhelm preferred to paint interiors scenes and Svend Hammershøi Nature ones.

Vilhelm and Svend Hammershøi walked frequently together in forest and painted the same subjects, using different approach. The older brother would place the trees in vast and silent surroundings, whereas in Svend’s composition the trees fill out the whole composition, as we can see in the present drawing. Given the fact that Svend travelled often – in France, England and through the Danish countryside –, it is quite difficult to situate his landscapes, unless a building can be seen behind the trees: his landscapes were often accompanied by a castle, a ruin or even a cathedral. Be as it may, this virtuous sheet shows Svend’s affinity towards solitary trees to which he gives an obvious poetic dimension.

1. For example: Vilhelm Hammershoi, *Interior with a young man reading (Svend Hammershøi)*, 1898, oil on canvas, 64.4 × 51.8 cm, Den Hirschsprungske Samling, Copenhagen.
2. Jean-Loup Champion, “Le paysage chez Vilhelm et Svend Hammershøi”, in *Hammershøi. Le maître de la peinture danoise*, Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André, 2019, pp. 31-32.



21 **Paul Mishel** 1862 Gdansk – Berlin 1929
Landscape near Gdingen (Gdynia) in West Prussia

Oil on board, 1895
Signed and dated lower left corner *Gdingen Aug 85 P Mishel*
Size 22.6 × 32.7 cm
Provenance Private collection, Germany

A rare landscape by Paul Mishel, illustrating his strong attachment to the Slavic Nature. Dated in 1885, this painting is an early work of Paul Mishel, as he was only 23 years old when he completed it. At that time, he had not yet joined the *Friedrichshagener Dichterkreis* (The Circle of Poets of Friedrichshagener), a Berliner movement close to naturalism-initiated ca. 1888. However, he had already been trained by the naturalist and landscape painter Eugen Bracht at the *Preußische Akademie der Künste*, the Prussian Academy of Arts (Berlin), where he became professor in 1882.

In this picturesque work, Mishel does not let us see any building or human presence. He proceeds with horizontal stripes of colours indicating the distance and depth of what appears to be the littoral country. Only small bushes draw the viewer's attention while the pale-yellow sky, only disrupted by sparse clouds, occupies three quarters of the painting with its quiet, somewhat

nostalgic, evening atmosphere. Paintings of such quality from Paul Mishel are extremely rare and this one is truly a testimony of the artist's sensibility. Furthermore, it highlights his early maturity and reflects the modernity of his œuvre.

The present landscape was actually painted in Pomerania, nowadays in Poland. In the artist's corpus, this region is a privileged centre of his attention, even though Mishel travelled through Germany, Great-Britain, Sweden and Norway searching inspiration for his atmospheric paintings. It depicts a landscape near the polish city of Gdynia (in German *Gdingen*) which had been incorporated to Prussia since 1772, and then belonged to the German Empire until 1920, when it was retroceded to Poland. Located on the Baltic Sea, it was a touristic city at the end of 19th century and was only a few miles away from the artist's hometown, Gdansk.



22 **Eugène Delâtre** 1864 Paris – Paris 1938

Evening atmosphere on the Oise near Auvers

Pencil and watercolor on wove paper, ca. 1900
Signed lower left with pencil *Eugène Delâtre*, dedicated lower left with ink *Hommage Respectueux à madame Vv. Godefroy, Janvier 1904*,
and annotated lower right with pencil *Auvers sur Oise*
Sheet 305 × 215 mm
Provenance Private collection, Germany

This luminous composition synthesizes Eugène Delâtre’s talent, whose drawing skills are without a doubt the result of his training in the art of engraving, initiated by his father Auguste Delâtre. Here, the mastery of lines sublimates the river’s curves. In just a few pencil strokes, the artist instantly immerses us on the Oise’s banks near Auvers. He offers us an impression and a vision that are both bucolic and warm, like the reminiscence of a memory. The critic Marc Stéphane has even qualified the artist as a “landscape poet”¹.

The scene’s twilight is enhanced by the watercolor technique learned from the painter John Lewis Brown. The thoughtful palette illustrates the falling night with the shadow of the trees on the left, slowly darkening the stream. Using fluid brushstrokes, the artist succeeds in sketching the last daylight in these clouds tinged with orange, bright yellow and blue, to create a sky illuminated by the declining sun and echoed by the water surface in the center of the composition.

As a true enthusiast and collector of Japanese objects and prints, Eugène Delâtre has certainly been influenced by Utagawa Hiroshige and Hokusai’s works, which have marked Japan’s popularity in the 19th century.

By the harmony and the colours’ treatment, this work is a perfect illustration of the Japanese inspiration but also of the artist’s working method, who has often made watercolors as models for his engraved compositions. This is evidenced by the inking technique called “à la poupée” which consists in applying several colours on the same copper plate, that allowed Eugène Delâtre to translate his watercolors in prints but also to revolutionize the field and become one of the pioneers of colour engraving around 1890. Member of the Society of Original Colour Engraving from 1899, he has established himself as a complete artist by his modern processes, both painter, engraver and printer. Able to train and collaborate with some of the greatest artists of his time such as Pablo Picasso, Auguste Renoir or even Henri de Toulouse Lautrec, Eugène Delâtre has also distinguished himself with his own works, critically acclaimed at the Laffite gallery exhibition in 1895, at Bing’s in 1896, at the Durand-Ruel gallery in 1898 and finally during all Georges Petit gallery’s exhibitions from 1905.

1. Emmanuel Bénézit, *Dictionnaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs Dessinateurs et Graveurs*, Paris, 1939, t. 2, p. 61.



23 **Andrea Tavernier** 1858 Turin – Grottaferrata (Rome) 1932

In Aglié's Park

Pastel on laid paper, ca. 1900
Dedicated (not easily readable) and signed *a. Tavernier* with red pastel on a cardboard found on the back of the drawing; sketches on the back of the sheet, of a man, a woman and a nude study
Sheet 345 × 610 mm
Provenance Robert Michels, Torino

This stunning pastel embodies an idyllic moment in a park, in the Piemonte's city of Aglié, in an explosion of orange and yellow brushed in a very rapid way. The children amusing themselves on the shore of a pond are maybe members of Michels' family, to whom the work is dedicated. Robert Michels was a sociologist, and a friend and collector of Andrea Tavernier's work. Even if the pastel is not dated, it most probably belongs to the very first years of the 20th century, when both Robert Michels and Andrea Tavernier lived in Turin.

Light and hatching are at the heart of Tavernier's work. He was clearly working in the vein of his contemporaries Giovanni Segantini and Gaetano Previati, but his symbolist works – as the present one or the *Barca con dama e amorini sul lago* – relates him also to the young Plinio Nomellini. Nomellini was another excellent example of intertwining divisionism and symbolism in the Italian 19th century Italy. In both Tavernier and Nomellini's paintings, the atmospheric mood is the key, distancing them from other symbolists as French and Belgian who painted landscapes usually as an emanation of a state

of mind. We could also see the connection to the Gaetano Previati's *Maternità*, shown in at the first *Salon Rose-Croix* in Paris in 1892, and which became an iconic painting for its use of dynamic hatching, the vibration of colour anticipating Futurism.

Andrea Tavernier studied in Turin with Andrea Gastaldi, he showed in la *Società promotrice di Belle Arti* in Turin in 1897 and in the *Exposition Internationale* in Paris, where he gained the gold medal. He took part in several editions of *Esposizione internazionale di Venezia*, between 1899 and 1914, and in 1922¹. His masterpiece *Ultime gocce*, an astonishing painting for the rendering of light and the intensity of warm colours, is dated 1898 and is now in the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome (inv. 1328). In ca. 1910, Tavernier left Piemonte to settle in the country surrounding Rome, called Castelli Romani, where he painted mostly landscapes, and ended his life in 1932.

1. <http://asac.labiennale.org/it/passpres/artivisive>.



24 **Théophile Alexandre Steinlen** 11859 Lausanne – Paris 1923

Idyll

Watercolour, gouache and crayon on wove paper, ca. 1900-09
Signed on the centre left, *Steinlen*
Sheet 654 × 356 mm
Provenance Stoppenbach & Delestre Ltd., London; Private collection, UK

This drawing is one the most innovative and vibrant sheet in the whole Steinlen’s œuvre. The figures are drawn with expressive lines of bright colors, reflecting the tension of this kiss. The technic and sublime modernity of this scene could even push us to put the name of Munch on this, and it offers the most beautiful insight of a less-known side of the artist’s production. Théophile Steinlen, best known for his Art Nouveau posters and drawings of cats, was also a keen observer of the Parisian street life of his day. He is described by a friend (the writer Claude Roger-Marx) as “the painter of the streets ... the friend of all the disinherited, the wanderers of the cities and villages, who glide, meagre and vagrant, through the wind, the rain, of the couples in never-ending embraces”.¹

His artistic career of the Swiss-born Steinlen only truly began when he settled in Montmartre in 1890 and started frequenting the cabaret *Le Chat Noir*. Here, he befriended the painters Adolphe Willette and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec among others, and was welcomed into the Montmartre artistic crowd. The inhabitants of that place, now his permanent home, attracted his attention throughout his whole career. In hundreds of

drawings and *croquis*, Steinlen captured the vagabonds, washerwomen, children, and *midinettes* (factory girls). Among those, the kissing couple was a recurrent theme in Steinlen œuvre, and a number of these compositions were put as *Idylles* in his publication *Dans La Vie* (1901). Here, this couple walks down a rainy street and shares a kiss, a private moment just before turning the corner into the main street. While their bodies are angular and gaunt, inspired by the work of Rodin and Constantin Meunier, and the woman resembles Daumier’s hard-working *blanchisseuses* (laundresses) type, the light colouring gives the scene a serene atmosphere. This sheet can be also related to two of Steinlen paintings and depicting the same couple. They are in the collection of the Petit Palais, Geneva (*Idylle*, ca. 1909, and *The Kiss*, undated).

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by Claude Orset, co-author of the *catalogue raisonné* in preparation.

1. Ernest de Crauzat, *L’œuvre gravé et lithographie de Steinlen*, Société de propagation des livres d’art, 1913, foreword.



25 **Georg Schöbel** 1860 Berlin – Berlin ca. 1930

Portrait of a young cab-driver

Black chalk on firm wove paper, around 1900

Signed with black chalk lower left *G. Schöbel*.

Sheet 318 × 226 mm

Provenance Private collection, Germany

The attraction of this portrait lies undoubtedly in the graphical mastery and in the treatment of shadows and lights with highly nuanced tonal values by using the blurring technique of chalk. The choice of the African figure is also interesting as a reflection of the political, social and cultural realities of the 19th century. Like in France, it was common to see Africans working as merchants or dockers, but also to find them in artworks dealing with the Franco-Prussian war in testimony of the combatants from the African colonies, despite a racist hierarchy still rooted in the society. So, it was logical to find these African figures in several Prussian paintings such as in “Sächsische Générale” by Hermann Götz in 1870 exhibited at the German Historical Museum in Berlin, or in the work named “Episode nach der Schlacht von Wörth am 6. August 1870” by Heinrich Lang visible at the Museum Pfalzgalerie in Kaiserslautern. Georg Schöbel is therefore in this line and testifies, at the turn of the century, of the social position of Prussia after the abolition of slavery in 1807 and the colonialist policy implemented by Otto von Bismarck after 1871.

Trained for a time at the Berlin Academy of Arts in 1884 at the age of twenty-four, and then after a commercial apprenticeship in a merchant family, Georg Schöbel established himself through his self-taught education, on the German art scene in exhibiting his works from

1896 at the International Art Exhibition in Berlin. Known first for his animal representations, he then specialized in history painting, notably through his cycle on the life of Frederick the Great. This evolution in Schöbel's work testifies to the direct influence of the two great Prussian artists, Paul Friedrich Meyerheim and Adolf Von Menzel, from whom he was able to adapt to his own drawing style, as exemplified by the characteristic atmospheric touch that we find in this portrait of a young cabdriver wearing a pea coat, a top hat giving him such a realistic expression that we have the illusion of an old picture. Schöbel clearly had penchant for the genre scenes and more particularly, the daily life representation of the Berliners of his time. With his peers' recognition from 1904, when the artist received a gold medal at the Great Berlin Art Exhibition for his work representing Frederick the Great's farewell to generals, entitled “*Abschied der Generalität von Friedrich dem Grossen, Sanssouci*” and which was in the possession of the German Emperor Wilhelm II¹, Schöbel then distinguished himself, like giving witness to the atrocities of the First World War by his historical re-enactments of episodes on the Western Front.

1. Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, *Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung*. Catalogue, Berlin, 1904, no. 1011, p. 68.



26 **Théo van Rysselberghe** 1862 Ghent – Le Lavandou 1926
Portrait of Félix Fénéon

Brown chalk on wove paper, 1903
Monogrammed and dated on the lower right, 19 [VR] 03
Size 800 × 540 mm
Literature Ronald Feltkamp, *Théo van Rysselberghe 1862-1926*, Éditions Racine, Brussels/Paris 2003, p. 343, no. 1903-010 (ill.)
Provenance Galerie Druet, Paris; Guy Pogu, Paris; Private collection, France

This exceptional portrait of the poet and art critic Félix Fénéon (1861-1944) is a preparatory study for one of Van Rysselberghe’s most important paintings: *The Reading* (Museum of Fine Art, Ghent). The final composition is a group of Van Rysselberghe’s best friends and the most significant symbolist artists of the time, listening to the poet Emile Verhaeren reciting one of his poems. This drawing therefore provides a key insight in the genesis of this painting.

Early in 1900, Van Rysselberghe wrote to the poet Francis Vielé-Griffin: “I am already pondering the realisation of a painting of good poets; it will be cheerful – you will pose, and we will not be embarrassed about money.” His idea was simply to portray friends of Verhaeren and himself, without any deeper literary significance. Vielé-Griffin replied¹: “The group will not have any literary meaning – too bad; because people will find one, you can be sure of that.” Aside from Vielé-Griffin, Verhaeren and Fénéon, the sitters included the poets Félix Le Dantec, André Gide, Maurice Maeterlinck, Henri Ghéon, and the painter Henri-Edmond Cross.

The group never met as such, instead, Van Rysselberghe had his friends individually to visit his studio to draw their portraits. Just four other preparatory drawings from these sessions are known, all in the Museum of Fine Art in Ghent, among them a sketch also of Fénéon, but much smaller. Van Rysselberghe then used these drawings

for a collage in his endless search for the perfect composition, as he did with other large works of this time, such as *Three Children in Blue* (Private collection, Brussels) and *The Promenade* (Kunstmuseum, The Hague). Interestingly, the painter eventually chose to include Fénéon in a very different position: standing at the chimney smoking, rather than seated, and facing the opposite direction.

Both Théo van Rysselberghe and Felix Fénéon played a key role in the European art world at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Fénéon, with his Quaker-like appearance and deadpan humour, combined an exemplary career as a civil servant with strong artistic and anarchist convictions. Columnist, editor at the *Revue Blanche*, art critic, publisher – he published Rimbaud’s *‘Illuminations’* –, and gallery owner, Fénéon was also an exceptional collector who amassed a large number of masterpieces. He was an unconditional supporter of Neo-Impressionism, discoverer of Seurat, artistic director of the Bernheim-Jeune gallery, champion of Fauvism, Futurism and Matisse. He played a decisive role on the artistic scene at the time. He was obviously close to Van Rysselberghe, who was one the founders of the group *Les Vingt*, and which extensively exhibited the neo-impressionist artists in Brussels.

1. Paul Eeckhout, *Retrospective Théo van Rysselberghe. Catalogus*, Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent, 1962, pp. 44-45.



27 **Édouard Vuillard** 1868 Cuiseaux – La Baule-Escoublac 1940

The Living Room, Rue de Calais

Pencil and watercolour on laid paper, ca. 1910-11
Signed lower left E. V
Sheet 130 × 110 mm
Provenance Vuillard's studio, until his death; Ker-Xavier Roussel, Paris; his son Jacques Roussel, Paris; Alfred Daber, Paris; Private collection, France

This cosy living room is the one from the Parisian apartment to which Édouard Vuillard moved with his mother in 1908. In front of the fireplace, we can recognize the yellow toad armchair, visible in other works of the same period. Vuillard was happy to have found such a large apartment in this neighbourhood, close to the Académie Ranson, where he taught sporadically, along with his friends Ker-Xavier Roussel and Paul Sérusier. From the 4th floor of the building, he could enjoy a nice view on the Place Vintimille, and the verdant Square Berlioz in its centre. From 1910, the square became the subject of a multitude of paintings by Vuillard, often characterized by a high point of view, from the apartment.

Made in the same years, this intimate drawing shows us the opposite side, the interior of the apartment, and displays a very different aspect of Vuillard's work. While the outside views are often big and narrow print-like format, the inside world is revealed in small scale to encourage that we examine it closely. Playing with the effect of warping from a close up look, the painter distorted the space into a compact environment. By making us close witness, literally, of the scene, Vuillard wanted his technique to be visible. Thus, the attentive spectator notices every touch of colour and the light

that clings to it, as well as the subtle contrast between matt and shiny. To enhance this view of the living room, Vuillard applied some watercolour, a rare technique in the artist's production, used mainly for small formats. However, the artist decided to leave blank some spaces of the sheet, highlighting just some elements with a touch of colour that gives a subtle perspective to the composition.

From 1908, Vuillard entered a period of appreciable fame. He was recognized both in France and abroad. In 1912, he was even awarded the Legion of Honour that he declined, wishing to keep distance from the official life. He favoured working for a small circle of art lovers, never having someone come to pose for him, but preferring his subjects in their environment, their domestic life. In Vuillard's own apartment, we usually see Mrs. Vuillard, carrying her everyday activities, sewing, eating, combing her hair. However, here, not a soul comes to disturb the intimate setting, adding a slightly timeless feeling to the faded colours.

The present work will be included in the supplement to the artist's *catalogue raisonné* in preparation by Mathias Chivot.



28 **Charles-Clos Olsommer** 1883 Neuchâtel – Sierre 1966

Portrait of a Valais woman

Pastel, ink, charcoal and watercolour on wove paper, ca. 1912-1915

Signed upper right C. C. Olsommer.

Sheet 310 × 310 mm

Provenance Charles Nuding (1878-1924); by heirs, Switzerland

A most lovely portrait by Charles Clos Olsommer. This young woman seems immersed in a moment of melancholy, staring into space, and inspiring tranquillity. The absence of background and the black columns partitioning the space – bringing all the attention to her gaze – deprive the model from context and make her look like an allegory, or an icon. Her clothes, however, reveal her reality. She wears one of the traditional costumes of central Valais, Switzerland: a woollen jacket, a shawl over her shoulders and a straw hat, covered with black velvet and topped with pleated ribbons. Olsommer portrayed several women wearing the same black hat and blue scarf, demonstrating his attachment to the traditional culture, as well as his attraction for the powerful aesthetic combination and contrast created by these two elements of colour, framing the pale and pinkish face of the women. It has clearly an echo to the school of Pont-Aven.

At the end of the 19th century, the Swiss canton of Valais hosted many Swiss artists in search for tranquillity, away from modern cities. These artists, often sensitive to the Symbolist movement, objected positivism and perceived a loss of spirituality in both the development of cities and the decline of rural world. Looking for mysticism and contact with nature, they undertook a retreat in

the countryside to share the daily life of the peasants in which they found a form of asceticism. At that time, the wild landscapes of the Swiss mountains appeared as an immaculate earthly paradise as well as a picturesque setting.

Around 1890, a group of young artists spent each summer in Savièse (Valais), following the painter Ernest Biéler. They produced works inspired by the local population and the landscapes, confirming a place for rural life in Swiss modern arts and participating in the constitution of a national art. These artists covered a variety of styles but shared a common iconography, including the daily religious or pastoral activities, the community life, the exaltation of maternity, and religious subjects transposed into the familiar context of Valais. Olsommer is part of the extension of this movement. First trained at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Munich (1902–03) and at the École des beaux-arts in Geneva (1904–05), Olsommer moved to Valais in 1912. His work, mainly on paper and often using mixed techniques, shares characteristics of the Jugendstil: plain backgrounds, flatness of the forms, inspiration from the decorative arts and clarity of the line.



29 **Franz von Stuck** 1863 Tettenweiss – Munich 1940

Beethoven sitting enthroned

Bronze, ca. 1909
Inscribed on the base *C. Leyrer Munchen* and *Beethoven / Franz / Von / Stuck*
Size 26.6 cm
Provenance Bettina Ann Brumbaugh, Plano (Texas)

This is remarkable cast of the von Stuck’s *Thronender Beethoven*. The late Romanticism saw a proliferation of representations of Beethoven, celebrating his music and making a myth of the man: “*Les plus grands poètes de l’Allemagne sont ses musiciens, merveilleuse famille dont Beethoven est le chef [...] Ce sourd entendait l’infini*” wrote Victor Hugo¹. In 1902, during the Vienna Secession exhibition, the colossal monument dedicated to him by Max Klinger² and the monumental frieze by Gustav Klimt³ depicting the Ninth Symphony were shown. Von Stuck also presents an impressive mask of the musician with a fierce and hypnotic look⁴. Since 1896, the figure of Beethoven has occupied his work. In 1909, he created the present *bozzetto* for a monument that was never built. Beethoven is seated on a massive, cubic throne, his naked body wrapped in a toga-like cloth, referring to ancient heroes and gods. His hands hold the armrests firmly. He looks intensely at the spectators from the top of his pedestal. This striking composition is also linked to a painting of *Pluto*, the king of hell, painted in the same year⁵. He elevated the musician to the rank of a deity who embodies his creation, whose harmony is based on the permanent interaction of the life and death impulses.

A protean artist, Franz von Stuck refused the boundaries between fine and applied arts. A representative of the *Jugendstil*, he was a founding member of the Munich Secession in 1892. This association of artists paved the way for Art Nouveau. Having attended the Academy of Fine Arts as well as the School of Arts and Crafts, he practised several means of expression with great creative force: illustration, painting under the primary influence of Böcklin, and sculpture after a trip to Rome

with Klinger. Initially imbued with a classicising dynamism, his works feature figures whose physical reality expresses a form of ideal, not through symbols, but through a vigorous and powerful form that fascinates⁶. In 1895, he was a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts where he trained new generations of avant-garde artists: Kandinsky, Munte, Klee, Albers, among others. From 1897, he put his vision of *Gesamtkunstwerk* – total art – into practice through the Villa Stuck in Munich, twenty years before the Bauhaus of Gropius.

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by Albert Ritthaler, Archive Franz von Stuck, on the basis of photographs.

Very few examples of this sculpture are known today. The Villa Stuck, now a museum dedicated to the artist, has one in bronze. This is an astonishing twist of history, as this sculpture is probably the only one in Stuck’s œuvre that was not linked to his villa, but was intended as a public monument.

1. Victor Hugo, *William Shakespeare*, Lacroix, Verboeckhoven and Cie Ed., Brussels, 1864, and *La Revue musicale*, no. 378, “Victor Hugo et la musique”, 1923.
2. Max Klinger, *Monument to Beethoven* (Museum des Bildenden Künste, Leipzig).
3. Gustav Klimt, *Beethoven Frieze*, fresco of 7 panels, 215 × 3414 cm (Secession Palace, Vienna).
4. Franz von Stuck, *Beethoven’s Mask*, polychrome plaster, 48 × 48 cm (Musée d’Orsay, Paris).
5. Franz von Stuck, *Pluto*, oil on panel, 52.5 × 80.5 cm (Private collection)
6. See Guido Battelli, *8th International Exhibition of Fine Arts, Venice Biennale, 1909*, p. 55.





30

Vincenzo Gemito

1852 – Naples – 1929

Seneca

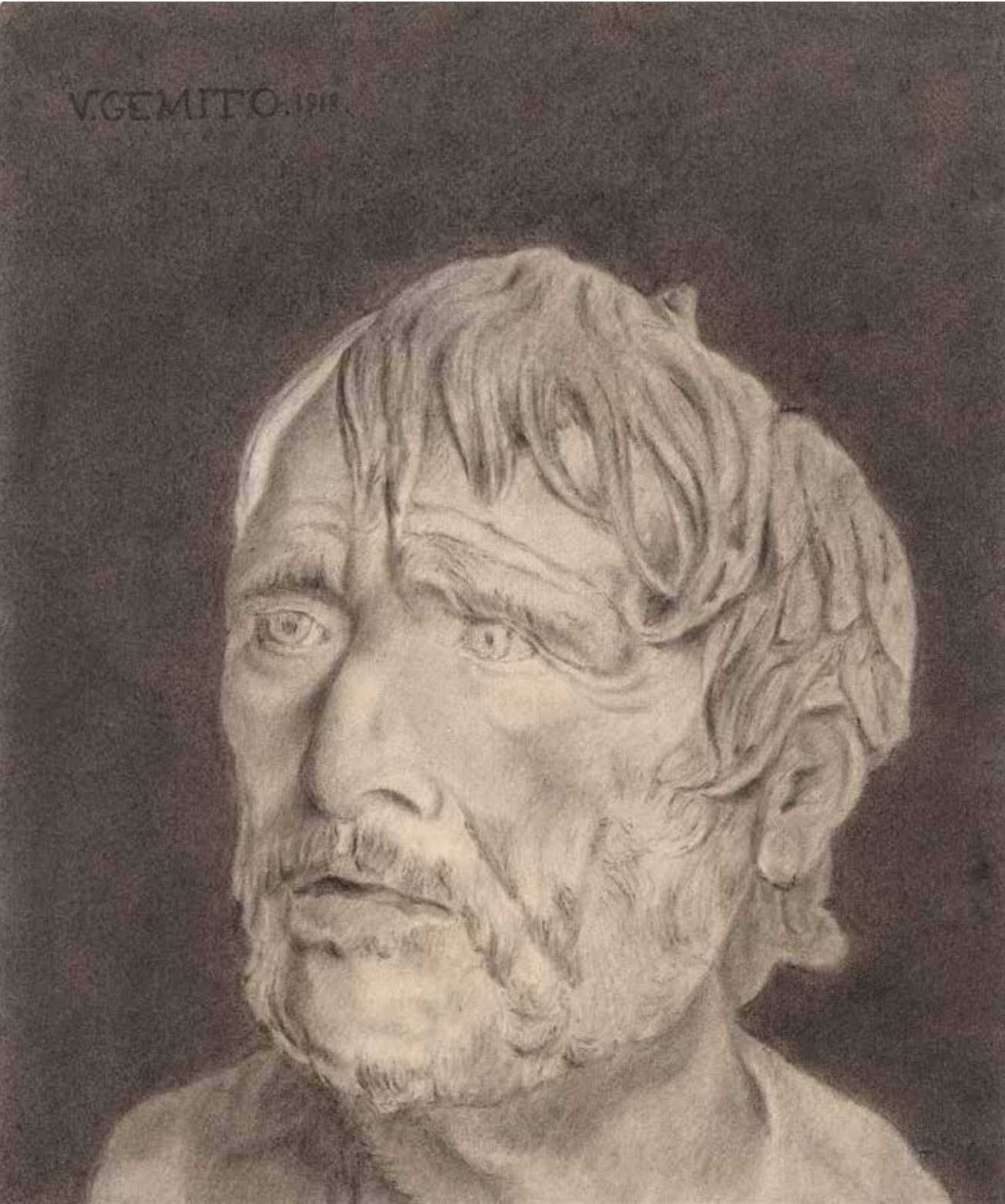
Crayon on wove paper, 1918
Signed and dated on the left upper corner, VGEMITO.1918.
Sheet 300 × 250 mm
Literature See Jean-Loup Champion, “Le retour à l’antique”, in *Gemito, le sculpteur de l’âme Napolitaine*, Petit Palais, Musées des Beaux-Arts de la ville de Paris, Paris, 2019, pp. 162-167
Provenance Antichità Errico, Naples; Private collection, Italy

In 1753, a Roman bronze bust, now known as the Pseudo-Seneca, was discovered at an excavation in Herculaneum, and it was kept at the Museo Nazionale in Naples, Italy. Since the 16th century, we had known several copies of this bust, but the original was only found in that year. It was identified as the Stoic philosopher Seneca the Younger because of its emaciated features¹. Gemito stands in a long line of artists depicting the bust or its copies, among them Rubens, Von Sandrart and Breughel the Elder. Gemito’s drawing is exceptional in that it portrays a light figure against a dark background, in contrast to the majority of his drawings, and to the original bust, with its dark bronze. This dramatic depiction brings the philosopher to life.

Gemito must have first drawn this bust as a student of the Naples Academy of Fine Arts, where he enrolled at just 12 years old. Left at an orphanage as a baby, he grew up in the family of an artisan who recognised his artistic talent at a very young age. Although he worked at the ateliers of the sculptors Emmanuele Caggiano and Stanislao Lista, Gemito is thought to have been largely self-taught, which accounts for his distinctive and highly realistic style. His first exhibited a work at only 16,

The Player, that caused a stir at the *Promotrice* in Naples and was bought by King Victor Emmanuel II. Gemito stayed in Paris in 1877-1880, befriending the painter and sculptor Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonir. Back in Naples in 1880, Gemito showed a great interest in antique sculpture. He measured his own work by their standard, and he made copies of classical statues such as *Psyche* and *Narcissus*. He modified and completed or bettered these copies. Gemito even used the Pseudo-Seneca bust, and the head of this father-in-law Masto Ciccio, as inspiration for his own work *The Philosopher* in 1883 (Naples, Museo di Capodimonte), “the ideal classical portrait” according to himself, giving it the same treatment of the hair, as a mass.² Gemito even made a new version, more realist, in 1912. He was closed to the foundry owner Gennaro Chiurazzi’s, who had a huge success in reproducing in bronze the antique statues of the collections of the Museo Nazionale, for a growing local market of tourists and collectors. So maybe there were plans for a reproduction of the Pseudo-Seneca, who knows?

1. In 1813, a very different bust and inscribed *Seneca* was discovered – hence the name *Pseudo-Seneca* given to the 1753 one.
2. Jean-Loup Champion, *op.cit.*, p. 163.



31 **Jacques Villon** 1875 Damville – Puteaux 1963

Portrait of Raymond Duchamp-Villon

Watercolour and India ink on tracing paper, ca. 1911

Signed lower right *Jacques Villon*, and titled lower left *Portrait de DUCHAMP VILLON*

Sheet 267 × 246 mm

Provenance Private collection, France

Executed at a key moment in the history of Cubism, this important drawing was linked to an oil portrait of Jacques Villon's brother, the sculptor Raymond Duchamp-Villon, today in the collections of the Musée National d'Art Moderne (inv. AM 3223 P). These two works are especially interesting in they are the combined testimony of two major cubist artists as well as the expression of family closeness.

In 1911, Jacques Villon and Raymond Duchamp-Villon lived in Puteaux, in the western suburbs of Paris. In their studio, they regularly invited fellow artists, like Albert Gleizes, František Kupka, Jean Metzinger, Francis Picabia, Fernand Léger, as well as their younger brother Marcel Duchamp, among others. Together, they discussed aesthetic research carried out in parallel with that of Picasso and Braque on new ways of representation. They considered that traditional painting gave an incomplete description of our temporal experience of the world, and suggested to represent things in movement, from different viewpoints simultaneously. From these gatherings, a group of artists was formed, first in an informal way: the *Groupe de Puteaux*, or the *Section d'Or*, in which Jacques Villon was a pivotal member.

In April of 1911, the *Salon des indépendants* opened in Paris, followed by the *Salon d'Automne* in October. The radical modernity of artworks exhibited by the artists of the

Section d'Or raised a scandal and brought Cubism to the attention of the general public. The next year, Villon resigned from the committee of the *Salon d'Automne* to protest hostility toward Cubism and set up the *Salon de la Section d'Or*. The sequence of these three moments of intense publicity for Cubism in less than two years was a climax for what would become one of the most important avant-garde movements of the 20th century.

In his cubist period, the portrait was Jacques Villon's privileged subject. He sought to generalize the characters, at rest or in motion, and to look for the structure of the face. In this drawing, we see how Raymond's face was restructured in geometrical shapes without eyes, giving him a cold authority. After a very creative period for both artists in the early 1910's, the war disrupted their careers. Both Jacques and Raymond were mobilized and served in the French army. After the war, Jacques Villon's drawings became rarer as he devoted himself mainly to printmaking. On his side, Raymond contacted typhoid fever from which he never fully recovered and died prematurely in 1918.

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by Galerie Louis Carré & Cie.



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