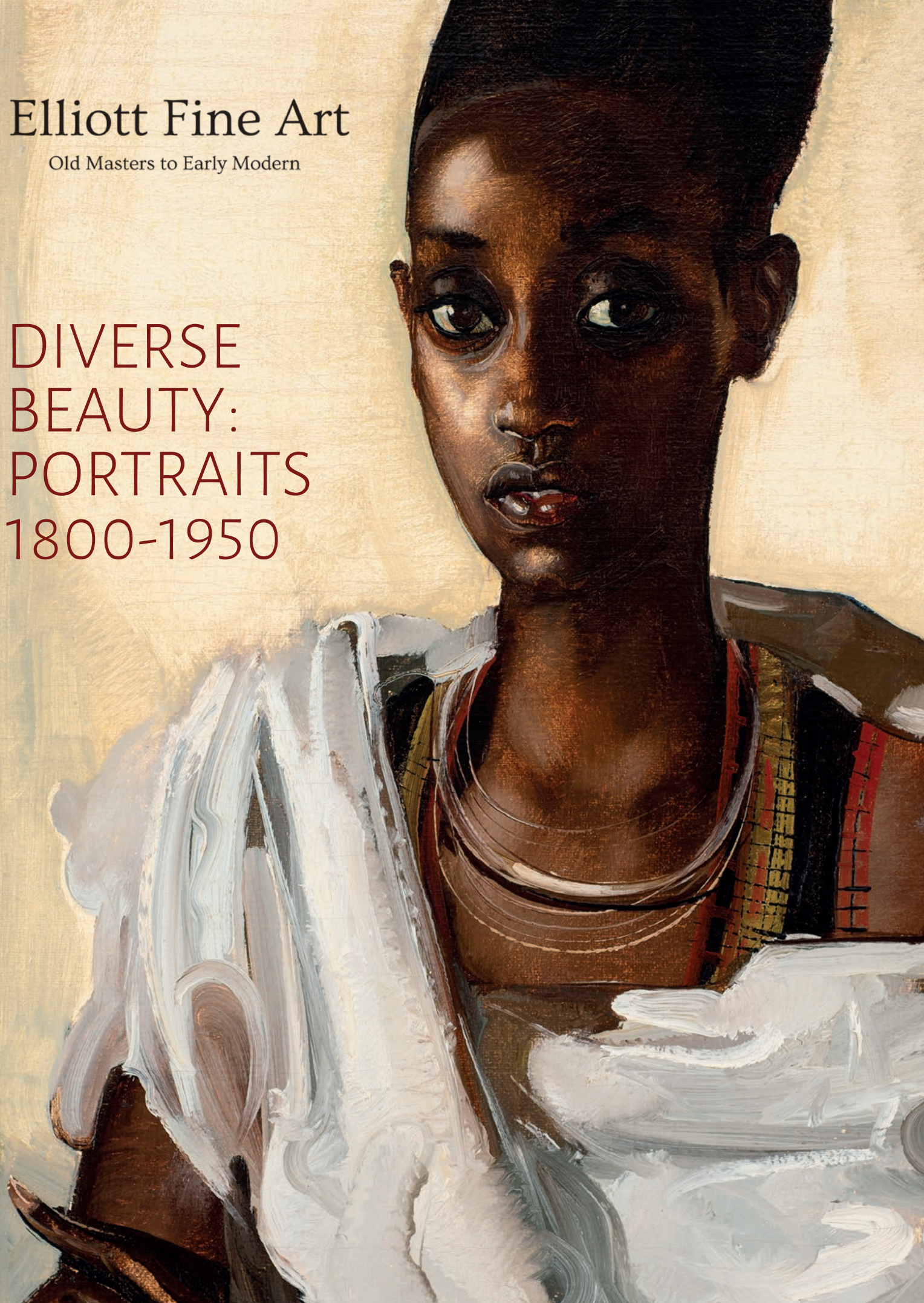


Elliott Fine Art

Old Masters to Early Modern

DIVERSE  
BEAUTY:  
PORTRAITS  
1800-1950



DIVERSE  
BEAUTY:  
PORTRAITS  
1800-1950

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# MARTIN DROLLING

(Oberhergheim 1752 – 1817 Paris)

The artist's son, Michel-Martin Drolling,  
with two studies of his left hand

---

Red chalk and pencil on paper  
22.7 x 16 cm. (9 x 6 ¼ in.)

Provenance:

The studio sale of the artist, Paris;

Part of an album of drawings belonging to the artist's descendants, placed on the Belgian art market, 1997;

Galerie Arnold-Livie, Munich, 1999;

Bernd Schultz, Bern.





FIG. 1, MARTIN DROLLING, *Portrait of Michel-Martin Drolling*, oil on panel, 24 x 18.5 cm, private collection.

Born in Alsace, Martin Drolling was a specialist in portraiture and genre painting, and as a youth studied the example of Dutch 17<sup>th</sup>-century painters. As one scholar has noted of the artist, 'His neat and careful style is directly inherited from the Dutch genre scenes, as are his portraits'.<sup>1</sup> Drolling exhibited at the Salons from 1793 onwards, and several of his interiors and genre pictures were reproduced as prints. He was occasionally employed by the portrait painter Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Lebrun to paint objects in her portraits, and through her met Jean-Baptiste Greuze. Drolling's genre scenes are often likened to those of his contemporary Louis-Léopold Boilly, and indeed the two artists 'are the best examples of that intimate, bourgeois art which appeared quite early in total contrast to the historical and neo-classical school of David and his pupils'.<sup>2</sup> Between 1802 and 1813 he worked as a designer and decorator at the Sèvres porcelain factory, yet he remained impoverished for much of his life.

Datable to c.1800, the present sheet is a portrait of the artist's son, Michel-Martin Drolling, who was also to become a painter. The drawing is a preparatory study for a small painting, in a French private collection, of a young boy reading in a chair set in front of an open window, with a view of the Place Vendôme in Paris beyond (fig. 1). A closely related, slightly more finished drawing in red chalk, showing the reading boy seated and facing to the left, is in the collection of the Musée de la Ville de Strasbourg.

Martin Drolling produced several painted and drawn portraits of his son, and Michel-Martin also posed for a number of his father's genre paintings. He is, for example, depicted in a painting of a young boy holding a violin and leaning out of a window, signed and dated 1800, in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. He also seems to have been the model for the sleeping boy in Drolling's painting *Le Petit Dormeur*, signed and dated 1795, which appeared at auction in London in 1995.<sup>3</sup>

A large portrait drawing by Martin Drolling of his wife Louise-Elisabeth Bélot and their son Michel-Martin, drawn in black chalk on vellum, is in the collection of the Musée Magnin in Dijon (fig. 2), which also houses a later painted portrait of the artist's daughter Louise, executed c.1805-1810. An earlier red chalk drawing by Martin Drolling of a younger Michel-Martin, seated in an interior and accompanied by his little sister Louise, is currently on the German art market.<sup>4</sup>

The subject of this drawing, Michel-Martin Drölling (1786-1851), studied with his father and completed his training in the studio of Jacques-Louis David. He won the Prix de Rome in 1810 with a painting of *The Wrath of Achilles*, and spent the next six years as a *pensionnaire* at the Academie de France in Rome. The younger Drolling exhibited regularly at the Salons between 1817 and 1850. Much of his early career was taken up with portraiture and with small-scale pictures such as the *Orpheus and Eurydice*, which won a gold medal at the Salon of 1819. Admitted into the Académie in 1833, Michel-



FIG. 2, MARTIN DROLLING, *Portrait of Louise Elisabeth Bélot and Michel-Martin Drolling*, black chalk on vellum, 42.2 x 35.8 cm, Musée Magnin, Dijon.

Martin Drolling received several important decorative public commissions, including paintings for Notre Dame de Lorette and the Conciergerie in Paris and the cathedral of Saint-André in Bordeaux. In 1850, near the end of his career, he completed a series of paintings of the life of Saint Paul for the church of Saint-Sulpice in Paris.

1. Jacques Vilain, 'Martin Drolling', in Paris, Grand Palais, Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts and New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *French Painting 1774-1830: The Age of Revolution*, exhibition catalogue, 1974-1975, p.398.
2. *Ibid.*, p.398.
3. Anonymous sale, London, Christie's, 7 July 1995, lot 69.
4. Hamburg, Dr. Moeller & Cie., *Portraits: Vom 18. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, 2020, unpaginated, fig.6 (where dated c.1795).



JEAN-CHARLES TARDIEU,  
CALLED TARDIEU-COCHIN

(Paris 1765 - 1830)

Portrait of the Artist's Son



---

Partly inscribed in pencil on the old backing board: *De Jean-Charles Cochin / Portrait de son fils...* [illegible]

Black chalk, with stumping, with framing in brown lines. Oval.  
15.6 cm. (6 ¼ in.) [diameter]



FIG. 1, LOUIS-LÉOPOLD BOILLY, *Portrait of the Artist's Son*, c. 1800-1805, oil on canvas, 22 x 16.5 cm, Ramsbury Manor Foundation.

As the old pencil inscription on the backboard helpfully explains, the cherubic and confident young boy in this portrait is one of Jean-Charles Tardieu's sons, drawn by his father. There were three sons born to Tardieu and his wife Prudence: Alexandre, in 1803; Jules Romain, in 1805; and Armand-Louis, in 1807. All three were born in Rouen, and would go on to have successful literary and legal careers. Jules-Romain was the most prominent, becoming a well-known publisher and author. As the second half of the inscription has become illegible, it is not possible to determine which son we are looking at in Tardieu's intimate portrait.

As the boy is aged perhaps three or four, the drawing can be dated to 1805-1810. Given the difficulty in getting a child of this age to sit still for any length of time, Tardieu presumably had to execute the portrait rapidly. And yet he manages to successfully convey that sense of mischievous curiosity and liveliness inherent in many children at an age when they are able to properly explore the world for the first time. Tardieu's image is quite reminiscent of numerous portraits by Louis-Léopold Boilly, who also enjoyed portraying his young sons at a similar age, likewise wide-eyed with wonder (fig. 1).

Born in Paris in 1765, Jean-Charles Tardieu, also known as Tardieu-Cochin after the small legacy left to him by his father's cousin Charles-Nicholas Cochin, was from a family of eminent engravers. His father, Jacques-Nicolas, and paternal grandfather, Nicolas-Henri, were both academicians and *graveurs du roi*, and his mother, Claire Tournay, and paternal grandmother, Marie-Anne Horthemels, were both also professional engravers. Tardieu entered the studio of Jean-Baptiste Regnault and obtained the *second grand prix de Rome* in 1790, debuting at the Salon three years later. Tardieu had excellent social connections and managed to maintain elite patronage through the successive upheavals and regime changes of the time, working for Napoleon, Louis XVIII and Charles X. Under these three sovereigns he received many official commissions for various imperial and royal residences, such as the palaces of Luxembourg, Versailles, Saint-Cloud and Fontainebleau (fig. 2).



FIG. 2, JEAN-CHARLES TARDIEU, *Halt of the French Army at Cyrene* 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1799, 1812, oil on canvas, 113 x 169 cm, Château de Versailles.





# GERHARDT WILHELM VON REUTERN

(Walk 1794 – Frankfurt 1865)

The Platzburschen Wilhelm Völcker and Ludwig Dörr

Inscribed: *W. d Iten Februar, Wilhelm Völcker Don Juan ; Ludwig Dörr, W den 30sten J. ; Platzburschen*

Pen and ink on paper  
18.8 x 19.5 cm. (7 ½ x 7 ¾ in.)

Provenance:  
Colin Clark, London, from 1978 until 2020.

Literature:  
S. Maison, *Gerhardt Wilhelm von Reutern. Drawings and Watercolours*, London 1978, cat. no. 18.

Exhibited:  
London, Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, *Gerhardt Wilhelm von Reutern. Drawings and Watercolours*,  
24 November to 22 December 1978.





FIG. 1, THEODOR HILDEBRANT, GERHARDT WILHELM VON REUTERN, 1838, OIL ON CANVAS, THE STATE RUSSIAN MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG.

Drawn by Gerhardt Wilhelm von Reutern, an aristocratic military officer in the Russian army, who lost his right arm in 1813 at the Battle of Leipzig, this remarkable double portrait was last seen publicly in 1978, at Hazlitt's exhibition on the artist. A small triumph in itself, the exhibition united thirty seven graphic works by Reutern, many of which are now in leading institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum, the Morgan Library and the National Gallery of Art, Washington. Dating to the mid-1820s, the sheet is exceptional for its rarity, quality, striking aesthetic and condition, as well as for the insight it gives into Reutern's interests and personality.

Reutern was born in 1794 in Livonia, on one of his father's six estates, to a Baltic-German noble family with roots in Saxony. Livonia, comprising the modern states of Latvia and Estonia, was then under Russian influence and control, and Reutern was sent to St. Petersburg for schooling, before entering Dorpat University at the age of fifteen to study military science. Here he was taught the basics of painting and drawing by the watercolourist and etcher Carl August Senff. Reutern joined the Russian army in 1811, initially serving under his elder brother Christophe, before quickly advancing through the ranks to become a lieutenant. In 1813, at the age of nineteen, Reutern was badly wounded in the right shoulder at the Battle of Leipzig, fighting against French Napoleonic forces. Amputation was deemed necessary and, within a few months, 'he began, with characteristic determination, to teach himself to draw with his left hand.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1814, after a short period convalescing in Baden Baden and Bruschel, where he met both Goethe and Tsar Alexander I respectively, Reutern made his first visit to Willingshausen to see his brother's parents-in-law, the Schwertzell family. Here he met Charlotte von Schwertzell, whom he would marry six years later. As aide-de-campe to General Barclay de Tolly, Reutern travelled from Warsaw to Paris in March 1815, as part of the occupying army, and there had his first encounter with the great masters in his frequent visits to the Louvre. An even greater turning point in Reutern's life occurred on his return to Germany later in the year,

where he met Goethe for the second time. The poet 'awakened in his young visitor deep feelings for nature' and opened his eyes to 'his true vocation, that of an artist'.<sup>2</sup> Several more meetings between them were to occur over the years, and the two friends remained in close contact up until Goethe's death in 1832, with the poet writing of Reutern 'Nature has given him a splendid talent, and art and nature have formed him'.<sup>3</sup>

A pension from the Russian government and the inheritance of a family estate called Ayasch gave Reutern enough of an income to resign from the army in 1819, at the age of twenty-five. After a brief trip to Italy, he married Charlotte in 1820 and for a time led the life of a gentleman farmer on his estate, drawing assiduously. Ill-health, due to the severe climate, forced Reutern to sell the estate, moving with his wife and three young children to Berne in 1824, where he worked with the landscape painter Gabriel Lory. Leaving Switzerland, the family settled more permanently in the town of Willingshausen, though made trips to Rome and Naples in 1825. A decisive influence on Reutern at this time was the painter Ludwig Emil Grimm, younger sibling to the literary Grimm brothers, who was invited to Willingshausen between 1826 and 1828 by Reutern in order to instruct him in the art of portrait drawing, thereby setting up the oldest artist's colony in Europe, a few years before the Barbizon colony was founded in Fontainebleau in 1830. The two artists roamed the fields and forests around the village looking for picturesque subjects to draw and were particularly interested in the appearance and personality of the villagers themselves.

Reutern continued to suffer ailments and moved frequently: a bout of cholera in 1831 led the artist to convalesce in the Baltic for two years, and an eye disease in 1833-1834 caused him to largely give up drawing in favour of painting. The family moved to Düsseldorf in 1835 and two years later Reutern was appointed court painter to the Russian Imperial family, ensuring financial security for the remainder of his life. In 1844 the family moved once again, to Frankfurt am Main, where Reutern would spend the next twenty-one years until his death in 1865. These two



FIG. 2, GERHARD WILHELM VON REUTERN, PORTRAIT OF THE POSTILLION JOHANN HEINRICH MATHEIS, c. 1825-1828, PEN AND INK ON PAPER, 19.7 X 13.1 CM, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK.



FIG. 3, GERHARD WILHELM VON REUTERN, ANNE LIES STAMM AND ANNE KATHRING, c.1825-1828, PEN AND INK ON PAPER, 15.6 X 21.6 CM, FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF SAN FRANCISCO.

decades, a time when the artist focussed his energies on oil painting, coincided with personal difficulties, including the deaths of his wife and three of his seven children. His work was increasingly occupied with Biblical themes, reflecting the steadfastness of his religious beliefs upon which he had come to rely in the face of these personal sorrows. He was buried in Frankfurt, alongside his right arm which was disinterred for the occasion from a miniature coffin in Leipzig.

Reutern's double portrait would have been executed between 1825 and 1828 when the artist was settled in Willingshausen. The initial 'W' inscribed before each date refers to the village,

and appears on several other drawings from this time. Wilhelm Völcker, on the left and seen at three-quarters, was depicted on 1<sup>st</sup> February and Ludwig Dörr, drawn from the back, was portrayed a couple of days before on 30<sup>th</sup> January. His left shoulder obscures Völcker's right, further confirming the notion that he was drawn first. Left-handed, Reutern likely felt more comfortable working from left to right. Reutern probably always envisaged this as a double portrait, leaving enough room on the left-hand side to balance the composition with the addition of Völcker. Whatever the case, with Völcker looking out sideways and Dörr seen from an unusual and striking angle, the image has a very different feel to Reutern's



FIG. 4, GERHARD WILHELM VON REUTERN, PORTRAIT OF LUDWIG DÖRR, c.1825-1828, PEN AND INK ON PAPER, 20.7 X 13.5 CM, WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN.

other known double portrait from the period, that of Anne Lies Stamm and Anne Kathring, even though this was also completed over two separate sittings (fig. 3).

The two young men, probably aged around twenty, were *Platzburschen*, as Reutern's inscription helpfully tells us. *Platzburschen* were youths chosen by other young men in the village to lead the village dance. They wore ribbons and flowers, and their duties included arranging the order of dancing and keeping the accounts. Reutern often included inscriptions explaining the profession and roles of the villagers, and we therefore have portraits of the coachman, the night-watchman and a farmer, among others. The artist also on occasion inscribed a humorous nickname. Völcker, with his striking good looks, is called 'Don Juan', for example, after the fictional libertine who devoted most of his life to seduction. In a second portrait of Dörr, from the 29<sup>th</sup> January, the young *Platzburschen* wears a fur-trimmed cap and looks out seriously; here Reutern has named him 'Der Philosoph' (fig. 4). His luscious locks tumble out from under the edge of the cap. Clearly Reutern felt they merited their own separate portrait, resulting in the present work.

Reutern's skill as a draughtsman is evident throughout, with the artist using the pen more sparingly for the men's jackets, building up the detail in the faces and hair, leading the viewer's eye immediately to these focal points. This is typical of all his pen and ink portraits, a media which leaves little room for error. As a group, these village portraits are immensely important, giving a rare insight into the lives and images of the working population of a small German settlement at the start of the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

1. S. Maison, op. cit. p. 5.
2. *Ibid*, p. 6.
3. *Ibid*, p. 7.



# FRANCESCO SCARAMUZZA

(Sissa 1803 – Parma 1886)

Self-portrait of the artist painting himself

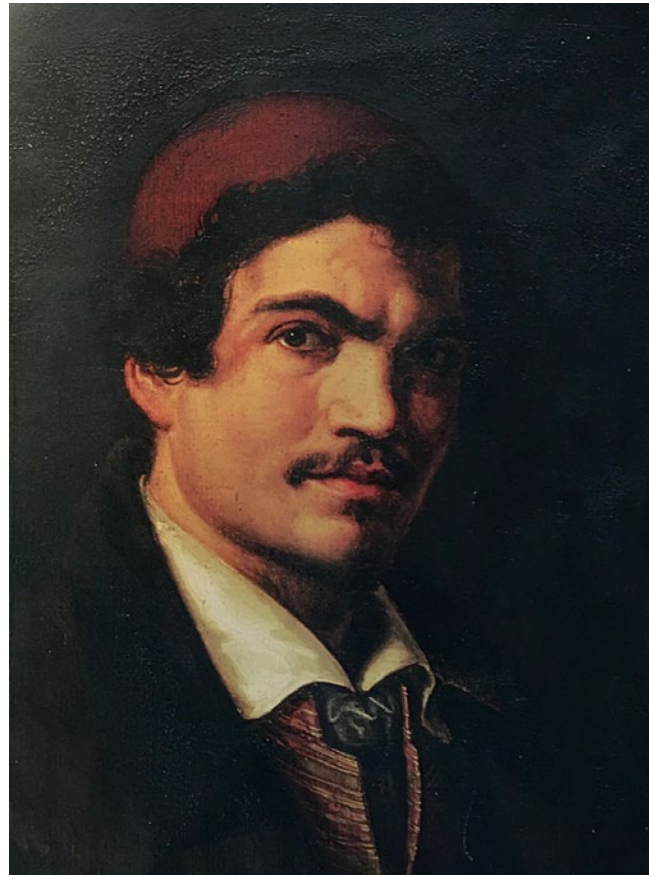
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*Inscribed on the reverse: F. Scaramuzza / dipinse se stesse / nel 1845 / in memoria ed affetto all'amore /  
...suo Zio VINCZO / PRINI, che politti / che vessazioni esile / ...in Francia... / ...ora di 72 anni*

Oil on canvas, unlined  
25.5 x 19 cm (10 x 7 ½ in.)

Provenance:  
Vicenzo Prini, France, by 1845;  
Private Collection, Paris.





As the now faded and only partly legible inscription on the reverse helpfully tells us, this lively little self-portrait was painted by Francesco Scaramuzza in 1845 and was sent by him to Vincenzo Prini, his 72 year uncle who had been exiled to France for unknown political reasons. This trans-Alpine journey no doubt explains in part the portrait's diminutive size. Wearing the type of tasselled-cap favoured by artists, Scaramuzza animatedly looks out at the viewer, his uncle, with a raised eyebrow and a smile forming on his lips, sharing a moment of levity with Vincenzo, despite the distance which separated them. Or perhaps the reality is more prosaic, and this is merely the result of Scaramuzza scrutinising his own features in the mirror, as he puts his likeness onto the canvas.

Painted when the artist was forty-two, this self-portrait fits in with two earlier bust-length iterations, dating from 1821 and 1828 (figs. 1 and 2), when Scaramuzza was eighteen and twenty-five respectively. We can therefore track his development from late teenager to middle age. In the intervening period, Scaramuzza gains a beard and cuts his bouffant hair, though is otherwise quite unchanged physically, and furthermore retains the sense of dynamic energy and youthfulness inherent in the early two works coupled with perhaps an even greater *joie de vivre*. An element of self-deprecation is also detectable, a trait which is very clear in a pen and ink self-portrait of 1837 (fig. 3), where the artist has inscribed under his melancholy image 'ho moglie, ho tre figli e non ho un soldo!!!' (I have a wife, I have three children and I don't have a penny!!!).

FIG. 1, FRANCESCO SCARAMUZZA, SELF-PORTRAIT, OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 33 CM, PERIZZI COLLECTION, PARMA.

FIG. 2, FRANCESCO SCARAMUZZA, SELF-PORTRAIT, OIL ON CANVAS, 47 X 39 CM, PERIZZI COLLECTION, PARMA.

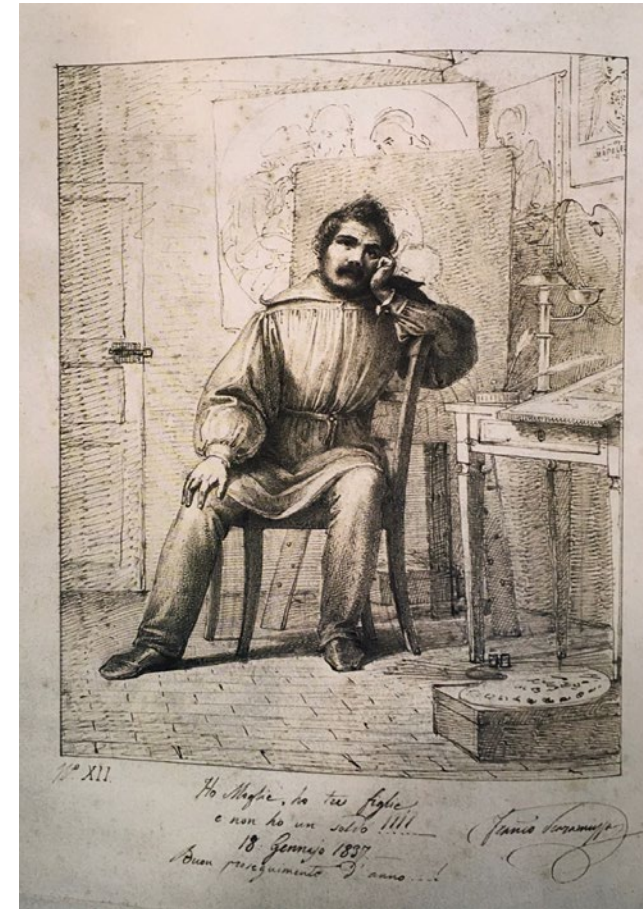


FIG. 3, FRANCESCO SCARAMUZZA, SELF-PORTRAIT, PEN AND INK ON PAPER, 54 X 42 CM, MUSEO GLAUCO LOMBARDO, PARMA.

By the time of our portrait, Scaramuzza was a well-established and much-favoured painter. Born in Sissa, he had graduated from the Academia of Parma in 1826, subsequent to which he spent three years on a scholarship in Rome. Returning to Parma, he gained the patronage of Napoleon's second wife, the Duchess Marie Louise, for whom he painted several altarpieces, and received commissions for numerous frescoes too. Scaramuzza's lifelong obsession and dedication to Dante found its spark in 1836, when the artist displayed to the public the now-lost *Death of Ugolino*. The acclamation it received encouraged Scaramuzza to focus his efforts almost exclusively on the Tuscan poet from then onwards, frescoing the Biblioteca

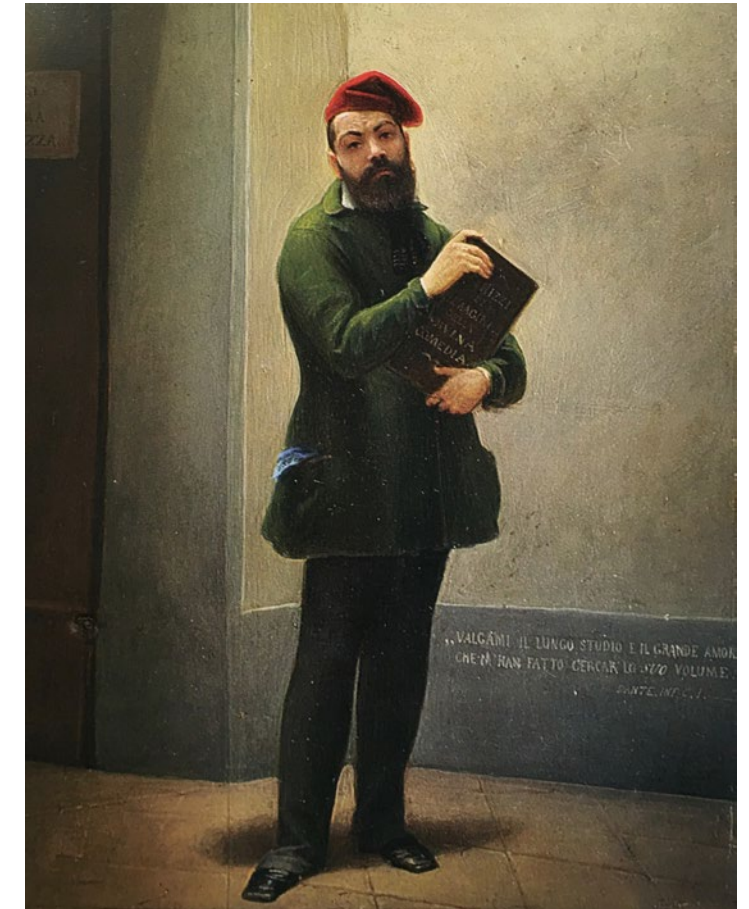


FIG. 4, FRANCESCO SCARAMUZZA, SELF-PORTRAIT, OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 32 CM, GIANFRANCESCO AIMI COLLECTION, PARMA.

Palatina with Dante scenes between 1840 and 1857. His most important project, and the one with which his name is most associated, was the illustration of a new edition of the *Divine Comedy*. Finally completing his task in 1876 after many years of toil and self-doubt, the result was 243 large pen drawings which many of his Italian contemporaries considered to be equal to the Dante illustrations of his great French rival, Gustave Doré, finished in 1868. Scaramuzza's own self-identification with this monumental project is clear in a self-portrait of approximately the same date as ours, where, standing at the entrance to his studio, the artist holds an album on whose cover is inscribed '*Immagini della Divina Commedia*'.

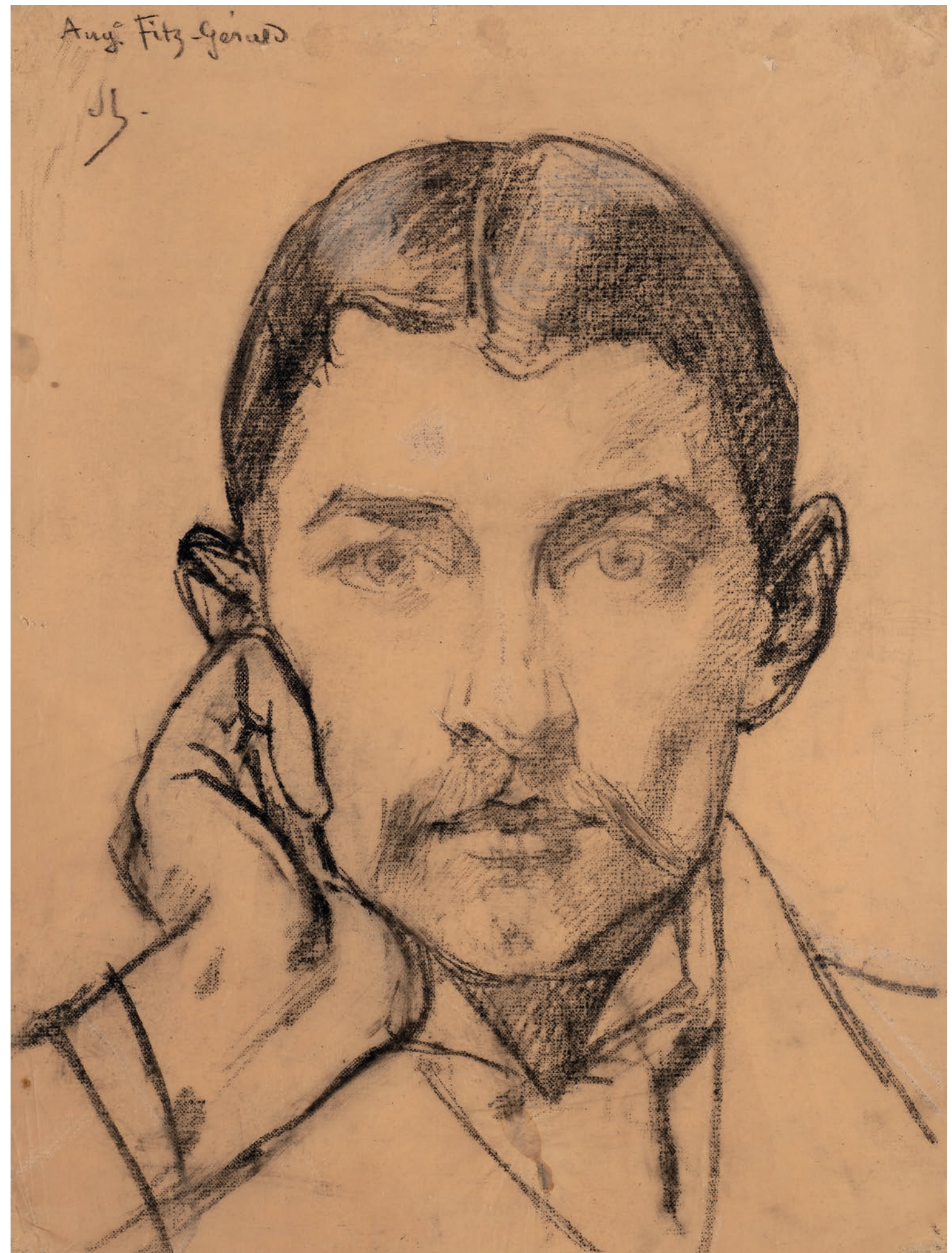




# JULES-JOSEPH LEFEBVRE

(Tournan-en-Brie 1834 – Paris 1912)

Portrait of Monsieur Fitzgerald



---

Titled and monogrammed upper left: *Aug. Fitz-Gerald / JL.*

Black and white chalk on tracing paper, in 19th-century walnut frame  
34.4 x 25.7 cm. (13 ½ x 10 ¼ in.)



FIG. 1, JULES LEFEBVRE, *Portrait of M. Fitzgerald*, oil on canvas, 143 x 104 cm, Musée d'Orsay, on depot with the Musée de Cambrai.

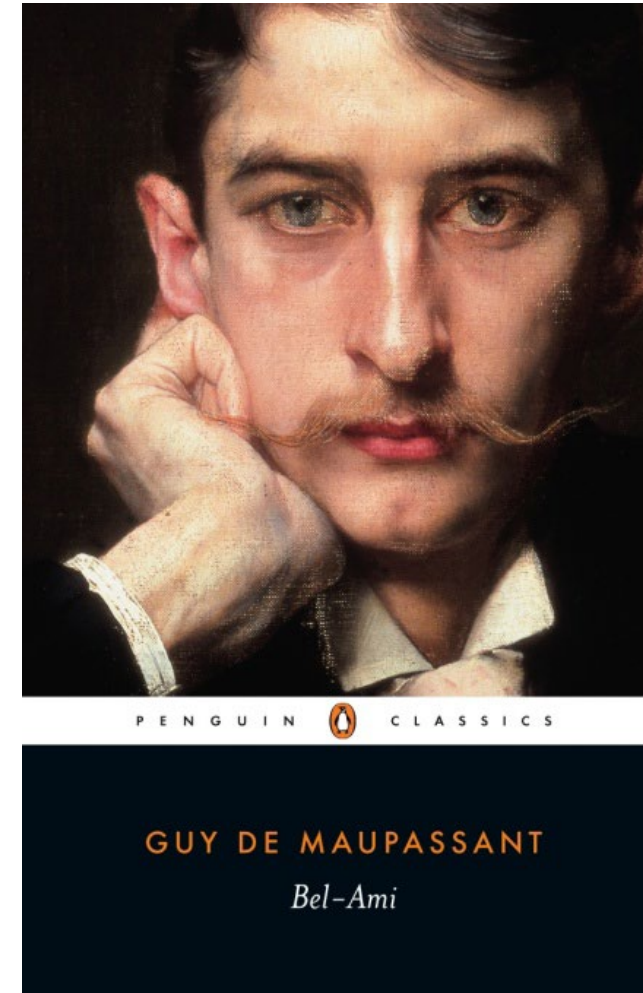


FIG. 2, COVER OF PENGUIN CLASSIC'S *BEL-AMI*.

With his hand resting under his chin and his insouciant air, Monsieur Fitzgerald epitomises the fin-de-siècle dandy, straight out of the pages of Marcel Proust. So much so that a close-up of his face from his 1889 portrait in the Musée du Cambrai (fig. 1), for which Jules Lefebvre's drawing is a preparatory study, was used by Penguin Classics for their cover of *Bel-Ami* (fig. 2), one of the Belle Époque's quintessential novels. Guy de Maupassant's masterpiece chronicles the scandalous tale of an attractive and opportunistic young journalist, who learns to become an arch-seducer and blackmailer in his corrupt rise through society.

Unfortunately, little is known of M. Fitzgerald's biography, so we cannot say if his personality, or only his image, is a good match for Maupassant's amoral protagonist. Whatever the case, M. Fitzgerald, with his parted hair, thin moustache and loose neck-tie, is completely au fait with the fin-de-siècle fashions of the upper-middle classes. His direct and seductive image transports us back to the bars of Montparnasse and the café culture of Paris of the 1890s.

The finished portrait is no doubt one of Lefebvre's most successful and most evocative, and this preparatory study is a useful aid in understanding how the artist went about constructing the painting, first building up the likeness on paper with forceful lines and powerful contours, before tracing it on to the canvas. This seems to have been a standard working method for Lefebvre, with several preparatory studies on tracing paper for other works being known.

Lefebvre entered the Ecole de Beaux-Arts in 1852, studying under Léon Cogniet, before winning the Prix de Rome in 1861 and later teaching at the Académie Julian, all of which were typical milestones for the leading Academic painters of this period. Though Lefebvre's oeuvre is quite diverse, he gained greatest fame for his depictions of the female form, as well as for his portraits, exhibiting 72 of these at the salon between 1855 and 1898.



# AIMÉ MOROT

(Nancy 1850 – Dinard 1913)

Portrait of an Indian Boy



Signed lower right: *Aimé Morot*

Oil on canvas  
31 x 25 cm. (12 ¼ x 9 ¾ in.)



FIG. 1, AIMÉ MOROT, *HEAD STUDY OF A NORTH AFRICAN*, OIL ON CANVAS, 36 X 29 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

This direct and striking oil sketch of a young boy was painted by Aimé Morot in India in 1893. Not connected to any known work, it therefore appears to be an autonomous study, painted for no other reason than the pleasure in swiftly capturing the appealing likeness of a young boy with a vibrant pink turban. In this respect, and in the way that Morot skilfully creates the volumes with a few deft brushstrokes, it compares well, for example, with a heady study painted in North Africa a few years previously (fig. 1). In both, the juxtaposition of finished areas with more spontaneous passages paradoxically gives the sitters a greater vivacity than would be the case in a more polished image.

Morot's dual interests in travel and hunting took him across much of French Africa and the Near East. His voyage to India was catalysed by tiger hunting, and indeed he did not appear to do much painting whilst on the Subcontinent, since there are very few works connected with this trip. A sketch of two tigers fighting (fig. 2), painted on a similar canvas to the young boy, is, as it stands, the only other known work from this period.

Born in Nancy to a Republican family, Morot had moved to Paris by the late 1860s to study under Alexandre Cabanel at the *École des Beaux-Arts* but left after a few weeks, preferring to learn independently. Incredibly, and testifying to his rare talents, Morot was awarded the *Prix de Rome* in 1873 at his first attempt and won a gold medal at the *Salon* of 1879. He married the daughter of Jean-Léon Gérôme and was evidently close to his illustrious father-in-law, sometimes collaborating with him on a single canvas. Though now less well-known than his contemporary William-Adolphe Bouguereau, with whom he taught at the *Académie Julien* in the 1880s, in his own day Morot was every bit as respected, winding down his career with a professorship at the *École de Beaux-Arts* and a gold medal at the *Exposition Universelle* of 1900.



FIG. 2, AIMÉ MOROT, *TIGERS FIGHTING*, OIL ON CANVAS, 45 X 60 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.



Colonia  
de España

# LEOPOLD CARL MÜLLER

(Dresden 1834 – Vienna 1892)

Portrait of a man wearing a burnous and turban

---

Oil on canvas, unlined  
68.8 x 50.5 cm. (27 x 19 ¾ in.)



We are grateful to Charles Greig for confirming the attribution to Müller, after first-hand inspection.

This striking portrait study can be dated confidently to 1882, the year of one of Leopold Carl Müller's visits to England, or very shortly thereafter, thanks to the Brodie & Middleton stamp on the reverse of the canvas, whose typeface corresponds to canvasses produced by the Covent Garden-based firm between 1880 and 1883.<sup>1</sup>

Müller was greatly acclaimed in Britain, often sending works for exhibition there following the advice Edward Prince of Wales and the art dealer Henry Wallis, both of whom he had met in Cairo. Wallis was responsible for the sale of a large number of Müller's paintings to English collectors, leading the artist to first visit London in 1875, and then several times thereafter. Müller therefore likely executed this painting on his 1882 visit, and indeed to judge from his features, the sitter appears to be Northern European. Yet he wears a burnous, a long hooded cloak of coarse woollen fabric traditionally worn by Berbers, and a turban. The sitter is possibly therefore a European who had some sort of link to North Africa through study or travel. However, if painted in England, more likely perhaps is that the sitter has been dressed by Müller and that the picture is therefore more of an artistic exercise, which would reconcile the unfinished nature of the painting, along with the lack of signature (uncommon but not unknown in Müller's oeuvre). Of course, it is not impossible that the picture was painted in Egypt, with Müller taking the canvas with his artistic supplies. Alexandria, the gateway to the Nile, was a melting-pot of peoples from all over the Mediterranean, including many from the Balkans, much of which was still nominally under Ottoman control around 1880, like Egypt itself.

The deft handling, sketchy nature and format all accord well with Müller's work, as does the outstanding technical quality of the painting, in keeping with what one would expect of one of the finest Orientalist painters of his generation. Typical of



FIG. 1, LEOPOLD CARL MÜLLER, *A MODERN DAY SPHINX*, OIL ON CANVAS, 66.5 X 40 CM, BELVEDERE MUSEUM, VIENNA.

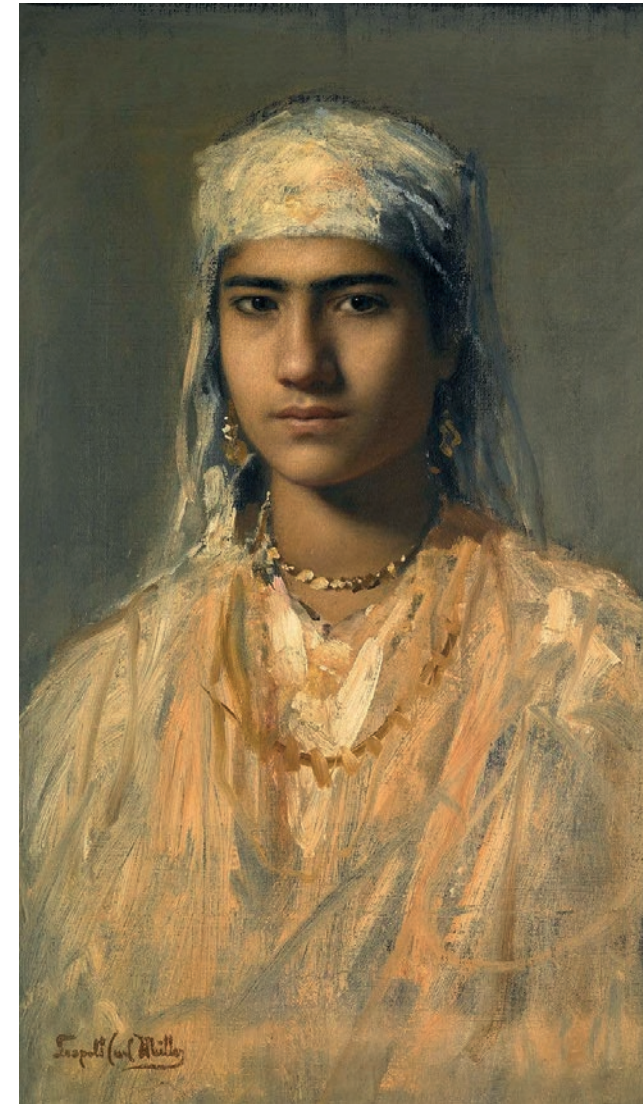


FIG. 2, LEOPOLD CARL MÜLLER, *AN EGYPTIAN GIRL*, OIL ON CANVAS, 47 X 28 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Müller, as we see here, is a more worked up face, combined with rapidly executed, though no less masterfully painted, garments, whose volumes are formed by a few bold outlines (figs. 1 and 2).

Müller was born in Dresden to Austrian parents, beginning his artistic training under Karl von Blaas. A government stipend enabled the young painter to visit the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris, where he was greatly impacted by the paintings of Eugène Fromentin. In the winter of 1873 Müller embarked on the first of nine extended tours of Egypt, immersing himself deeply in the local culture, and painting both scenes of everyday life and individual portraits. In 1877 Müller took a professorial post at the Vienna Academy, teaching many prominent Orientalist artists of the next generation, including Ludwig Deutsch, Paul Joanowitch and Charles Wilda. Müller was from an incredibly gifted artistic family: two sisters, Marie and Berta, were accomplished and well-known portrait painters, and a third sister Josephine married the painter Eduard Swoboda. Their children Josephine and Rudolf were both gifted artists, with Rudolf studying under his uncle Müller and accompanying him to Egypt in 1879, before travelling to India in 1886 under the patronage of Queen Victoria.

1. See the National Portrait Gallery's online resource listing London-based artistic suppliers between 1830 and 1930: [https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/files/pdf/research/D.marks2\\_A\\_D.pdf](https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/files/pdf/research/D.marks2_A_D.pdf)





# JOSIAH MARTIN

(London 1843 – Auckland 1916)

Susan, Rotaura

---

Inscribed on the negative: *Susan, Rotura / JM 175*  
Albumen print  
20.4 x 15.3 cm. (8 1/2 x 6 in.)





FIG. 1, GOTTFRIED LINDHAUER, *Portrait of Pare Watane*, oil on canvas, 103 x 86 cm, Auckland Museum of Art.

Dating to the 1890s, Josiah Martin's portrait depicts a young Maori woman named Susan from Rotarura, an area in the centre of New Zealand's North Island initially settled by the Maori in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In a tasselled cloak and with a feather in her long hair, Susan wears a large tiki around her neck and holds a carved flat greenstone club, all of which are typical accoutrements in Maori culture. A moko, or tattoo, has been inked into the negative. The photo is in many ways reminiscent of Gottfried Lindauer's 1878 portrait of Pare Watane, today in the Auckland Art Gallery (fig. 1).

Susan, whose Maori name was Tuihana, was listed as a guide in the April 1910 Register of *Native Guides in Government Reserves at Whakarewarewa, Rotura*. Soon after the first missionaries and traders arrived in Rotorua, local Maori began to turn the inquisitiveness of the visitors to their advantage by showing them the geothermal environment. Under government control from 1894, the tourist industry became more developed from then onwards, and guiding became a formalised profession for local Maori women, though remained a seasonal activity, with brisker business in the summer months.

Born in London, Martin worked initially in insurance and then the coal mining industry, before immigrating to New Zealand with his wife and daughter in 1867. Martin settled his family in Auckland where he founded a private academy in 1874, finding his first vocation as a gifted and innovative teacher. Failing health compelled him to resign his headmastership to focus on photography, in which field he quickly gained an international reputation for ethnological and topographic images from New Zealand and Polynesia. His photographs are very important records of late 19<sup>th</sup>-century New Zealand and can be found today in leading international institutions.

Susan appears in a second photograph by Martin, clearly taken at the same time. She appears with another guide, whose name is inscribed on the negative as 'Ngapuia'.



FIG. 2, JOSIAH MARTIN, *Portrait of Ngapiu and Susan*, albumen print, 20.4 x 15.3 cm, private collection



## WILLIAM LAPARRA

(Bordeaux 1873 – 1920 Valle de Hecho)

Head of a woman wearing a multi-coloured turban and purple head-scarf

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Signed lower left: *William Laparra*  
Oil on canvas, in a Spanish style frame  
47 x 39 cm (18 ½ x 15 ½ in.)

Exhibition:  
Probably Bordeaux, 1922, *Rétrospective William Laparra*, no. 16 (Tête à turban avec voile violet)



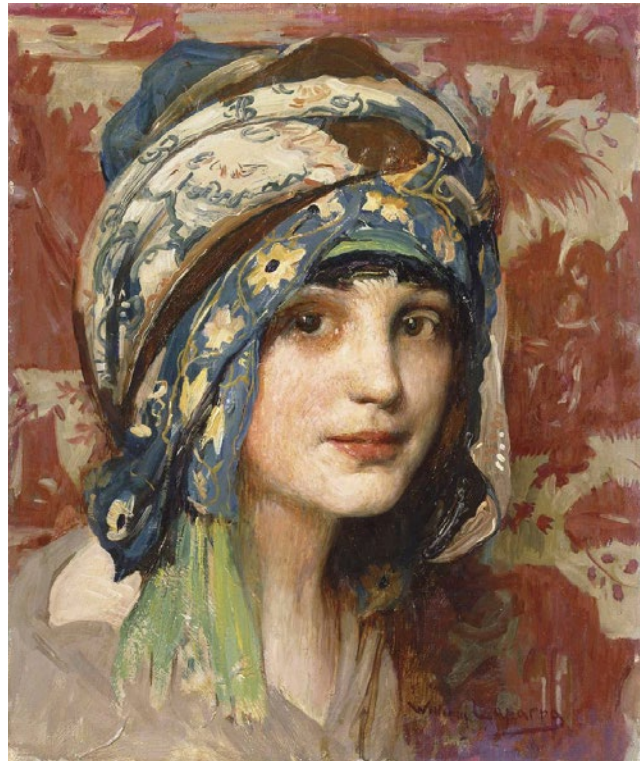


FIG. 1, WILLIAM LAPARRA, *YOUNG GIRL WITH TURBAN*, OIL ON CANVAS, 29 X 24 CM, MUSÉE D'ORSAY.

Imbued with a sense of stillness and mystery typical of William Laparra, the present work fits into a small group of paintings depicting bust-length female figures wearing colourful turbans set against Art Nouveau wallpaper backgrounds. Characterised by a vibrant tonality and beautiful passages of fresh, impasto brushwork, the painting counts amongst the finest of this group, comparable in its impact to the example on panel in the Musée d'Orsay (fig. 1) or the beautiful head that was reproduced in 1926 in the weekly paper *L'illustration* (fig. 2). The present painting is an outlier amongst this group, however, in that it depicts a young woman, as opposed to the adolescents of the other works.

These turban-wearing females were clearly much appreciated by Laparra's contemporaries. Indeed, in the catalogue for an exhibition in Pau in 1915, the museum's curator Paul Lafond wrote 'how charming is the young woman in a strange turban, in which one finds the young master's rare and exquisite qualities of drawing and colour, which make the painting a quite precious work!' They may be partly inspired by a trip Laparra made to Egypt



FIG. 2, WILLIAM LAPARRA, *YOUNG GIRL WITH TURBAN*, OIL ON CANVAS, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

in 1898, though more likely the source is French early 19th-century female portraiture, replete with woman wearing turbans, which were very much en vogue at the time thanks to an increasing interest in the East (fig. 3). The 1910s, the decade in which the present work was likely painted, also saw the return of turbans in female fashion. Paul Poiret, a leading designer of the time, known as the 'Sultan de la mode', included the turban in his revival of 'oriental' styles, declaring 'I admire unwaveringly the diversity of their so logical and elegant forms' (fig. 4).<sup>2</sup>

Laparra painted these 'logical and elegant' forms in a virtuoso manner, using a vivid palette and thick impasto brushstrokes that have much in common with the Spanish painter Ignacio Zuloaga, an almost exact contemporary (fig. 5). Laparra got to know Zuloaga well, and though the Frenchman maintained his own highly distinctive style, he absorbed much of the Spaniard's technical approach. Of Spanish heritage on his father's side, Laparra was proud of his Iberian roots, visiting the country many times from 1897 onwards and admiring its arts.

Born in Bordeaux, Laparra moved to Paris in 1892 to study at the Académie Julian, under the tutelage of the prominent painters William Bougeureau, Tony-Robert Fleury and Jules Léfèvre. In the same year, aged twenty-two, he won the Prix de Rome, thereby setting himself up for a successful career (his brother, Raoul Laparra, won the Prix de Rome for musical composition in 1903). Laparra travelled widely in Europe, though settled in Paris and became a teacher at the Académie Julian in 1914, dying at the age of forty-seven in northern Spain, and leaving behind a diverse and individual body of work.

1. William Laparra 1873-1920, exhibition catalogue, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Bordeaux, 1997, p. 67, 'Combien charmante la Jeune femme au turban si curieusement coiffé, dans laquelle se retrouvent les rares et exquis qualités de dessin et de couleur du jeune maître, qui font de la toile une oeuvre tout à fait précieuse'.
2. P. Poiret, *King of fashion: the autobiography of Paul Poiret*, London 1931, p. 95.



FIG. 3, ANN-LOUIS GIRODET, *WOMAN IN A TURBAN*, OIL ON CANVAS, 41 X 35 CM, HERMITAGE MUSEUM.

FIG. 4, UNDATED PHOTOGRAPH OF DORIS KENYON IN A PAUL POIRET DESIGNED TURBAN.

FIG. 5, IGNACIO ZULOAGA, *CANDIDA WEARING AN ORIENTAL SHAWL*, OIL ON CANVAS, 72 X 51 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.





# PIET VAN DER HEM

(Wirdum 1885 – Den Haag 1961)

Odette

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Signed lower right: *PVANDERHEM.*  
Titled upper right: *ODETTE*

Pastel on paper  
60.5 x 45 cm. (23 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.)

Provenance:  
Kunsthandel H. Bos, Den Haag, before 1935.







FIG. 1, PIET VAN DER HEM, *MOULIN ROUGE*, OIL ON CANVAS, 81 X 100 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

The undeniably alluring Odette, with her jet-black, wavy bob-cut and pastel pink lipstick, stares confidently out at the viewer. Though we cannot as yet be definitive of her identity, Odette was very likely drawn around 1915, in the years when Piet van der Hem was at his most original and forceful.

Piet van der Hem was born in 1885, the son of a merchant. Orphaned at the age of 12, he was taken in by his uncle and aunt. Encouraged by a secondary school teacher to become an artist, Hem went to Amsterdam in 1902 to study at the Rijksschool and Rijksakademie. His talents won him a Royal Grant in 1907, enabling him to study for a year in Paris, where, enraptured by Montmartre, and the art of Toulouse-Lautrec, he made a large number of paintings and drawings of Parisian nightlife (fig. 1).

With the advent of World War I and the political maelstrom that engulfed Europe, Hem transformed himself into an

editorial cartoonist of biting social commentary, with his work regularly appearing in *The New Amsterdammer*. At the same time, he realised several striking bust-length pastel portraits of prominent female cultural figures from the time, including the actress Enny Vrede (fig. 2, 1915) and the dancer Mata Hari (fig. 3, 1914), who was famously executed as a German spy in 1917. *Odette* clearly forms part of this highly-individual and memorable series of avant-garde femme-fatales, all of very similar dimensions, which must count amongst the most impactful and forward-thinking portraits executed in Holland at this time.

*Odette* is possibly a portrait of the Frenchwoman Odette Myrtil (1898-1978), who began her career on the vaudeville stage in Paris at the age of 14, before expanding into acting and singing. Her first major success came in London in 1916, when she appeared in the West End show *The Bing Boys Are Here*. A photograph taken of her in that year shows striking similarities

to van der Hem's portrait (fig. 4). Indeed, between 1916 and 1923, when Myrtil moved to New York, she appeared regularly on the London stage and appeared in several other vaudeville productions in major European cities, so there would likely have been opportunity for her to visit Amsterdam.

As for van der Hem, he continued with his political cartoons until the 1930s, until the Nazi occupation of Holland stifled the Dutch free press. At this point, the artist turned to respectable society portraits, which he would continue with for the rest of his career. He also appeared three times at the Olympics (1924, 1932 and 1936), when painting was accepted as an Olympic discipline.



FIG. 2, PIET VAN DER HEM, *ENNY VREDE*, 1915, PASTEL ON PAPER, 62 X 48 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIG. 3, PIET VAN DER HEM, *MATA HARI*, 1914, PASTEL ON PAPER, 64 X 47 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIG. 4, BASSANO LTD, *ODETTE MYRTEL*, 1916, GLASS NEGATIVE, 62 X 48 CM, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



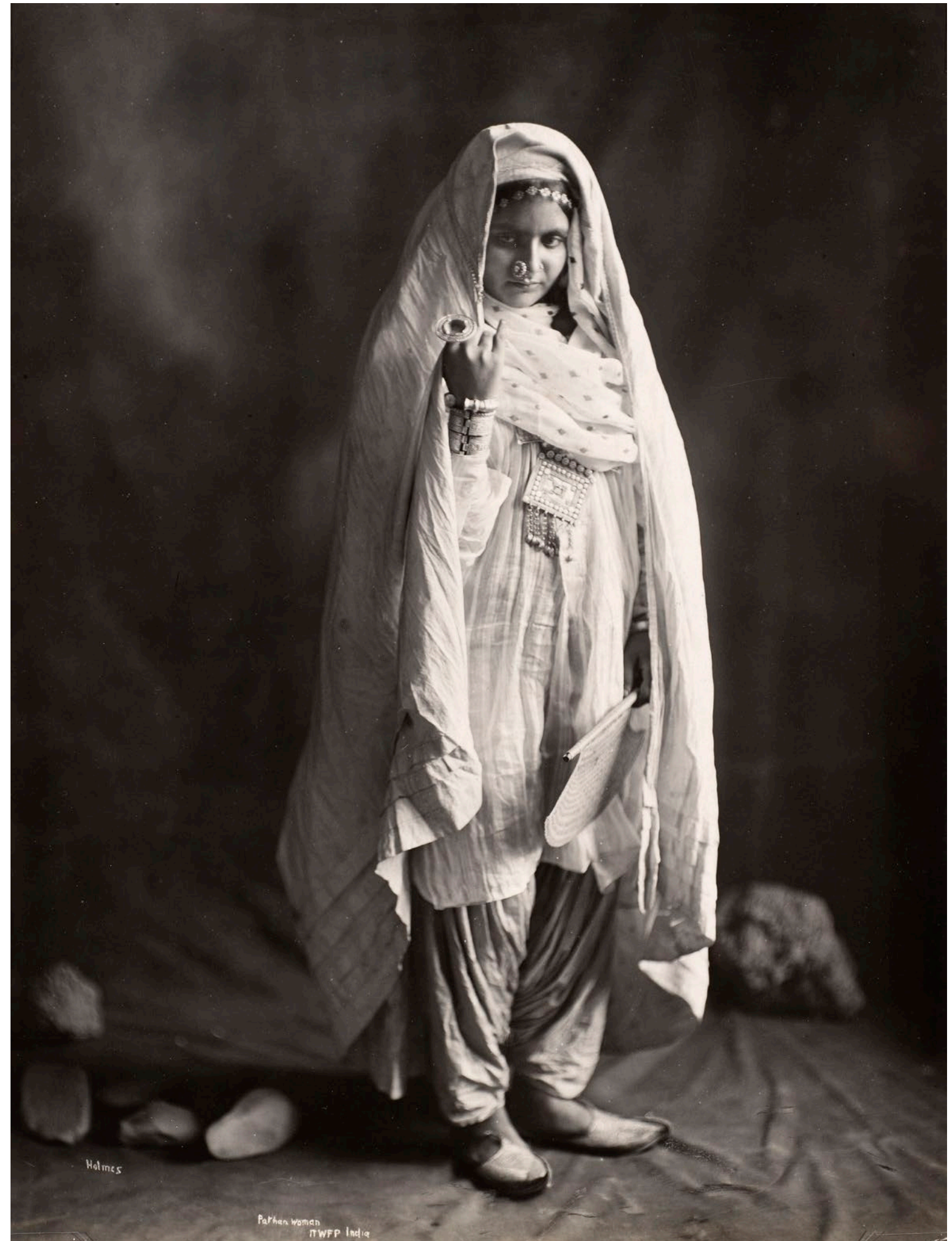
# RANDOLPH BEZZANT HOLMES

(Peshawar 1888 – New Zealand 1973)

Pathan woman

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Signed in the negative: *Holmes / 124*  
Inscribed: *Pathan Woman / NWFP India*  
Silver gelatin print  
28.8 x 22.4 cm. (11 ½ x 8 ¾ in.)





As Randolph Bezzant Holmes' inscription in the negative tells us, the sitter is a Pathan woman and the photo was taken in Peshawar, the capital of British India's North West Frontier Province, today in Pakistan. Pathans, also known as Pashtuns, are an Iranian ethnic group, native to the lands comprising today's southern Afghanistan and north-western Pakistan, mountainous and generally inhospitable territories occasionally referred to as Pashtunistan. Pashtun culture is most famous for *Pashtunwali*, which refers to an ancient and self-governing tribal system which regulates nearly all aspects of Pashtun life. Two of the better known tenets are *Melmastyā*, the idea of hospitality and asylum to all guests seeking help, and *Badāl*, swift revenge.

Taken around 1915, Holmes stands the sitter against a curtain in his Peshawar studio, placing a few rocks on the ground to

mimic the mountain landscape. The lady, who looks directly at the camera, wears traditional Pashtun garments: a *chador* over her head, a *firaq*, or upper garment which flows like a skirt, reaching to just below the knees; and finally a *partug*, which is the lower, baggy garment.

Holmes learned the art of photography from his father William Dacia Holmes, who opened the Holmes Studio in Peshawar in 1889. Holmes took the business over in 1923, and by the time he left for New Zealand in 1947 at the moment of Partition, he had been living in the North West Frontier Province for over fifty years. His photographic images are important historical records of the people and places of Northern India and Central Asia.

# CATHERINE CARRINGTON (NÉE ALEXANDER)

(1904–2004)

Portrait of David John

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Signed and dated lower right: *Alexander 1923*

Pencil on paper

31 x 22.5 cm. (12 ¼ x 8 ¾ in.)

Provenance:

Colin Clark, London, until 2020.

Exhibited:

London, New Grafton Gallery, English Drawing 1900-1940, 16<sup>th</sup> January – 6<sup>th</sup> February 1975.



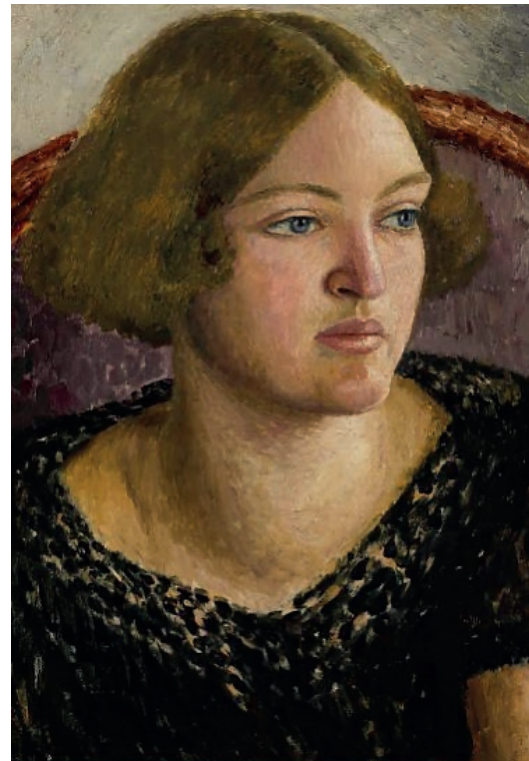


FIG. 1, RALPH PARTRIDGE AND CATHERINE CARRINGTON AT HAM SPRAY HOUSE, EARLY 1930S.

FIG. 2, DORA CARRINGTON, *PORTRAIT OF CATHERINE CARRINGTON*, OIL ON CANVAS, 40.5 X 30.5 CM, CHATSWORTH HOUSE, DEVONSHIRE COLLECTION.

Last seen publicly in 1975 when exhibited at the New Grafton Gallery, this sensitive portrait of David John is a rare example of the graphic work of Catherine Carrington, wife of Noel Carrington and sister-in-law, and close confidant, of the Bloomsbury group painter Dora Carrington. Catherine was born in 1904 in rural England and educated primarily by her father – a schoolmaster and later craftsman – before winning a place at the Slade School of Art, which Dora herself had attended in 1910. In 1925 she married Noel, a well-known author, editor and publisher, and lived with him in Hampstead for the next twenty years, before moving to Long Acre farm in Berkshire after World War II. They had three children, one of whom was the artist Joanna Carrington.

Through Dora, Catherine and Noel were members of the Bloomsbury Group, a collective of closely-knit artists, writers and intellectuals. Often working and living together in complicated relationships, they embraced a Bohemian lifestyle and railed against bourgeois conventions. Members included Vanessa Bell, Lytton Strachey, Duncan Grant, Virginia Woolf, John Maynard Keynes and, of course, Dora Carrington. Dora and Lytton Strachey, inseparable, set up a home together in 1917 but never married and indulged in numerous affairs over the years, with Dora marrying Ralph Partridge, an Oxford friend of her brother Noel, in 1921. While Ralph fell in love with Dora, Lytton fell in love with Ralph, and the three set up a complex ménage-à-trois relationship from 1924 onwards at Ham Spray House, in Wiltshire. There are numerous photographs of Catherine Carrington at Ham Spray House from the early 1930s (fig. 1), testament to her close relationship with Ralph, Lytton and Dora, who painted her in the mid 1920s (fig. 2). The sisters-in-law often corresponded, and confided, with each other by letter, until Dora's death by suicide in 1932, unable to live without Lytton who had passed away a few months earlier.

The New Grafton Gallery exhibition label on the reverse identifies Carrington's sitter as David John, son of the painter Augustus John, and there is no reason to doubt this. Born

in 1902, David would have been 21 in 1923, which accords with the age of the sitter, and furthermore there are close physiognomic similarities to other known portraits of David around this time (fig. 3). Though not part of the Bloomsbury Group, Augustus John knew many of its members well, including Dora Carrington, who visited John's home at Fryen Court. For the Bloomsbury artists, John was the Bohemian artist par excellence and was therefore a figure of respect and emulation, at least in the Group's earlier days.

David was John's eldest son with his wife Ida Nettleslip, with whom he had a further four boys. In 1903 John met Dorelia MacNeil, who would become his lifelong muse, and a ménage-à-trois was formed with Ida, until her untimely death in 1907. Dorelia went on to have a further two sons and two daughters with John. Growing up in a secluded farmhouse on the edge of the New Forest, with eight siblings, parents who came and went as they pleased, and a whole range of visitors who stayed weeks at a time, it was certainly an unconventional upbringing for David. John could be moody, detached and severe with the boys, all of whom were talented but 'in the shadow of the Great Man, they dwindled!' David, who played the oboe for several major orchestras, eventually gave up music and was appointed a postman, turning in retirement to occasional furniture removals. Two years older than Catherine Carrington, the two would certainly have known each other reasonably well through their respective families.



FIG. 3, HENRY LAMB, *PORTRAIT OF DAVID JOHN*, PENCIL ON PAPER, 32.5 X 23 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

1. M. Holroyd, *Augustus John. Volume 2: The Years of Experience*, London 1975, p. 161.



# KARL PARSONS

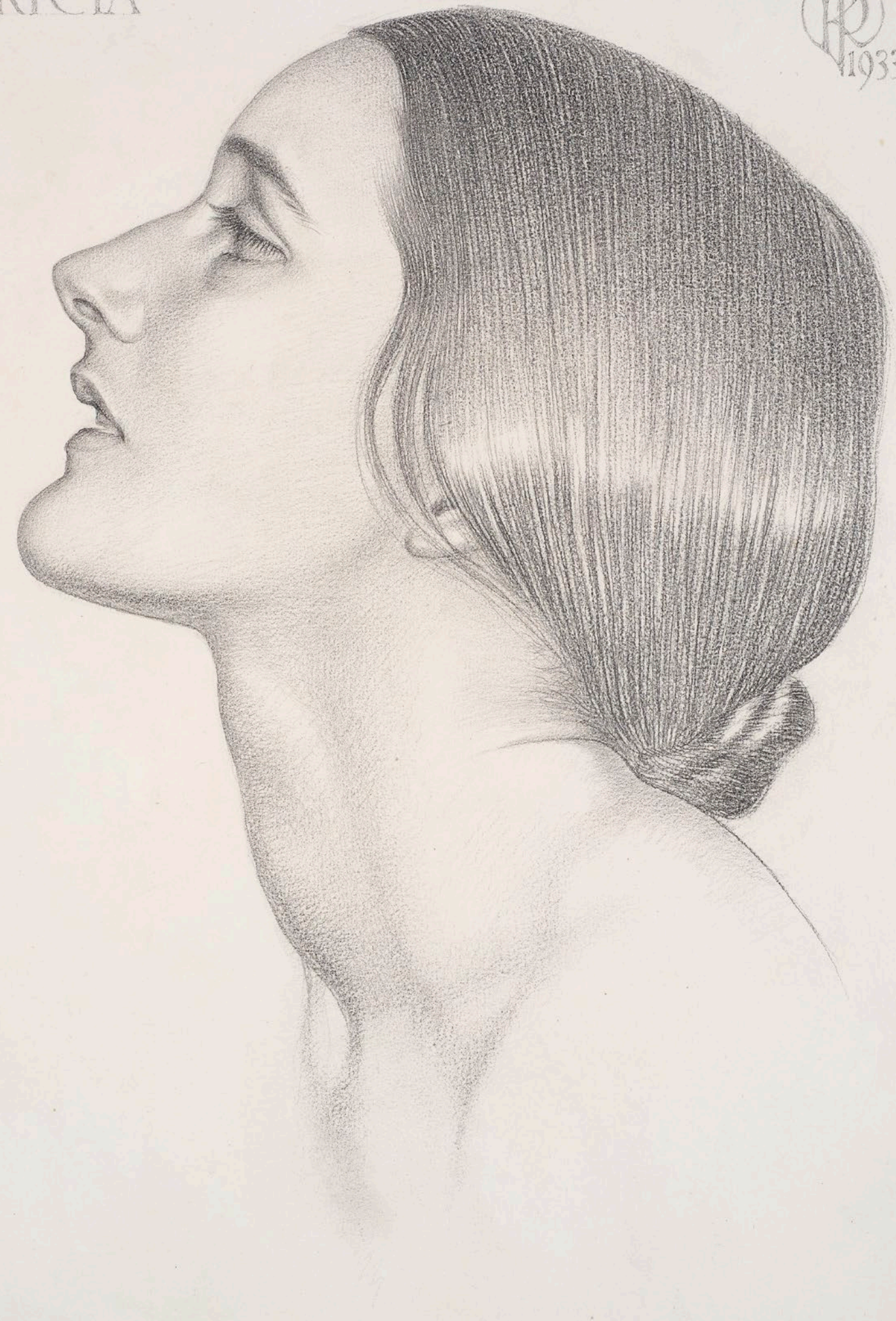
(London 1884–1934)

Patricia

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Monogrammed upper right and dated 1933  
Pencil on paper  
38 x 29.5 cm. (15 x 11 ½ in.)

PATRICIA





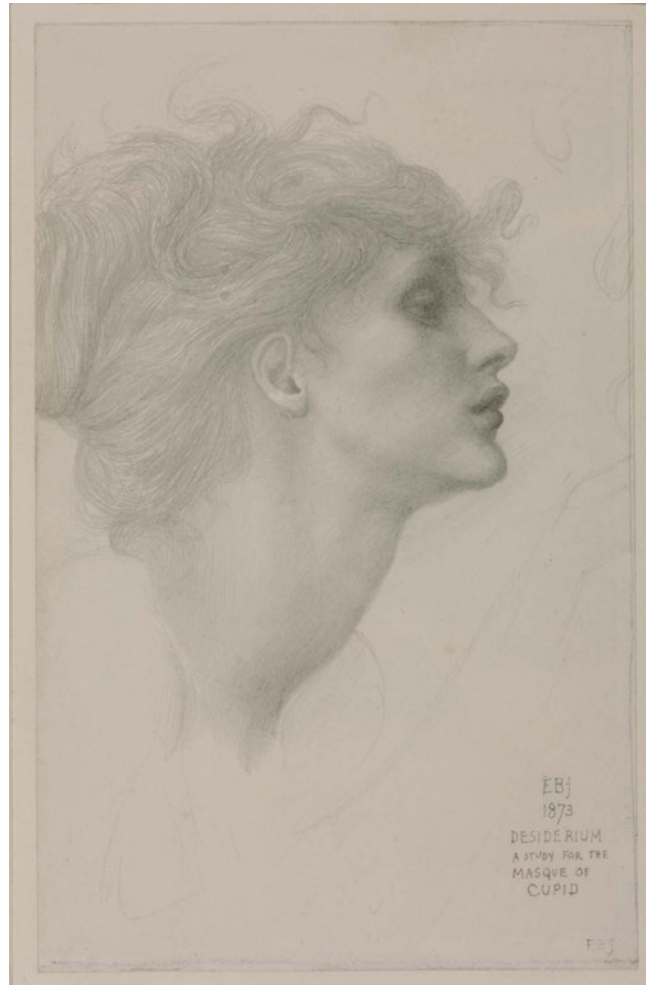


FIG. 1, SIR EDWIN COLEY BURNE-JONES, *DESIDERIUM*, PENCIL ON PAPER, 21 X 13.5 CM, TATE.

FIG. 2, GERALD LESLIE BROCKHURST, *ANAIS*, PENCIL ON PAPER, 32 X 23.5 CM, PHILIP MOULD & COMPANY, LONDON.



One of Britain's leading stained glass designers during the early decades of the 20th century, Karl Parsons 'drew portraits, invariably for pleasure rather than as commissions, throughout his life, and it is in these that one sees most clearly the influence of some of the artists whom he most admired, notably Botticelli, Rossetti and Burne-Jones (fig. 1);'<sup>1</sup> as is indeed evident in this elegant profile drawing entitled *Patricia*.

Though harkening back to these illustrious forebears, both technically and compositionally, Patricia perfectly epitomises the type of portraiture fashionable in British high society during the 1920s and 1930s, typified by artists such as Gerald Leslie Brockhurst. In fact, Karl Parson's technique here, with delicate shading and strong outlines, is close to Brockhurst's graphic style, as a portrait of the latter's wife, Anais, attests (fig. 2). Clearly, as attested by many of his other female portraits (fig. 3), Parsons took delight in demonstrating his skill at depicting the light shimmering across the strands of hair, and sculpting hard volumes through gentle shading.

Karl Parsons career was devoted to stained glass, becoming in 1899 a pupil-apprentice of Christopher Wall, the leading Arts and Crafts's proponent of this medium. Parsons was a gifted student, from the outset collaborating on major commissions,

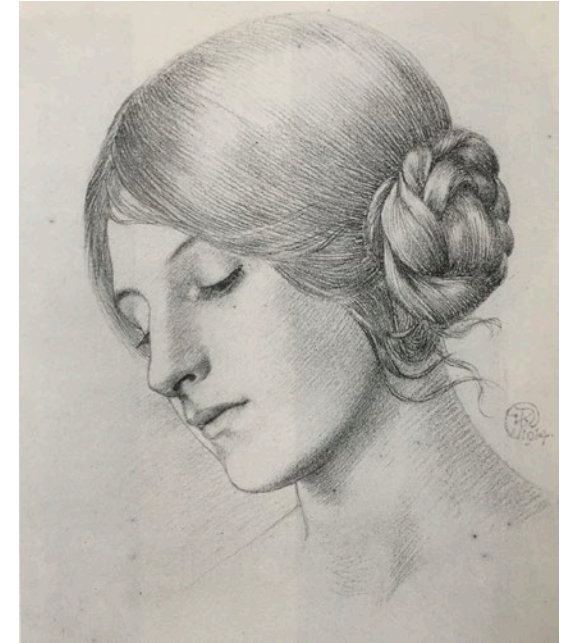
such as that for Gloucester Cathedral. By 1910, Parsons had set up his own studio, and would undertake several more significant commissions, including for the windows of Canterbury, Cape Town and Johannesburg cathedrals.

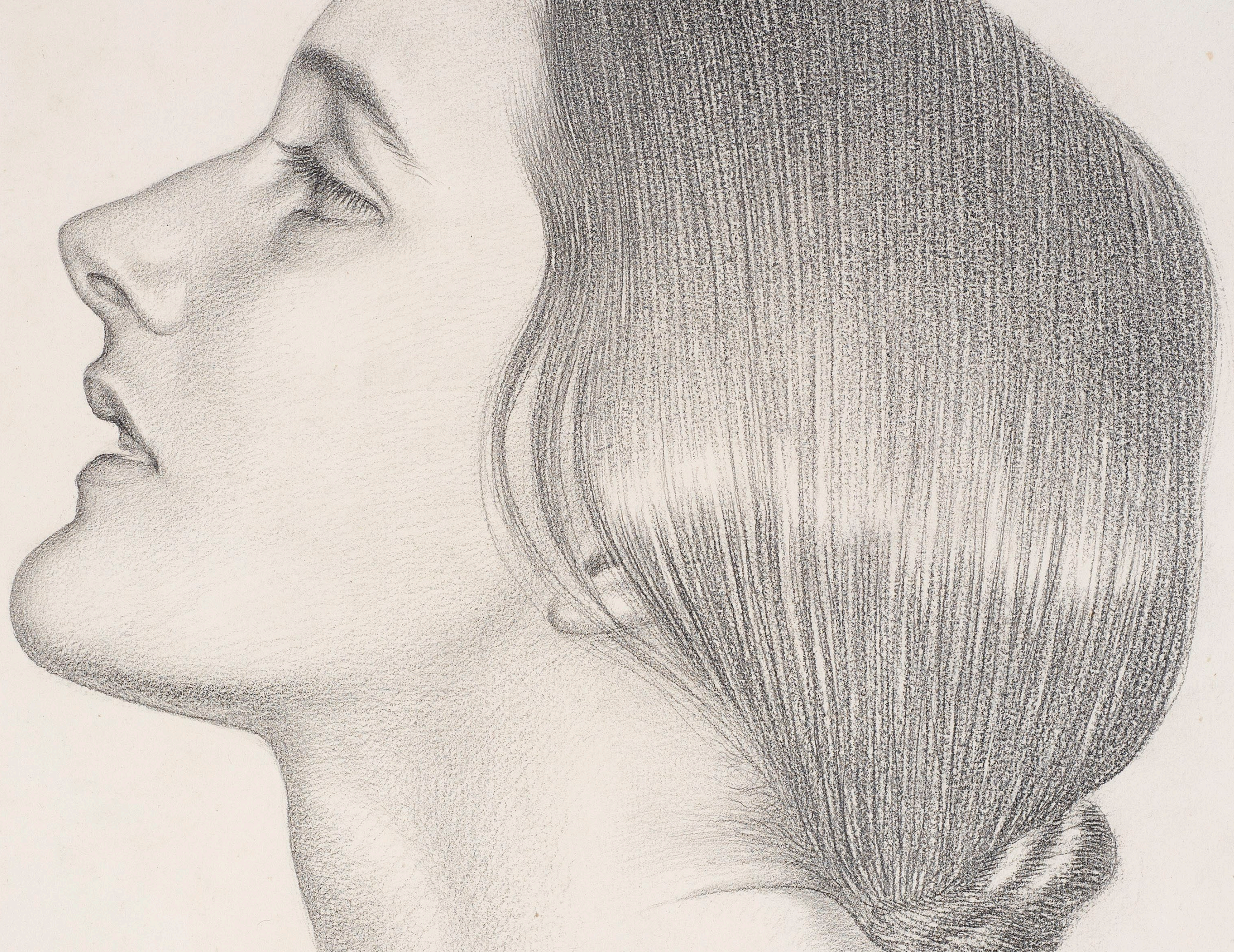
The sitter is very likely to be Patricia Frances, Lady Strauss. A photograph of her from the late 1930s or early 1940s displays striking physiognomic similarities, as well the same hairstyle (fig. 4), with her plat wrapped behind the neck. Born in 1909 to an Irish merchant, Patricia was an author and politician, standing unsuccessfully for the Labour Party in Kensington South at the 1945 General Election. She wrote biographies on Aneurin Bevan and Stafford Cripps and served as a war correspondent with the New York Herald Tribune. Patricia was a significant patron of both the performing and the visual arts. She led a campaign to persuade the government to use half a percent of the cost of all new buildings for works of art and pioneered the first international sculpture exhibition in Battersea Park. Patricia married George Strauss, MP, in 1932, becoming Lady Strauss in 1979.

1. *Karl Parsons, 1884-1934: Stained Glass Artist*, exhibition catalogue, William Morris Gallery, London, 1987, p. 9, cat. no. 8.

FIG. 3, KARL PARSONS, *PORTRAIT OF DINAH BERRY*, PENCIL ON PAPER, 33 X 27 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

FIG. 3, BERT SACHSEL, *PATRICIA FRANCES, LADY STRAUSS*, VINTAGE PRINT, 16.5 X 12.5 CM, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.





# CLÉMENT SERNEELS

(Brussels 1912 – 1991)

Portrait Chief Rwampungu's Wife



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Signed, titled, located and dated: *FEMME DU CHEF / RWAMPUNGU / KIGALI / Clément Serneels / 1939*  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 71 cm (31 ½ x 28 in.)



FIG. 1, CLÉMENT SERNEELS, *TUTSI INTORE DANCER*, OIL ON CANVAS, 80 X 70 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Painted in Kigali in modern-day Rwanda in 1939, Clément Serneels' portrait of the Tutsi chief Rwampungu's wife can be considered an exceptional example of its type on account of its remarkable quality, fine condition and striking beauty.<sup>1</sup> More importantly still, outside of the Tutsi royal family, it is incredibly rare to be able to identify the sitter in a Rwandan portrait of this date and place them within the broader historical context, even if in the present work the sitter's identity is known only through the name of her husband, a prominent Tutsi chief in the province of Kigali. In fact, in only a small handful of European portraits of Central African sitters over the first half of the twentieth century, can we know anything about the biography of those depicted, ensuring that the portrait of Rwampungu's wife is not only a mesmerising image but also a historical document of some significance.

Clément Serneels, born in Brussels in 1910, was the son of a Belgian architect. He first visited the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi in 1936-1937, though there was initial resistance from the Belgian minister of the Colonies due to the expensive nature of such travels. However, he was eventually granted the necessary finances thanks to the support of Alfred Bastien, the director of the Académie de Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles, where Serneels was one of his most brilliant students. Thanks to the success of the first trip, with a sell-out exhibition on his return to Belgium, Serneels travelled back to Central Africa in 1938, this time using his own resources. When World War II broke out, the artist stayed on in Costermansville (modern-day Bukava), on the south-west shores of Lake Kivu in the Belgian Congo.

Rwampungu's wife was painted by Serneels in 1939 at Kigali, about two-hundred and fifty kilometres to the east of Costermansville, situated amongst the rolling hills and valleys of central Rwanda. Today Kigali is the country's capital, as well as its economic and cultural hub, though at the time it was a relatively small and recently founded regional centre. Serneels seems to have visited Kigali specifically to see the famous Tutsi dance festival, as confirmed by his image from the same date

of an *Intore* dancer, whose performances were reserved for the King and his retinue (fig. 1). The dances would have allowed Serneels to spend time amongst the Tutsi elite, where he would have seen Rwampungu's wife.

Though we do not as of yet unfortunately know her name, something of Rwampungu's wife's biography can be gleaned through her husband, a notable Rwandan chieftain. Rwampungu was the head of the Abatsobe clan and held sway over the province of Bumbogo, near Kigali, which was given by King Rwabugiri to his father Gashamura in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As head of the *abiru*, essentially a politico-ritualist council close to the king, Gashamura was a powerful figure in the Rwanda of the 1920s, occupying a position of importance second only to the ruling sovereign and queen mother. Due to his opposition to Christianity and the influence he was thought to hold over King Musinga, Gashamura was accused of witchcraft and exiled to Gitenga, in Burundi, in 1925.<sup>2</sup>

Thereafter, the Belgian administration initiated a decree forbidding all ancestral rituals connected to the king, eventually deposing Musinga in 1931, after his repeated refusals to convert to Christianity. Rwampungu was placed in a Belgian-run school in Nyanza for the sons of chiefs, and was baptised in 1928, taking the name Edouard. Like his father, he was one of the leading chiefs of Rwanda and close to the king. A photo from the mid-1930s shows a smiling Rwampungu standing next to King Mutara, successor to Musinga, who turns and grins at him, as they presumably share a joke amongst a group of other leading Tutsis (fig. 2). A bust-length photo of Rwampungu can also be seen in Léon Delmas' *Généalogies de la Noblesse du Ruanda*.<sup>3</sup> Rwampungu frequently appears in the official notes of the Belgian governors and administrators, which describe some of his territory and the under-chiefs who reported to him, as well as mentioning a long-standing conflict between Rwampungu and his brother Kagango over land.<sup>4</sup>



FIG. 2, ANONYMOUS PHOTOGRAPH OF C. 1935, *KING MUTARA AND RWAMPUNGU, WITH OTHER TUTSI CHIEFS*.

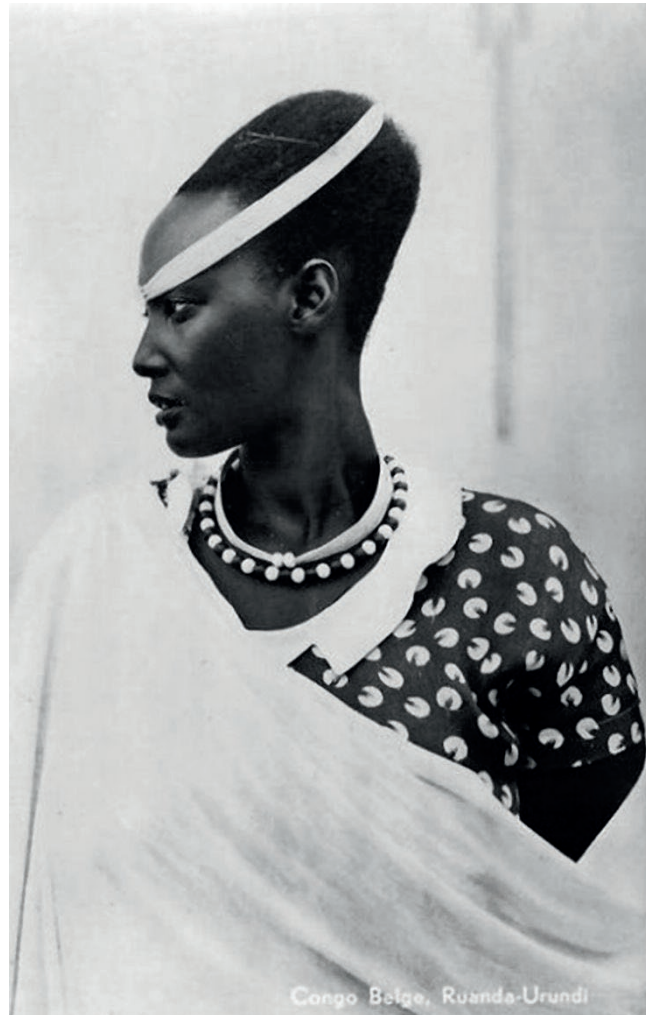


FIG. 3, ANONYMOUS PHOTOGRAPH OF C. 1940, PRINCESS EMMA BAKAYISHONGA.

When Serneels painted Rwampungu's wife in 1939, she would therefore have been the most important woman in Kigali province, and indeed one of the most prominent in Rwanda as a whole, surpassed only by the Queen, the Queen Mother and the princesses of the royal family. She must therefore have been a leading figure at the dance festival, which took place in her home territory. This, alongside her striking beauty, was probably what led Serneels to paint her. Her exalted status is evident from her attire: voluminous white fabric draped toga style around the shoulders; upswept, bouffant hair, and copper bangles around the neck and wrists. These elements are consistent with other images of privileged Tutsi women from the time, as can be seen, for example, in a photograph of Princess Emma Bakayishonga (fig. 3) or indeed in Irma Stern's portrait of her from 1942 (fig. 5). Serneels places his sitter next to a traditional Tutsi basket of the *itana* ('tip of the arrow') pattern, whose tapering lid mirrors the elongated forms of Rwampungu's wife. Amongst the Tutsi elite, women were responsible for weaving refined baskets of this type, and did so as a communal activity, often accompanied by the sound of music performed by Tutsi harpists.

Unlike Stern, with her contemporaneous notes, we are unable to definitively determine Serneels' thoughts on the Tutsi, and on Rwampungu's wife in particular. Yet, a reading of the portrait itself would suggest that Serneels, like many of his fellow painters and countrymen, was mesmerised by the physical aspect of the Tutsis, perceived or otherwise. Serneels clearly took delight in his sitter's 'noble bearing' and 'aristocratic beauty', both of which he emphasised by placing Rwampungu's wife against a neutral background. The drapery, created through liquid and virtuoso brushstrokes, contrasts with the detail of her face, further accentuating its forms and structure. The result is an image which easily stands alongside Serneels' most striking works from all his years in Central Africa (fig. 4), and should be considered amongst his most important paintings. In fact, it can be seen to be one of the most significant paintings of a Rwandan, and indeed Central African, sitter of this period, alongside Irma Stern's depictions of the Tutsi royal family.

Irma Stern visited Rwanda in 1942, after having passed through the Belgian Congo. Her stay in Rwanda is well-documented, thanks to her journal and the numerous letters she wrote whilst there and, though we cannot speak for Serneels, these sources, which eulogise the physical attributes of the Tutsis and muse upon their 'high-culture' and 'ancient origins', articulate the allure the Tutsis held for many Western artists.

Like Serneels, Stern visited Kigali for the annual *Fête Nationale*, enthusing that she had 'painted the king and queen and the queen mother of the Watussi. Their movements were dignified beauty, their features – long-necked, long-faced - were exquisite, a beautiful and timeless majesty. Here I had found, as I thought, the quintessential of beauty'.<sup>5</sup> In her journal, published in 1943, she described her visit to the Royal Box: 'There sits the Queen Mother...She looks like an Egyptian statue. Next to her, in flowing white garments, sits the young and beautiful new queen...Her hair is a huge arrangement of black, just perfectly proportioned to the size of her long oval-shaped head. She purses her lips as the Egyptians did. From beneath her long flowing robe her bare foot emerges. Never have I seen such beauty; it is like the black basalt foot of an Egyptian statue. It is expressive of a highly-bred cultured ancient race.'<sup>6</sup>

Though Stern's words feel outmoded today, they perhaps sum up what Serneels felt and saw as he painted Rwampungu's wife, creating a picture of outstanding beauty and importance for its time and place.

1. Spelled 'Wrampungu' by Serneels but 'Rwampungu' in the contemporary sources.
2. D. Byanafashe and P. Rutayisire, *History of Rwanda. From the Beginning to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Kigali 2016, p. 243.
3. L. Delmas, *Généalogies de la Noblesse du Ruanda*, Kabgayi 1950, p. 121.
4. *Territoire de Rubura [Rukira?]. Rapport établi en réponse au questionnaire adresse en 1929 par M. le Gouverneur de Ruanda-Urundi à l'Administrateur du territoire de Rubura*, M. Massart. 1929, p. 18.
5. I. Stern, 'My Aim in Art', *N.C.W. News*, November 1954.
6. I. Stern, *Congo*, Pretoria 1943, p. 38.

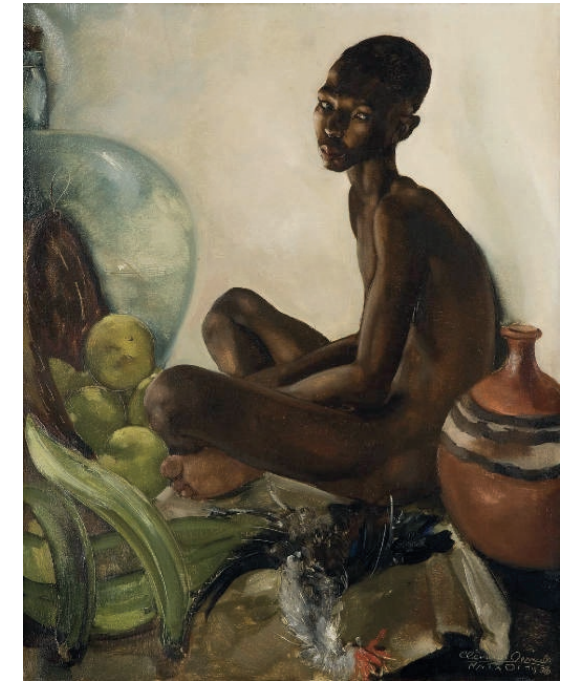


FIG. 4, CLÉMENT SERNEELS, YOUNG MAN FROM MATADI, OIL ON CANVAS, 101 X 81 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIG. 5, IRMA STERN, PRINCESS EMMA BAKAYISHONGA, OIL ON CANVAS, 86 X 86 CM, PRIVATE COLLECTION.



## CARLO LAMOTE

(Belgian, active in the 1940s and 1950s)

Portrait of a Lalia child

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Inscribed on reverse: *Enfant Lalia*  
Silver gelatin print  
23.6 x 17.8 cm. (9 ¼ x 7 in.)





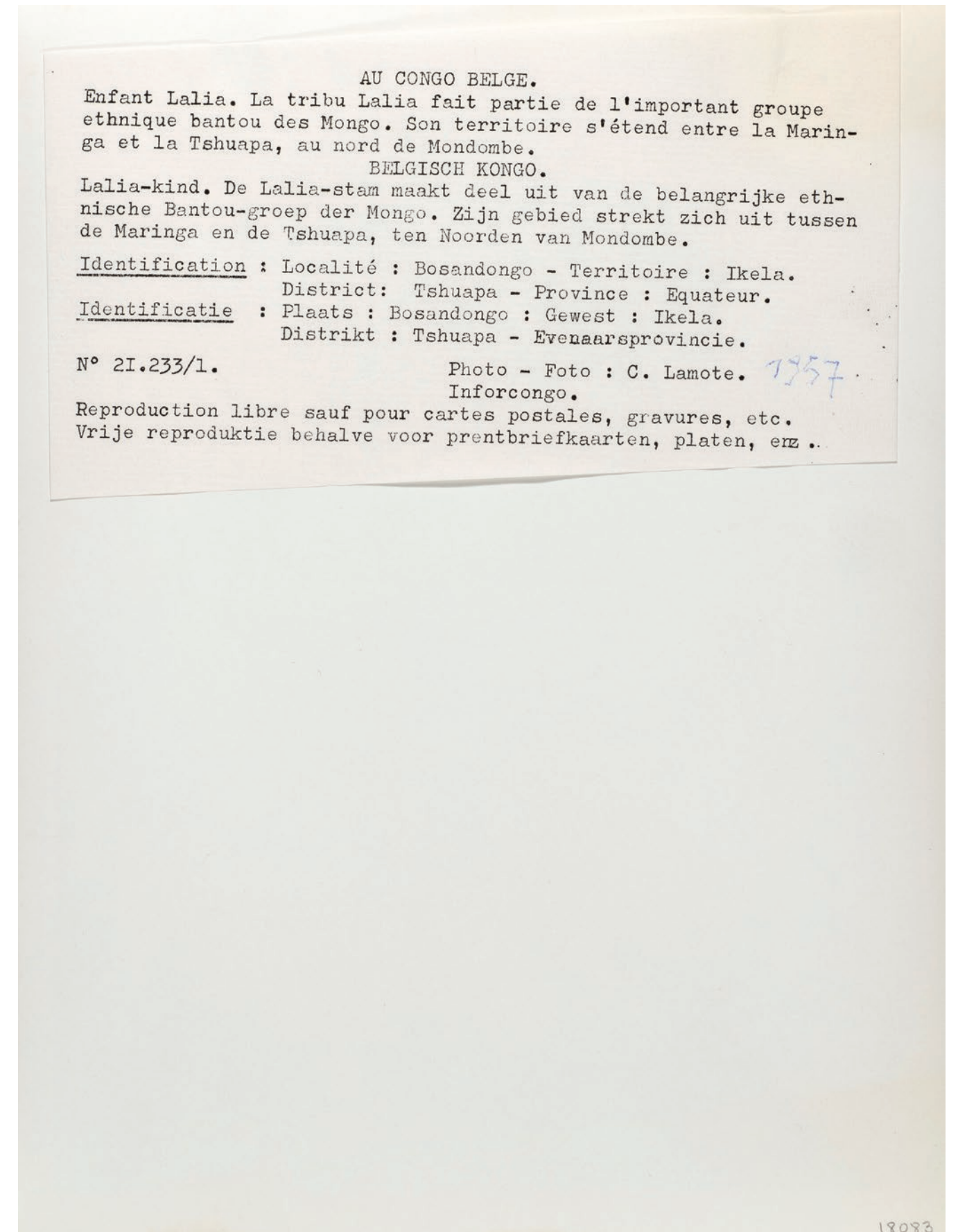
FIG. 1, CARLO LAMOTE,  
PORTRAIT OF A LALIA  
CHILD.

FIG. 2, CARLO LAMOTE,  
PORTRAIT OF A LALIA  
CHILD (REVERSE).

As the original label on the back of the photograph confirms, the sitter in this portrait is a Lalia child and the image was taken at Bosandongo, in the Ikela Territory, in the centre of what was then the Belgian Congo. The Lalia are a subset of the Mongo people, a Bantu ethnic group who today form the second largest ethnic group in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The young child in the photograph, who seems to be scrutinising the photographer, looks to be a young boy of six or seven, yet to receive the facial scarification which was typical of the Lalia.

Though no biographical information on Carlo Lamote has yet come to light, he was clearly a Belgian photographer working for Congopresse, the main agency for photojournalism in the Belgian Congo from its inception in 1947 until independence in 1960. Lamote's image likely dates from the early 1950s. The University of Madison Wisconsin Libraries possess an image another Lalia sitter by Lamote, a man with a forehead scar and monkey skin headdress.<sup>1</sup>

1. <https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/SYU5WW3IRIYHS9D>



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# Elliott Fine Art

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[will@elliottfineart.co.uk](mailto:will@elliottfineart.co.uk)

+44 (0) 7786 444 329

By appointment:  
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London SW1





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