

# Gallery Notes

SUMMER 2015

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**JOHN MITCHELL**  
FINE PAINTINGS



**Jean Pillement (1728-1808)**

*A pair of imaginary landscapes* [see cover for detail of pendant]

signed lower left: Jean Pillement and dated 1790

pastels on paper

18 x 26½in (46 x 67cm)

both signed and dated 1790

TO BE EXHIBITED AT MASTERPIECE 2015

In this summer edition of *Gallery Notes* we are proud to present some fine rediscoveries by Willem van de Velde the Younger and Francis Hayman together with a historical and unconventional American painting by Robert Salmon. There are also some elegant pictures by James Ward, Julius Caesar Ibbetson and Alfred Stevens.

Our forthcoming exhibition in the gallery will display the work of three generations of the Van de Velde dynasty, and investigate their influence on the British school:

*In the wake of the Van de Veldes:  
marine painting in 18th century England*

June 4 to July 12

In the aftermath of the Dutch Golden Age the works of the Van de Veldes (see pages 4-13) were highly sought after by collectors, especially in Britain, and greatly emulated by artists. Most notable of these were Charles Brooking and Dominic Serres, who will be represented in this selling exhibition. Oils and watercolours by artists such as Cleveley, Anderson, Atkins and Whitcombe will be available as well.

The recent exhibition at The National Gallery, *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market*, has offered some excellent observations on the transience and unpredictability of taste. One contemporary review in particular makes for unsettling reading. Albert Wolff wrote about the Durand-Ruel Gallery for *Le Figaro* in 1876: *'There has just been opened at Mr. Durand-Ruel's an exhibition of what is said to be painting...Five or six lunatics, of whom one is a woman, have chosen to exhibit their works. There are people who burst into laughter in front of these objects.'* From the same authoritative mould as today's critic, Brian Sewell, Wolff had a loyal following of collectors and art lovers, and gave his own verdict: *'Personally I am saddened by them. These so-called artists style themselves Intransigents, Impressionists.'* How wrong he proved to be, not that the shine of the Impressionists' story needs any further varnish!

It must be remembered, however, that these now world-famous paintings are only part of the Durand-Ruel story and that in his lifetime he bought and sold hundreds of Old Masters as well. Without his own unwavering faith in the Impressionists, they might not be so well known today, and undoubtedly it was Durand-Ruel's assimilation of past masters that enabled him to champion the struggling, unremarked painters of his own time. The complex web of association and connections between the artists, critics and collectors of this remarkable period in the history of art has been written

of many times before in *Gallery Notes*, and may justifiably be mentioned again in the light of the National Gallery exhibition. The two still life paintings by Edouard Manet were first seen hanging in the studio of our friend Alfred Stevens (see pages 30-31): Durand-Ruel was friendly with Stevens, a leading Paris artist of the day, and Stevens had bought the paintings from Manet, an aspiring artist who occasionally shared his studio.

No art dealer today could reasonably hope to achieve Durand-Ruel's renown, but the principles remain much the same as they were for him in nineteenth-century France – even with all the modern distractions of databases, growth indexes, continuous fairs and middlemen. To be of service to collectors and institutions for the long term today, when some schools of painting are no longer accessible due to scarcity, a dealer needs to try and focus alone on the quality of the painting, watercolour or drawing he is being offered, and ignore its creator's rating on internet search engines!

The paintings and two drawings shown in this edition of *Gallery Notes* have their own interesting provenances and stories to tell and, hopefully, will reward those seeing them in the original.

**We will be taking part in Masterpiece at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea (25 June-1 July – stand B17), and we very much look forward to welcoming you there, and at the exhibition at 44 Old Bond Street.**

William Mitchell  
June 2015





Not since the heyday of collecting Dutch pictures in late Georgian Britain has there been as much interest in, and appetite for, the work of the Van de Veldes as we are seeing today. With a record price being reached at Christie's in December 2011 (£5.91m), and a 'sea fight' of his fetching nearly as much six months later, Van de Velde the Younger is now among the most valuable of all the Dutch Old Masters. As well as the renewed interest inevitable in any artist whose work begins to bring 'Rembrandt' money, the reputations of both father and son Van de Velde have been further buoyed by two separate sales in the last ten months. Last July a remarkable album of twenty-seven pen and wash drawings collected by the Duchess of Northumberland in the eighteenth century went on view for sale, while in January this year a pen-painting by the Elder was a highlight of the New York auctions (see opposite above). The latter had particular relevance for us, having recently handled a rare work in the same medium from the very end of his life forty years on. (see opposite below)

Even if the precise attribution of each one to father or son, or both, is never discovered, the Alnwick drawings prompted as many questions as they answered about the life stories and methods of these ship painters *extraordinaires*. Did Willem senior in fact accompany the Dutch fleet all the way to Norway in 1665? How did he manage to work on his two-metre 'documentary' scroll of the fleet at Solebay in 1672 in a rolling, pitching open boat? Similarly the extraordinary *penschilderij* offered in January met with great acclaim and was clearly highly prized (\$5.4m), but how many of us really understand the near-alchemy of this relatively obscure technique, and the artist's reason for using it in the first place? There is still much to be learnt about the achievement of the Van de Veldes, in spite of their legendary reputation. It is to be hoped that our friend Remmelt Daalder, formerly of Amsterdam's Scheepvaartmuseum, will shed some light with the publication of his thesis on the Van de Velde studio later this year. Meanwhile if, after all this, readers of *Gallery Notes* feel in need of a 'refresher course' in Van de Velde(!), then I can prescribe no better remedy than to visit the sumptuous, newly-refurbished Long Gallery at the Wallace Collection and contemplate Willem the Younger's *Calm: Dutch ships coming to anchor*, one of his all-time triumphs.

Lest I have given the impression that the work of the Van de Veldes' is now inaccessible, it should be said that only a small proportion of the oils are in the heady afore-mentioned category. Pleasing pen and wash drawings by the Younger regularly come on to the market and are not costly in terms of Old Master drawings, while every now and then more affordable oils by him become available, usually from his later, English period. The two examples presented here, of contrasting sizes, belong to that category, but have the distinction within that rank of being entirely by the Younger rather than one with studio co-operation. The later example is, according to Drs. Daalder, 'an excellent example of a late painting entirely by Willem van de Velde II himself'.

JFM

OPPOSITE ABOVE

**Willem van de Velde the Elder (1611-1693)**

pen painting on panel

48 x 65cm

signed

Sotheby's New York, 29th January 2015, lot 32.

OPPOSITE BELOW

**Willem van de Velde the Elder (1611-1693)**

pen painting on canvas

56 x 64cm

signed and indistinctly dated 169[?]

With John Mitchell Fine Paintings, 2014.

**Willem van de Velde the Younger (1633-1707)**

*The sixth-rate ship 'Saudadoes' in a light breeze, with a royal yacht behind firing a salute*

oil on canvas

13¼ x 16¼in (35.5 x 41.2cm)

indistinctly signed lower left 'W.V.Velde', with fine antique Louis XIII frame.

PROVENANCE

with William Drown, London, 1956 (advertised in 'Connoisseur', December 1956);

Paris, auction, Ader Picard Tajan, 27th June 1989, lot 39 (£32,914);

where bought by Johnny van Haeften; sold by John Mitchell & Son to a private collector, England.

LITERATURE

M. Robinson, *The Paintings of the Willem van de Veldes* (1990), p. 643, no. 764.

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This small ship portrait by Van de Velde the Younger was probably painted in the second half of the 1670s or in the early 1680s. Even without knowing the identity of the principal ship, it can be seen that the painting dates from the artist's 'English' period, from the time when he and his father were settled in London. The array of flags on both vessels celebrates British naval power, and in this respect the picture is in keeping with much of Van de Velde's production after his move to England, when he was very much a 'court' painter under the patronage of the royal family and their extended circle. The style of the painting, however, is still recognisably that of the great Dutch master whose work reached its apogee between the late 1650s and the early 1670s, and it shows none of the deterioration in quality which characterises much of the later work from his London period. The setting out at sea is a breezy one, a genre which Van de Velde had come to perfect in his best, afore-mentioned period, and it seems to invigorate even this small canvas with atmosphere and liveliness. The palette is classic Van de Velde the Younger, with the strong shadows across the steely sea contrasting with the rich cream of the billowing sails, the warm hue of the ship's timbers and the azure blue of sky in the top centre. As in some of his greatest work, Van de Velde's detailed knowledge of ships, the disposition of sails and rigging and the activities of the crew are all to be found in the present work. One of his particularly pleasing 'signature' touches is to be found in the men climbing the shrouds and the multitude of other sailors gathered on deck in the challenging sea conditions.

The painting was inspected at first hand in 1989 by Michael Robinson when he was preparing his book on the Van de Veldes, and it was he who identified the principal ship, drawing on his extensive knowledge of the large number of Van de Velde drawings still in existence. In correspondence with our firm at that time, Robinson recorded four drawings of the same vessel at the National Maritime Museum, one of which is inscribed by Van de Velde the Younger 'sodato. quins vergadt', referring to her as built for Charles II's queen, Katherine of Braganza.

JFM





**Willem van de Velde the Younger (1633-1707)**

*Lord Archibald Hamilton in the 'Lichfield' engaging the St. Malo Privateer 'Tyger', 11th December 1695*

oil on canvas  
25¾ x 38¾in (65.4 x 98 cm)  
indistinctly signed

## PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Lord Archibald Hamilton (1673–1754);  
by descent to his daughter Elizabeth (1720–1800) who married Francis  
Greville, 1st Earl of Warwick (1719–1773);  
By descent in the family until 2014.

## EXHIBITED

Wellesley, Massachusetts, Davis Museum, on long term loan.

## LITERATURE

Probably Anon., *Inventory of the Contents of Warwick Castle*, 1806, one of three sea fights mentioned, two as by Van de Velde; Probably W. Field, *An Historical and Descriptive Account of Leamington Spa*, Warwick 1815, p. 204, ('A Seafight by Vandervelde'), in the Compass room; W. Spicer, *Vitruvius Britannicus. History of Warwick Castle*, London 1844 ('Naval Engagement - Vandervelde'), in the Compass Room; H. T. Cooke, *Present State of the Castle*, 1846 ('A Frigate in Chase, by William Vandervelde'), in the library, opposite the fire place; Anon., *Inventory of the contents of Warwick Castle*, ms., 1900, as ('Sea Piece and Ships'), hanging in the Chinese Corridor; M. S. Robinson, *Van de Velde, A Catalogue of the Paintings of the Elder and the Younger Willem van de Velde*, London 1990, vol. I, no. 470, pp. 245–46.

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Lord Archibald Hamilton, seventh and youngest son of William, 3rd Duke of Hamilton and his wife Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, became captain in the Navy on the 11 September 1693 and by the end of 1694 was appointed to a new 48-gun vessel the Lichfield that was being built at Portsmouth. In 1695 he was active in the English Channel pursuing French privateers and this picture appears to commemorate a particular action recorded in the ship's log: "*Dec 11 at:8: this morn. saw 2: sayle to Leward we gave chase to one ye Anglesy to ye other. by noon came up with our chase & Engag'd with her fo: 2: hours after which she struck haveing both her topmasts shott away - being a french Privateeer of Snt Malo of: 24: guns Call'd ye Tyger.*"

Robinson suggests that the picture may have entered the collection at Warwick Castle together with the portrait of Lord Archibald by Thomas Murray, which still hangs in the state rooms at Warwick, from the collections of one of his children, probably Sir William Hamilton.







**Francis Hayman (1708-1776)**

*Portrait of Charles Bedford as an infant*

oil on canvas  
20 x 24in (51 x 61cm)  
with very fine original English carved and gilded rococo frame

Until only very recently this portrait remained in the possession of the sitter's descendants, and was not known of outside the family circle. Painted in 1744 or 1745, it is an uncommonly intimate and informal portrait of a child in the context of early Georgian portraiture, and, as such, a valuable addition to Hayman's known *oeuvre*. It is one of numerous surviving portraits of the family of Grosvenor Bedford (1708-1771), one of Hayman's most consistent patrons and a retainer of the Walpoles. Charles Bedford is seen when a few years older sitting on a St Bernard dog with his sister Elizabeth in a larger canvas of 1746-7 still privately owned (see Brian Allen, *Francis Hayman*, 1987, col. pl. II, p. 8) and in *Grosvenor Bedford with his Wife Jane and Son Charles* (Exeter, Royal Albert Memorial Museum).

A friend of Hogarth and David Garrick, and teacher of Gainsborough, Hayman holds an important position in the history of British art, and yet his paintings appear only infrequently on the market today. This canvas remains in excellent, original condition and has only required light cleaning to enhance a palette that suggests the influence of French art of the period. The exceptional frame may well have been made by a noted cabinet-maker of Hayman's acquaintance, as similar, original frames remain with some of his other pictures today.

JFM

**James Ward (1768-1859)***Studies of a Spanish Ass*

oil on paper  
13 x 17½in (33 x 44.5cm)  
signed and dated 1810

## PROVENANCE

(possibly) Ward sale, Christie's, 29 May 1829, lot 94, as *A Spanish Ass*, bought by Colburn;  
Sotheby's, 23 June 1971, lot 7, as *Two Donkeys in a Landscape*;  
Private collection, London

## EXHIBITED

(possibly) Ward's exhibition of his own work at his home in Newman Street, 1822, no.5,  
as *A Young Ass of the Spanish Breed, the property of the late Thomas Garle, Esq.*

This oil on paper study has re-emerged on the market after more than forty years and at a time of renewed interest in the work of James Ward, soon after the sale of our last painting by him, the imposing portrait of a hunter on a thick mahogany panel nearly four feet wide (see right). Ward has long been recognized as the most important animal painter of his generation, and last year saw the publication of Ed Nygren's lifetime study of the artist and his pictures (The Walpole Society, 2013, vol. XXV); it is to him that we are grateful for his assistance in cataloguing the present painting.



This sympathetic and penetrating study of a single ass in two positions confirms Ward's primacy as an animal painter rather than as a sporting artist, as some have tended to view him in the past, and it is noteworthy that this 'zoological' approach should be apparent even in a relatively early work by Ward. (It is worth remembering that Ward originally trained as an engraver and first worked as a successful mezzotintist, not taking up oil painting until the 1790s.) The Rubensian drama and dynamism which Ward would bring to his major works of the 1820s, the prancing steeds, the lions pouncing on wildfowl and the enraged bulls, have not yet made their appearance in this sober and realistic treatment – and rightly so, for none of the foregoing are qualities readily associated with the slow, sure-footed donkey.

The immediacy of Ward's oil sketch means that the texture of the wire-laid paper is much in evidence, with the background loosely worked in with diluted paint, while all detail and precision have been saved for the texture of the animal's hide and the careful rendering of its head. The fine twists of *impasto* on the donkey's flanks further bring the creature to life, and, exceptionally, we have decided to leave the slightly discoloured varnish as it seems to complement the tone of the picture.



Ed Nygren has kindly written the following commentary:

'The painting actually depicts one Spanish ass in two different positions, something Ward did from time to time. This particular work was actually used as the study for a slightly larger picture, painted in 1813, exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1889 (25) as *A Donkey*. That painting, now in a private collection in London, was definitely sold at the Ward sale in 1829 (101) where it is identified as: *Two different portraits of a Spanish Ass, in a Landscape*; it was bought by Henry Bone for Joseph Neeld and descended to L.W.Neeld. The 1813 work, which is on panel and measures 17½ x 24 inches (44.5 x 61 cm), was in the Neeld sale at Christie's, 13 July 1945 (156). The important thing is that your animal appears in the 1813 painting in exactly the same positions. There was another picture of two asses or donkeys in a landscape, perhaps dated 1810, slightly smaller in size and on canvas, sold at Sotheby's, 19 July 1972 (71) and bought by William Darby.

**William Callow, R.S.W. (1812-1908)***Cir Mhor seen from Glen Rosa, Arran*

watercolour over pencil  
 10 x 14¼in (25.7 x 36.2cm)  
 signed and dated 1849, and inscribed with location

## PROVENANCE

R. N. Stevens, 1907; anon. sale, Sotheby's 24th July 1980, lot 234; Private Collection UK.

## EXHIBITED

London, Leicester Galleries, *Exhibition of Works by William Callow*, Oct-Nov 1907, no.12

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*William Callow: An Autobiography*, ed. H.M.Cundall, London 1908

After training as an engraver in London, Callow moved to Paris in 1829. There he met Thomas Shutter Boys and shared a studio with him for two years from 1831. Callow also fell under the spell of Bonington and transferred his interest to watercolour. He had great success at the Paris Salon, and was employed to teach the children of King Louis-Philippe. In 1835 Callow made the first of a series of lengthy walking tours in France, Germany and Switzerland; his first trip to Italy was for his honeymoon in 1840. Callow returned to England in 1840, and exhibited at the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours, to which he had been elected Associate in 1838, every year for the rest of his life.

Callow meticulously kept diaries of his travels in Europe, and for a long time afterwards kept notes of the principal events of his life, all of which were published as an autobiography in the year of his death at the age of ninety-six (see **BIBLIOGRAPHY** opposite). Therein are



recorded such diverse experiences as narrowly avoiding being killed in the streets of Paris during the revolution of July 1830, sketching with Turner in Venice, climbing at Grindelwald and watching the coronation of Queen Victoria. He also recounts a visit to the Inner Hebrides, during which he would have done the present drawing: *'In 1849 I made a sketching tour in the West of Scotland, arriving at Glasgow whilst the Queen and Prince Albert were there, and afterwards visiting the Kyles of Bute.*

JFM





**Robert Salmon (1775-1845)**

*Maverick House, Boston, Illuminated on 13th November 1837 in Honour of the Whig Victories in New York*

oil on canvas  
12½ x 16 ¼in (32 x 41cm)  
signed

PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Bayonne, France

LITERATURE  
John Wilmerding, *Robert Salmon Painter of Ship and Shore*,  
published by the Peabody Museum of Salem and the Boston  
Public Library (1971). no. 879, p. 96

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Long forgotten about for over a century this small canvas from a collection in south-western France undoubtedly corresponds to Salmon's entry, the first for the year 1838, in his catalogue of his own paintings: no. 879 *Janvery 1838 17 by 14. Whig Victory Lumination at South Boston (w work?) 6 Days*. Until now the picture was traditionally considered to depict a street fire with gunpowder explosions, both subjects that Robert Salmon liked to capture, but with the invaluable help of Professor Wilmerding (see **LITERATURE** above), we have been able to positively identify the painting as above, namely a celebratory firework display – or 'lumination' – accompanied by a hundred gun salute. Research has shown that the evening in November 1837 was hosted by John W. Fenno, the son and heir of the founder of *The Gazette of the United States*, a newspaper that played a major role in the shaping of party politics in the United States in the 1790s. Indeed the event was recorded in the *Gazette*:

*On Tuesday evening last a brilliant festival was given at East Boston, by John W. Fenno, Esquire, in honor of the recent glorious whig victories in New-York. It was held in Maverick House, the largest hotel in the city, gorgeously illuminated for the occasion.*

The banquet hall and hotel, Maverick House, was built in 1833 and survived until 1929. The building dominated Maverick Square, the main commercial hub of East Boston, and it served as both a summer resort for the wealthy and an overnight stay for people sailing to Europe or catching a train further north. It was subsequently owned by Patrick Kennedy, father of Joseph and grandfather to J.F.K, who established a wine and spirits importing business there having worked as a young man on the East Boston dock.

Salmon's composition is artfully balanced between the oarsmen watching the scene in the lower right and the docking quay on the lower left. Employing the perspective of adjacent buildings, the viewer's gaze focuses on the glowing gas-lit windows of Maverick House and the bright moon beyond. Despite so much activity in the background with a raging bonfire, shooting fireworks and smoke all seems calm and almost contemplative out on the water. Moonlit water is dripping from the oars in a characteristic painterly flourish.

Robert Salmon was born in Whitehaven, Cumbria and by 1806 was living and working in either Liverpool or Greenock. In 1828 Salmon left for Boston where he remained for the next fifteen years. He painted over a thousand pictures in his career and more than four hundred of them in Boston.

Robert Salmon became the outstanding marine painter of his generation and his maritime subjects played a central role in the development of the Luminist Movement in nineteenth century American landscape painting, a genre made famous by the likes of Fitz Henry Lane and Martin Johnson Heade, now considered amongst the greatest American painters of all time.

Although Salmon was not alone in moving to America to seek a wider and wealthier patronage, he was wholly responsible for importing the Anglo-Dutch tradition of marine painting into American art. Salmon's style loosely followed that of the van de Velde family, and as a young man in Liverpool he had attended many auctions and exhibitions of pictures by de Vlieger, Ruysdael and Canaletto.



R. Salmon  
*Liverpool Town Hall Illuminated, 1806*  
Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

With a distinguished clientèle made up of some of Boston's oldest families and living right on the harbour's wharves, the successful ex-patriot may indeed have considered himself Boston's answer to Canaletto! The consistencies of quality and originality in his paintings never changed over four decades. In his later years he turned more and more to moonlit scenes depicting smugglers, fishermen, shipwrecks and castles including over a dozen scenes with outbreaks of fire.

Only one other 'lumination' scene is known of (see above) painted to commemorate the Prince of Wales' and Duke of Clarence's official visit in September 1806. Several thousand crystal lamps were used to wreath the entire building. According to the *Liverpool Chronicle* it "presented the appearance of an enchanted temple...and formed an object of grandeur and splendour almost beyond conception."

That Salmon should witness such a similar event thirty years later across the Atlantic is coincidence enough but to have again captured the scene in oils, and so accurately, suggests a spark of genius.

This discovery has poignancy for us as our grandfather, John Mitchell, (founder of the family firm in 1931) was an early specialist dealer in the work of Robert Salmon when living in New York in the 1940s.

**Julius Caesar Ibbetson (1759-1817)**  
*Scenes of English rural life*

both oil on panel  
 10 x 12in (25.5 x 30.5cm)



These richly colourful and lively panels appeared recently in separate auctions in Germany, and were hitherto unknown to me. More than fifteen years after the publication of my book, it is surprising – and gratifying – that new Ibbetson paintings continue to come to light. In these oils, dating from the 1790s, one finds the artist at his best, and, even when working on a small scale, his style is assured, precise and the results most pleasing. Artisans like the knife-grinder seen here were of continual interest to Ibbetson's keen eye, and this character belongs to a rich tradition in the artist's work of depicting villagers at work, or gathered in town squares. In this vein, his numerous pictures of cottage industry in Wales come to mind – a notable example being *Llangollen, peasants spinning* (Cardiff, National Museum of Wales, inv. A504). Similarly, the figures grouped around a single, mounted traveller outside an inn are another regular feature in Ibbetson's oils and watercolours. Cleaning has revealed both the tavern sign, with its distinctive horseshoe motif, and the seated toper underneath. It is tempting to think that this is meant to be the painter himself, as he was no stranger to such places! The donkeys and pigs in each picture are drawn with the skill and affection with which Ibbetson invariably treats these beasts, and his distinctive 'Berchem' palette of prussian blue, naples yellow and crimson lake set off the figures agreeably. It would be difficult to find a better pair of small Ibbetson oils from this, his most fruitful period.

JFM



**Princesse Louise Marie Eugénie Adélaïde d'Orléans (1777-1847)**  
*Pansies, Morning Glories and Single Chrysanthemums*

watercolour, body colour and graphite on vellum  
 10½ x 8in (26.5 x 20cm)  
 signed and dated 1821, with fine period frame

Princesse Adélaïde was the sister of Louis Philippe, King of France from 1830 to 1848. This exquisite watercolour on vellum demonstrates why she was not only one of Pierre-Joseph Redouté's most famous pupils, but arguably his most talented.

Adélaïde's early years were rocked by the political upheavals that engulfed France from the late eighteenth century onwards. As the situation in the 1790's in the capital deteriorated, Adélaïde was forced to flee France and would not return home for over twenty years until the fall of Napoleon in 1814. Her father was guillotined during the Terror of 1792 and her mother banished to Spain, destroying any hope of a homecoming. Her faithful governess, Madame de Genlis, accompanied her at all times during her exile which took her from the Austrian-occupied Netherlands to Switzerland, Bratislava and Barcelona, before finally settling in 1809 with Louis Philippe in Palermo.

On her return to Paris in 1814 Adélaïde took up residence with her extended family in the Palais-Royal, where she devoted her intellectual powers and political ambitions to helping her brother. For an unmarried woman she had an unusually prominent participation in the family councils of the house of Orléans, acting as Louis Philippe's confidante and adviser. In Adélaïde's apartment at the Palais she would host a Salon which soon became a centre for the opposition towards the Bourbon regime where artists and intellectuals rubbed shoulders with a liberal press and influential figures including Talleyrand. Through this enlightened environment, Adélaïde sought to create a constitutional monarchy headed by her brother. This dream came to fruition in 1830 with the July Revolution.

Given such a role in the history and politics of her time, it is remarkable that this ambitious and intelligent woman became one of the most accomplished students of her great flower painting master, Redouté. Judging from its date, 1821, Redouté would have instructed her privately at her apartment in the Palais. Using a calf skin vellum as a medium required discipline and a virtuoso technique: matchlessly smooth washes of watercolour built up over a delicate pencil



Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum



under-drawing which forbade any retouches or errors. The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge owns a vellum by Adélaïde, dated 1820 (see above) which is a free copy of a Redouté in the same museum and yet our *Pansies, Morning Glories and Single Chrysanthemums*, from the following year, is an original composition.

This fine and unblemished watercolour is close in quality to those of Adélaïde's master, Redouté, of the same period, and yet it is all the more intriguing that this remarkable woman could paint as well in this exacting technique without there remaining today more than a handful of her creations.



**Alfred Stevens (1823-1906)**

*Girl wearing a kimono*

oil on panel  
 13¾ x 10½ in (35 x 26.7cm)  
 signed with monogram, painted in 1876.  
 with fine antique French frame.

PROVENANCE

Charles Everard, London, 1876; Francois Franck, Antwerp, 1928; Private Collection, Western France

EXHIBITED

Musée d'Art Moderne, Bruxelles. *Alfred et Joseph Stevens*, 1928. no. 137: *La Dame en bleu*

LITERATURE

G. Van Zype *Les frères Stevens*, Bruxelles, 1936, p. 105, no. 137

*Girl wearing a kimono* was last seen in public in the 1928 Brussels Stevens exhibition. The model recorded as 'Agathe' appears in over twenty paintings by Stevens in the 1870s and 1880s, the most famous being *Souvenirs et regrets* (Williamstown, Massachusetts, The Clark Institute, see right) The intimate, single figure subjects are the finest endorsement for Alfred Stevens' status as one of the leading painters of his time. He did not consider himself a portraitist and made no secret of his real and everlasting preference for women as his sitters. His brushes and adoration of the subject certainly breathed life into them but such was his skill that his paintings never fell into empty and sentimental nostalgia. The large 'set piece' Salon interiors, garden scenes with various figures and the *élegantes* by the coast have often brought his name great commercial acclaim but we can confidently predict that *Girl wearing a kimono* and other smaller pictures from his 'power' years will prove to be his best legacy.

WJM



# JOHN MITCHELL

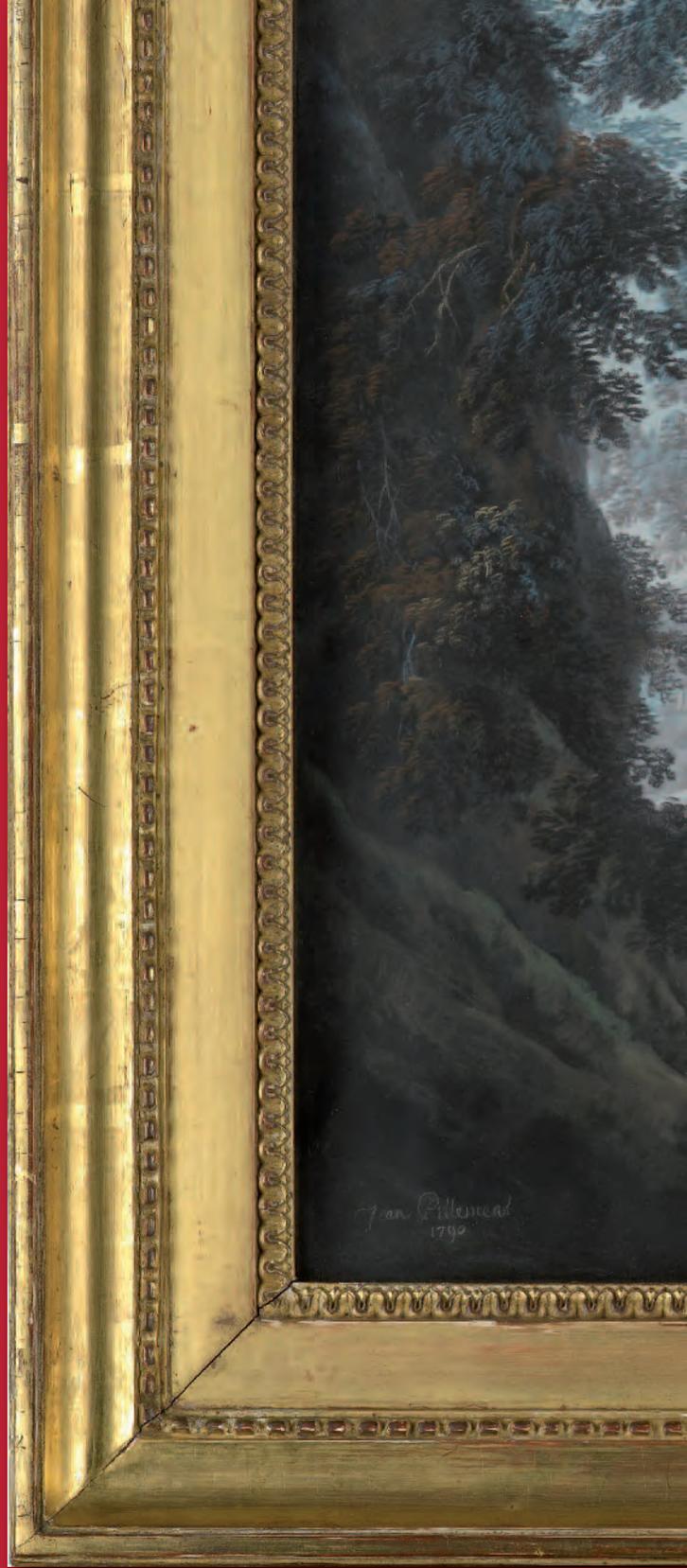
## FINE PAINTINGS

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Our policy remains unchanged. Across all schools, periods, and values, we seek, with rigorous selectivity, a high standard of quality in what we buy. Once satisfied, we can offer works with confidence, backed up by long experience, integrity and scholarship. The business is one of long-term friendship and association, not short-term advantage.

We hope that in receiving *Gallery Notes* you will share the interest and enjoyment which they have brought to collectors throughout the world for over sixty years.

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