

JOHN MITCHELL
FINE PAINTINGS

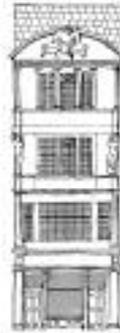


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French nineteenth-century paintings

Autumn 2012



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This catalogue is being published to accompany an exhibition of these paintings at our gallery. It will also serve as a record of our current, wide-ranging stock of paintings by traditional French artists of the nineteenth century, a field of picture collecting which our firm has advocated for forty years and one which remains quite fertile and accessible as paintings of excellent quality continue to emerge from this remarkably productive period. Indeed we are including artists whose work we have previously never handled, for example, the still lifes by **Fouace** (p.16) and **Bergeret** (p.13) and, at the same time, the prices for these paintings seem to us ever reasonable. For collectors, the key considerations of quality and originality remain indispensable, especially in the extensive nineteenth-century paintings market now top-heavy with formulaic and often repetitive work by undistinguished artists. Together with the pedigrees and historical context of the artists, in these respects we have every confidence in the pictures proposed here. In fact many of them touch on the salient points of the history of art in the period.

Although **Guillemet's** connections with Emile Zola, Manet and Cézanne, and **Stevens'** friendship with Manet and his remarkable commercial success have already been explored in our specialist publications on these artists over the years, other works also reflect aspects of the period in one way or another. The contemporary appeal of the fashionable coastal resorts, for example, had a great and well documented effect on art at this time, and the very fine **Lalanne** pencil drawing of Trouville (p.12) and **Loppe's** breezy beach scene at Le Havre (p.14) represent an affordable way to 'buy into' that heady age. Within this group of pictures the theme of still life prevails: we have deliberately focused on an artistic movement known as 'the Chardin revival'. In the 1840s 'Realist' artists like Bonvin, Rousseau and Vollon led the re-appraisal of the great still life painter of a century earlier, Jean-Siméon Chardin, and his near contemporary, Jean-Baptiste Oudry. In homage to these neglected masters, casualties of the sweeping changes in taste brought about by the end of the *ancien regime*, they produced their own quiet, introspective still life paintings - another rich seam which continues to be mined by connoisseurs and museums.

James Mitchell
October 2012



Philippe Rousseau (1816-1887)

Still Life of a Camembert Cheese, a Carafe of Wine and Bread
oil on canvas, 29 x 36¼ in. (73.5 x 92cm.)
signed with initials



Andre-Henri Dargelas (1828-1906)

Cache-Cache

oil on panel, 16 x 12½ in. (40.6 x 31.7cm.)

signed

Born in Bordeaux, Dargelas was a pupil at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris of the history painter François Picot, and then began exhibiting at the Salon in 1857. He was a specialist genre painter, with a particular emphasis in his subject matter on childhood games, as seen here in the present example.



Alfred Stevens (1823-1906)

Marine with steamer

oil on canvas, 16 x 12¼ in. (41 x 32cm.)

signed, inscribed 'Puys' and dated 1893

A typical, late sea study by Stevens, using a striking palette, this unlined canvas was painted at Puys, just along the coast from Dieppe (see page 7).



François Bonvin (1817-1887)

Nature morte au poitron et aux oeufs
oil on canvas, 18 x 15 in. (46 x 38cm.),
signed and dated 1854

Literature: G.Weisberg, *Bonvin*, Editions Geoffroy-Dechaume Paris, 1979, no. 106, p.210a

As a member of Courbet's 'Realist' movement and friend to younger artists such as Fantin-Latour and Whistler, Bonvin became an influential figure and was awarded the Légion d'honneur in 1870. A greater understanding of the extraordinary period in which he lived has led to a renewed appreciation of the whole 'Chardin revival' movement. These still lifes (see also page 18) reflect Bonvin's admiration for Chardin's work, and at the same time show his awareness of the 'bodegones' of the great Spanish masters, such as Sanchez Cotan, Zurbaran and Melendez. Incidentally, we have kept to the original title for the upright still life shown here, with 'poitron' being the French word for a pumpkin, but we are inclined to think that Bonvin was in fact painting a slice of melon!

François Bonvin (1817-1887)
Still life of mackerel on a griddle
oil on panel, 12½ x 18½ in. (31.5 x 47cm.)
signed and dated 1866

Exhibited: Salon of 1868, Paris, no 282;
Glasgow International Exhibition, 1901.

Literature: G.Weisberg, *Bonvin*, Editions Geoffroy-Dechaume Paris, 1979, no. 133, p.220





Antoine Guillemet (1841-1918)

Équihen, Nord-Pas-de-Calais

oil on panel, 9½ x 14 in. (24.5 x 35.5cm.)

signed

Gaston Roullet (1847-1925) *Rivière d'Auray, Bretagne*

oil on panel, 6¾ x 10¾ in. (17 x 27 cm.)

signed and inscribed with title

Gaston Roullet was a pupil of Jules Noël and made his Salon debut in 1874. As both a correspondent for *Le Monde Illustré* and an official painter to the Ministry of the Marine, Roullet travelled widely throughout the world. Several years ago we sold a painting by him of the Comoros Islands, off Madagascar. His most characteristic work, however, depicts views in Normandy and Brittany. *Rivière d'Auray* is a sea loch opening into the Golfe de Morbihan, and the harbour seen in Roullet's painting, known today as Port Saint-Goustan, is where Benjamin Franklin stepped ashore in December 1776, upon his arrival from the United States to seek the help of France in the War of Independence.





Antoine Guillemet (1841-1918)
Les Falaises du Puys à marée basse
oil on canvas, 21¼ x 29 in. (54 x 73.5cm.), signed

This unlined, newly cleaned canvas depicts the cliffs at Puys, just to the north-east of Dieppe, and is a smaller version of Guillemet's painting dated 1877 in the Château-Musée Dieppe. The latter was seen in the Royal Academy's major *Impressionists by the Sea* exhibition of 2007, and, in its dramatic and airy composition, drew favourable comparisons with Monet's later views of the beach at Pourville.



Antoine Vollon (1833-1900)

Nature Morte au Pot de Cuivre

oil on panel, 12¾ x 9½ in. (32.5 x 24cm.)

signed

François Bonvin (1817-1887)

La Cuisinière

oil on panel, 12¾ x 9½ in. (32.4 x 24cm.)

signed and dated 1856

Recent cleaning has revealed the striking tone of the whites in the maid's clothing and the crockery, and in a small painting like this it is the contrasts of these cool highlights with the warmer browns and greys that make it especially pleasing. The composition is as much about the inanimate as it is about the animate: the serving girl and the visitor to her sparse kitchen no more dominate the picture than the stool, shiny bowls and the spoon, which attest to Bonvin's primary interest in still life as a genre. Bonvin exhibited an earlier version of *La Cuisinière* (now at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Mulhouse) at the Salon of 1849, where it met with a favourable reception and led to him being dubbed 'le nouveau Chardin'.





Philippe Rousseau (1816-1887)
Scullery with a Cat and two Rabbits
oil on canvas, 14½ x 21¼ in. (37 x 54cm.), signed

From the mid-1840s to his death in 1887, Rousseau was one of the leading animal and still-life painters in the traditional manner. Although Chardin was to become his inspiration (as he was for Bonvin and other contemporaries), Rousseau was initially attracted to the work of the great *animalier* Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755), and became a gifted painter of monkeys, rabbits, rodents, foxes and birds, often incorporating them into his interpretations of the tales of Aesop and La Fontaine. A major retrospective of the artist's work was held at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam in 1993.



François Bonvin (1817-1887)

L'Ecureuse

oil on canvas, 17¾ x 12¾ in. (44.5 x 33cm.)

signed and dated 1858

A preparatory drawing in black chalk for this composition, also dated 1858, is recorded under no. 261 in Weisberg's monograph (see p. 5 for details).

The tile means 'the scourer'.

Maxime Lalanne (1827-1886)
A river running through woodland
charcoal on paper, 8½ x 5½ in. (21.5 x 14cm.)
signed





Maxime Lalanne (1827-1886)

Trouville

pencil on paper, 9 x 13¾ in. (23 x 34cm.)

signed, inscribed and dated 1876

In the general rise of the fashionable seaside resort, Trouville, located just to the east of Deauville, underwent one of the most spectacular transformations of all. Around 1830 it was a fishing village with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants; in 1866 its population was 5,200, but augmented by around 20,000 visitors every summer. The beach at Trouville is perhaps best remembered as the setting for Eugène Boudin's many canvases of elegant ladies in their 'crinolines', which have become the archetypal image of holidays by the sea in this period.



Denis-Pierre Bergeret (1846-1910)
Jars, bottles and a plate of asparagus
oil on board, 18 x 22¼ in. (46 x 57 cm.)
signed



Gabriel Loppé (1825-1913) *The jetty at le Havre*
oil on board, 11¾ x 15¾ in. (30 x 40cm.)
signed and dated 1885, inscribed verso: 'La jetée au
Havre/ fin d'un coup de vent'

We tend to think of Loppé as the remarkable *peintre-alpiniste* of Chamonix whose mountain views were exhibited at this time in London in the Alpine Club's winter exhibition, and forget at our peril that he was a gifted all-round landscape painter. This is the same view that Stevens and many other 'fashionable' Parisians were coming to the Seine estuary to paint, and Loppé takes the trouble to tell us in his inscription that a squall has just passed – as if his cool palette, and the scudding smoke from the steamer weren't convincing enough!

Alfred Stevens (1823-1906)
Tete de Jeune Fille
oil on canvas, 15 x 12 in. (38 x 30.5 cm.)
signed, circa 1885

This smiling girl, a bit 'à la Renoir' perhaps, was probably painted towards the end of Stevens' busy career, and was included in our firm's pioneering exhibition on Stevens in 1973.





Alfred Stevens (1823-1906)

A study of Victorine Meurent

oil on panel, 8¾ x 5½ in. (22 x 14 cm.)

signed with monogram top right

Victorine Meurent (1844-1927) was an artist's model who was immortalised by Manet in his masterpieces *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*. She continued to be his principal muse until the 1870's, and during this time she also sat for Degas and Stevens, both close friends of Manet. With her Flemish complexion, flame-coloured hair and long pale eyelashes, she represented Stevens' ideal of *Le Sphinx parisien*, and is seen in at her most beguiling in his canvas of that title from 1872-3 in the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp. This small, sensual study shows not only Stevens' extraordinary versatility, but also how spontaneous and 'modern' he could be.

Louis Welden Hawkins (1849-1910) *Le retour au Village*
oil on panel, 7½ x 10½ in. (19 x 26.5cm.), signed

Born in Esslingen in Germany to an English father and Austrian mother, Hawkins spent much of his childhood in Middlesex. In 1870 he studied under Bougeureau and Jules Lefebvre at the Academie Julian in Paris, and went on to study under Gustave Boulanger at the Beaux Arts. His first Salon painting *Les Orphelins* in 1881 won him a third place medal and was bought by the French government in 1887 for the Musée de Luxembourg. The painting was set in Grez-sur-Loing where Hawkins spent the 1880s, along with other artists such as Frank O'Meara, Jules Bastien-Lepage and Puvis de Chavannes. He exhibited two important works *By the Wayside* and *Keston Common* at the Royal Society of British Artists in 1880 and 1881.





Antoine Guillemet (1841-1918)

Près de Saint-Suliac

oil on panel, 7¼ x 10¼ in. (18 x 26 cm.)

signed

This breezy little panel was shown in our first Guillemet exhibition at the Drapers' Hall in the City in 1981, and epitomizes his talent for capturing the scenery and feel of the coast in a compact scale. St. Suliac, near Dinard, is one of the few places in Brittany which Guillemet painted on more than one occasion, given that we know him mostly as a painter of the Normandy coast.

Guillaume Romain Fouace (1827-1895)

Still life with a hare and a copper pan

oil on canvas, 16 x 24¾ in. (41 x 63cm.)

signed



Gabriel Loppé (1825 -1913)

Old Waterloo Bridge from Blackfriars Bridge

The Thames from Waterloo Bridge looking West – a pair (2)

oil on card,

11¾ x 15½ in. (30 x 39.5 cm.)

dated 25.10. [18]95 and 14.12.[18]86 respectively



Loppé was the first foreigner to be elected an honorary member of the Alpine Club and as a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy, Fine Art Society and the Alpine Club itself he spent long periods of time in London. Loppé often stayed at the Savoy and both these oil studies were recorded in his London diaries. Luckily for picture researchers the painter kept thorough records of his travels. Nearly all of his studies are dated with the day, month and year, if not always signed.



François Bonvin (1817-1887)
Still Life of Greengages and a Glass of Wine
oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in. (40.5 x 51cm.)
signed, inscribed and dated 'London 1871'



Antoine Guillemet (1841-1918)
Barfleur, Normandy
oil on panel, 6¼ x 9¼ in. (15.5 x 23.5cm.)
signed

Like the painting on page 16, this Corot-like study of the ancient little port in the Cotentin peninsula was in our 1981 Guillemet exhibition, where it was bought by the family who have owned it until now.

Price List

Pierre Bergeret	<i>Asparagus</i>	(p.13)	£12,500
François Bonvin	<i>Nature morte au poitron</i>	(p.5)	£38,000
François Bonvin	<i>Still life of mackerel</i>	(p.5)	£9,500
François Bonvin	<i>L'Ecureur</i>	(p.10)	£24,500
François Bonvin	<i>Still Life of Greengages</i>	(p.18)	£14,000
François Bonvin	<i>La Cuisinière</i>	(p.8)	£35,000
Andre-Henri Dargelas	<i>Cache-Cache</i>	(p.4)	£12,500
Guillaume Fouace	<i>Nature Morte</i>	(p.16)	£ 24,500
Antoine Guillemet	<i>Équihe, Pas-de-Calais</i>	(p.6)	£5,500
Antoine Guillemet	<i>Les Falaises au Puys</i>	(p.7)	£55,000
Antoine Guillemet	<i>Saint-Suliac</i>	(p.16)	sold
Antoine Guillemet	<i>Barfleur, Normandy</i>	(p.19)	£15,000
Louis Welden Hawkins	<i>Le retour au Village</i>	(p.15)	£8,500
Maxime Lalanne	<i>Woodland</i>	(p.11)	£1,200
Maxime Lalanne	<i>Trouville</i>	(p.12)	£3,500
Gabriel Loppé	<i>River Thames – a pair</i>	(p.17)	£24,000
Gabriel Loppé	<i>The jetty at le Havre</i>	(p.14)	£14,500
Gaston Rouillet	<i>Rivière d'Auray, Bretagne</i>	(p.6)	£6,500
Philippe Rousseau	<i>Still Life of a Camembert</i>	(p.3)	£65,000
Philippe Rousseau	<i>Scullery with a Cat</i>	(p.9)	£9,500
Alfred Stevens	<i>Tête de Jeune Fille</i>	(p.14)	£42,000
Alfred Stevens	<i>Victorine Meurent</i>	(p.15)	sold
Alfred Stevens	<i>Marine with steamer</i>	(p.4)	£12,000
Antoine Vollon	<i>Nature morte au pot</i>	(p.8)	£6,500



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