



GALLERY
NOTES®

from

JOHN MITCHELL
FINE PAINTINGS

EST 1931

MARCH 2019

This edition of *Gallery Notes* features some paintings and drawings which will be included in our display at the British Antique Dealers Fair towards the end of the month. We look forward to sharing them with you, either here or in Chelsea.

JAMES MITCHELL

Stand A16

BADA

Fine Art / Design / Antiques

20th - 26th March 2019

Duke of York's Square, King's Road, London SW3

Front cover:

WILLIAM TURNER OF OXFORD (1789-1862)

A view towards Cheltenham, with the Malvern Hills in the distance [detail]

watercolour, 7½ x 11¾ in. (19 x 30 cm.)

signed and inscribed on the reverse, 'View from Charlton Down near Cheltenham, looking towards the Malvern Hills/W.Turner/Oxford'

Exhibited:

London, Society of Painters in Watercolour, 1833, no. 255.

Turner was sent to London at the age of fifteen to take up an apprenticeship under John Varley, and was elected a full member of the Old Watercolour Society in 1808. It was in this period that J.M.W. Turner rose to fame, and as a result the younger artist became known as 'Turner of Oxford'. His own reputation firmly established, he returned to his uncle's estate at Shipton-under-Cherwell in 1812 and began to build up his practice as a drawing master in Oxford. His range of subject matter was vast, and he travelled throughout the British Isles in search of subjects – from the Wye Valley to the Lake District, from Wales and the Hebrides to the Isle of Wight, and he was a loyal exhibitor at the Society of Painters in Watercolour, submitting a total of 455 pictures, including this one. Turner of Oxford was described as follows: 'Worthy and dignified, looking like a parson of the old school, dressed in black and wearing a white tie, he lived a hum-drum life at his house, 16 John Street, near Worcester College, where he resided from 1833 till his death on 7th August 1862' (quoted in Martin Hardie, 'William Turner of Oxford', *Old Water-Colour Society's Club* 9 (1931-32).



JEAN-PIERRE GRANGER (1779-1840)

Bacchus and Ariadne

oil on canvas, 14¼ x 11⅜in. (36.2 x 29 cm.); with fine Charles X antique frame

In this lovely painting by a neoclassical pupil of David, Bacchus has come to the rescue of Ariadne on the island of Naxos, where she had been abandoned by Theseus. Ariadne's crown has already turned into a constellation of stars and Bacchus is about to fling it into the heavens, while his retinue await out at sea beyond. The sculptural handling of the figures and slightly stylized faces may seem affected to modern tastes, but would have been the height of fashion in the period.



JULIUS CAESAR IBBETSON (1759-1817)

View of Hawthornden Castle on the River North Esk, Midlothian, Scotland

oil on canvas, 16½ x 21¼ in. (42.5 x 54 cm.); with fine period Morland frame

Ibbetson spent the summer and autumn of 1800 in Midlothian in Scotland, where for much of the time he stayed in lodgings at Roslyn [Roslin]. His principal activity here was teaching the two daughters of Lady Balcarres, whom he had met in Edinburgh, and by whom he was evidently much charmed by. As well as numerous paintings of Roslin and the scenery nearby which survive today, Ibbetson produced several views of Hawthornden, an ancient castellated house dramatically situated on a cliff overlooking the upper reaches of the River Esk. This had been the home of the poet-laird, William Drummond (1585-1649), visited by the playwright Ben Jonson (1572-1637), among others. This scene of maidens bathing in the rockpool below is typical of his Gainsborough-inspired interpretations of the 'mermaid's haunt', where mythical classical beauties abound in an accurate topographical setting. As with many of his paintings of Scotland completed some years after his time there, as with the present example, the contrasts are well done, with dense woods fringing a deep ravine and pink figures against a shaded pool. Hawthornden remained in the Drummond family until the 1970s, and in the following decade was sold to Drue Heinz, who restored the castle and turned it into a literary retreat.



PHILIP REINAGLE (1749-1833)

A woodland scene with a lizard, frog, snail and insects

oil on panel, 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (36 x 27 cm.)

This delightful interpretation of the theme of the 'forest floor still life' probably had its origins in seventeenth century Italy, when artists developed the *sottobosco* genre (literally 'under the woods'), with all the imagined goings-on in the natural world of the woods. Born in Edinburgh the son of a Hungarian musician, Reinagle was at first a portrait painter and then turned to landscape, sporting subjects and animals, these latter often in the manner of Frans Snyders, the Flemish painter of game. (Like his contemporary Julius Ibbetson, he also happened to be a skilful imitator and restorer of the Dutch masters.) In April 1990, a set of three exotic bird paintings of quite extraordinary quality and size (ten feet wide) were sold at Christie's. Indisputably Reinagle's masterpieces, they had been at Houghton Hall in Norfolk since the late eighteenth century, and in their rich, teeming foregrounds bring to mind the somewhat smaller example here.



AUGUSTIN-ALEXANDRE THIERRIAT (1789-1870)

Fleurs dans un vase de Sarreguemines

oil on canvas, unlined, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in., signed and dated 1824; with original frame

Exhibited:

Paris, Salon, 1824.

Epitomising the achievements of the Lyons school of flower painting in the first half of the nineteenth century, this exquisite canvas must have been painted very soon after Thierriat replaced the great but mercurial Antoine Berjon as 'Professeur Classe de Fleur' at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, a post which he held until 1853. He was a man of wide interests and civic duties, and certainly the most influential teacher of flower painting, with over four hundred pupils. His appointment as director of the city's museum in 1831 further distracted him from his own work. Thus, despite a very long and active life, he left behind few flower or still life paintings; hence their rarity today. Although not officially a pupil of Berjon, there is no doubt that Thierriat was the heir to the great artist in so far as anyone could be. In this, small, sophisticated painting he succeeds, like his mentor, in expressing himself through his subject matter with calm and mysterious subtlety.

We are grateful to John Whitehead for confirming that the faïence vase was a product of the Utzschneider ceramics factory at Sarreguemines in north-eastern France.



SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, PRA (1769-1830)

Portrait of Jane Nash Linley (1768-1806)

pastel on vellum, oval, 12½ x 10½ in. (32.5 x 27 cm.)

Literature:

C. Black, *The Linleys of Bath*, 1911, rep. facing p. 270;

N. Jeffares, www.pastellists.com, under J.466.355

Lawrence has always been accepted as one of the great figures of the Regency period, and he dominated portrait painting in England for forty years. It is not commonly known, however, that as a teenager in Bath he worked almost exclusively in pastels before he abandoned the medium entirely after 1790, by which time he had moved to London. Lawrence's ability as a pastellist was considerable, though in retrospect without the flair and excitement which he was to bring to his oils. His pastels are almost all of the same size and oval, and at the Dulwich Picture Gallery and Dulwich College there are similar portraits by Lawrence of four of the sitter's siblings, some of the twelve children of the famous musician, Thomas Linley of Bath.

We look forward to seeing you here in our gallery in 2019,
and at the art fairs we are participating in.

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