



**NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS  
AT THE STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE**

**VOLUME TWO**

Edited by Sarah Lees

With an essay by Richard Rand  
and technical reports by Sandra L. Webber

With contributions by Katharine J. Albert, Philippe Bordes, Dan Cohen,  
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James Rosenow, Zoë Samels, and Fronia E. Wissman

*Nineteenth-Century European Paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute* is published with the assistance of the Getty Foundation and support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



The Getty Foundation



Produced by the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute  
225 South Street, Williamstown, Massachusetts 01267  
[www.clarkart.edu](http://www.clarkart.edu)

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Whately, Massachusetts  
Printed on 135 gsm Gardapat Kiara  
Color separations and printing by Trifolio, Verona

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Distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London  
P. O. Box 209040, New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9040  
[www.yalebooks.com/art](http://www.yalebooks.com/art)

Printed and bound in Italy  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

Nineteenth-century European paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute / edited by Sarah Lees ; with an essay by Richard Rand and technical reports by Sandra L. Webber ; with contributions by Katharine J. Albert, Philippe Bordes, Dan Cohen, Kathryn Calley Galitz, Alexis Goodin, Marc Gotlieb, John House, Simon Kelly, Richard Kendall, Kathleen M. Morris, Leslie Hill Paisley, Kelly Pask, Elizabeth A. Pergam, Kathryn A. Price, Mark A. Rogl an, James Rosenow, Zo  Samels, Fronia E. Wissman.

volumes cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-935998-09-9 (clark hardcover : alk. paper) —

ISBN 978-0-300-17965-1 (yale hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Painting, European—19th century—Catalogs. 2. Painting—Massachusetts—Williamstown—Catalogs. 3. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute—Catalogs. I. Lees, Sarah, editor of compilation. II. Rand, Richard. III. Webber, Sandra L. IV. Title. V. Title: 19th-century European paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

ND457.S74 2012

759.9409'0340747441—dc23

2012030510

Details:

TITLE PAGE: Camille Pissarro, *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf* (cat. 253)

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Impressionists' principal supporters in the mid-1870s. At the auction sale following Hoschedé's bankruptcy in 1878, another of the pioneer Impressionist collectors, the homeopathic doctor Georges de Bellio, purchased the painting for the derisory sum of forty-two francs.<sup>5</sup> JH

**PROVENANCE** Ernest Hoschedé, Paris, probably bought from the artist (until 1878, his sale, Drouot, Paris, 6 June 1878, no. 74, sold to de Bellio); Georges de Bellio, Paris (1878–d. 1894); Victorine and Eugène Donop de Monchy, Paris, de Bellio's daughter and son-in-law, by descent (from 1894); Georges Hoentschel, Paris (d. 1915); [Knoedler, Paris, sold to Clark, 13 Oct. 1925]; Robert Sterling Clark (1925–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

**EXHIBITIONS** Williamstown 1956b, no. 137, pl. 2.; Chicago 1973, no. 18, ill.; Tübingen 1996, pp. 146–47, no. 33, ill.; Williamstown 1996–97, pp. 55, 58, 72, 74, ill.; Tokyo–Nagoya 2001, pp. 68–69, no. 7, ill.; London–Ottawa–Philadelphia 2007–8, pp. 58–59, 166–67, 240, 247, no. 32, ill.; Madrid 2010–11, pp. 50–53, 59, 92, no. 4, ill.

**REFERENCES** Meier-Graefe 1911, p. 58 (French ed., p. 54); Rewald 1946, p. 275, ill.; Rewald 1961, p. 348, ill.; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, no. 108, ill.; Bodelsen 1968, pp. 339–40; Niculescu 1970, pp. 32, 73, pl. 20; Fezzi 1972, p. 96, no. 150, ill. (French ed., p. 95, no. 146, ill.); Nakayama 1978, p. 162, ill.; Nakayama 1979, p. 68; Vacant 1988, ill. bet. pp. 152–53; Nagoya–Hiroshima–Nara 1988–89, p. 231; Distel 1990, pp. 104, 119–20; De Vries-Evans 1992, p. 175; Jeromack 1996, p. 84; Wilkin 1996, p. 49; Dauberville and Dauberville 2007–10, vol. 1, p. 197, no. 136, ill.; Distel 2009, p. 117, fig. 100.

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a fine-weave canvas (28 threads/cm), glue-lined to a coarse fabric (16 threads/cm), and the lining is very taut. The six-member mortise-and-tenon stretcher is probably a replacement. The artist's tacking margins survive. There is some solvent abrasion and retouching, and during a 1979 cleaning some of the earlier overpaint was left in place. The varnish that was partially removed in 1979 was very tenacious, and brown residues still remain trapped in the textured paint. There is presently overpaint along one inch at the top of the picture, and on parts of the right and lower left sides. In ultraviolet light, small retouches can be seen in the sky and the tiled roofs. The paint is pitted through three layers in some areas, such as a band (2.5 cm wide) along the bottom, and there are yellow, red, orange, green, and blue glazes damaged in the architectural details and the signature. Under low magnification, abrasion is most noticeable in the signature and in a figure that has all but disappeared from a small boat in the center. There may be some blanching of dark blue strokes, and possibly some fading of the purplish red pigment.

The ground is a thin, commercially applied, cool white, water-sensitive layer. No underdrawing was detected. Although difficult to confirm, there may be a blue paint sketch beneath the completed painting, visible in parts of the bridge and the left shoreline buildings in the middle ground. The paint was occasionally applied wet-into-wet, but much of the surface seems to have dry scumbles applied after the thicker and more vehicular lower strokes were set. Wide brushes were used for the greater part of the image.

1. One example from the Musée de l'Île-de-France, Château de Sceaux, is reproduced in Washington 1996–97, p. 37; see also the postcards reproduced in Los Angeles–New York–London 1990–91, p. 145.
2. Barron 1886, p. 493: “la banlieue fruste,” “la campagne civilisée,” and “villas coquettes.”
3. Joanne 1872, p. 176: “leur lieu de predilection, leur paradis.”
4. Barron 1886, p. 494: “paradis artificiel.”
5. See Bodelsen 1968, pp. 339–40.

## 266 | Self-Portrait c. 1875

Oil on canvas, 39.1 x 31.6 cm

Lower right: Renoir.

1955.584

Despite its small scale and informal, improvised execution, *Self-Portrait* was one of the seventeen canvases that Renoir exhibited at the second Impressionist group exhibition in April 1876. Émile Porcheron's review of the show makes it clear that it was exhibited, describing a self-portrait by Renoir “painted entirely in hatching”;<sup>1</sup> the present canvas is the only one that fits this description. It seems likely that this was the painting displayed with the title *Tête d'homme*. It was among the six works by Renoir lent to the show by the collector Victor Chocquet, who had first met him and bought his work at the auction sale organized by Renoir and his colleagues in March 1875. Chocquet sold the canvas to another of Renoir's early collectors, the homeopathic doctor Georges de Bellio, probably soon after the exhibition. Renoir later gave a perhaps romanticized account of this transaction: “Do you remember that little portrait I did of myself, that paltry sketch that everyone praises nowadays? At the time, I had thrown it in the rubbish bin, but since Chocquet asked me to let him take it, I had to agree, even though



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I was sorry that it was no better than it was. A few days later, he brought me a thousand francs. Monsieur de Bellio had seen the painting at his house, fallen in love with it, and paid him this enormous sum of money. That's how art lovers were in those days!"<sup>2</sup>

Renoir depicts himself smartly dressed, with a blue-striped starched collar and a dark blue *lavallière* necktie, but the treatment of his face is somewhat at odds with his clothing.<sup>3</sup> His hair, mustache and beard appear unkempt, and his expression appears alert and even nervous, as he looks past the viewer, his eyes seemingly fixed on something in the distance (unusually for a self-portrait; see, in contrast, cat. 291). The brushwork of the face and hair complements

his expression; the crisp, animated strokes of impasto do not model the face in a straightforward way, by following its contours, but suggest the textures of skin and hair with broken, irregular rhythms that convey both his inward alertness and the neglect of personal grooming that many of his friends noted.<sup>4</sup> The face is given added relief by the contrast between its thick paint layers and the very thinly brushed background. Along with the warm flesh tones, blues and yellows are freely used to suggest the textures of flesh and hair and the play of light.

The overall treatment of the painting is quite unlike the softer, gentler handling that Renoir normally deployed in his portraits of both male and female sit-



Fig. 266.1. Artist unknown, *Pierre-Auguste Renoir*, c. 1875. Photograph. Musée d'Orsay, Paris (inv. OD 102)

ters; it would have stood out from the other portraits of men that he exhibited in 1876, notably his canvas depicting Monet at work, holding his palette (Musée d'Orsay, Paris), and is very unlike his roughly contemporary portrait of Alphonse Fournaise (cat. 264). In some ways, in this one canvas Renoir's treatment of his own face comes closer to Paul Cézanne's late self-portraits, which evoke the intensity of the painter's vision quite without self-adornment (for example, those in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris; and The Phillips Collection, Washington). *Self-Portrait* is also conspicuously unlike another canvas that Renoir painted around the same date that has come to be considered a self-portrait (1876; Harvard Art Museums / Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Mass.). In this unfinished painting, depicting an artist seemingly holding his brushes as he turns to look at the viewer, the sitter's facial features are much softer, his eyes larger, and the brushwork far smoother and more supple. This canvas was not recognized as a self-portrait in Renoir's lifetime, and it remains very possible that it represents one of his friends.<sup>5</sup> Comparison with a contemporary photograph of the artist (fig. 266.1) confirms the verisimilitude of the present painting, and casts further doubt on the identity of the sitter in the Fogg canvas. JH

**PROVENANCE** The artist, to Chocquet (c. 1875); Victor Chocquet, Paris (c. 1875–76, sold to de Bellio); Georges de Bellio, Paris (1876–d. 1894); Victorine and Eugène Donop de Monchy, Paris, de Bellio's daughter and son-in-law, by descent (1894–1917, sold to Rosenberg, 4 June 1917);<sup>6</sup> [Paul Rosenberg, Paris, from 1917]; Henry Bernstein, Paris (by 1929–1939, sold to Durand-Ruel, New York, 14 Feb. 1939, as agent for Clark); Robert Sterling Clark (1939–1955); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

**EXHIBITIONS** Paris 1876a, no. 214, as *Tête d'Homme*, lent by Chocquet;<sup>7</sup> Paris 1883a, no. 53, as *Portrait*, lent by de Bellio; Paris 1917, no. 60; Paris 1933a, no. 24, pl. XVII, lent by Henry Bernstein; Williamstown 1956b, no. 167, pl. 32; Chicago 1973, no. 19, ill.; Williamstown 1996–97, pp. 55–56, 58, ill. (withdrawn early, 10 Sept. 1996); Washington 1996–97, p. 258, pl. 43; Ottawa–Chicago–Fort Worth 1997–98, pp. 145–46, 148, 288–89, no. 24, ill. p. 146; London–Amsterdam–Williamstown 2000–2001, p. 160, fig. 107; Montgomery and others 2005–7, no cat.; Williamstown–New York 2006–7, pp. 258–59, fig. 189; Paris 2007–8, pp. 15, 20, 71, no. 31, ill. (installation view of de Bellio's apartment); Madrid 2010–11, pp. 26, 54–56, 60, 128, no. 5, ill.

**REFERENCES** Bertall 1876; Chaumelin 1876; Enault 1876, p. 2; Leroy 1876; Porcheron 1876; Rivière 1876; Meier-Graefe 1911, pp. 59–60, ill. (French ed., pp. 55–56, ill.); Vollard 1918, vol. 1, ill. p. 96, no. 383; Vollard 1920, p. 85 (English ed., p. 79); Duret 1924, pl. 1.; Coquiou 1925, p. 225; Meier-Graefe 1929, pp. 11, 85, fig. 58; Barnes and de Mazia 1935, pp. 392, 447, no. 51; Drucker 1944, pp. 59, 184, ill. opp. p. 59; Catinat 1952, p. 23, ill.; Kooning 1956, p. 44, ill.; Fosca 1961, pp. 65, 68, ill. on frontispiece; Rewald 1961, p. 364, ill.; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, no. 124, ill.; Wilenski 1963, p. 340; Daulte 1964, p. 75, fig. 1; Niculescu 1964, p. 268, no. 114; Schneider 1968, p. 122, ill.; Cabanne 1970, ill. on cover; Niculescu 1970, pp. 9–10, 32, 72, pls. 21, 37 (installation view of de Bellio's apartment); Daulte 1971, no. 157, ill.; Fezzi 1972, p. 97, no. 180, ill. (French ed., pp. 96–97, no. 176, ill.); White 1972, pp. 167, 169, ill.; Pach 1973, pp. 40, 51, ill.; Wheldon 1975, pl. 51; Yoshikado 1976, p. 78.; Nakayama 1979, p. 84; Thomas 1980, ill. on title page; White 1984, p. 91, ill.; London–Paris–Boston 1985–86, p. 298, ill. (French ed., p. 375, ill.); Bernard 1986, p. 57, ill.; Bonafoux 1986, p. 117, ill.; Washington–San Francisco 1986, p. 164; Cavendish 1987, p. 384; Denver 1987, p. 87, ill.; Keller 1987, pl. 4; McQuillan 1987, pp. 118–19, ill.; O'Brian 1988, pp. 54, 56, ill.; Monneret 1989, p. 151, no. 7, ill.; Distel 1990, p. 119, fig. 100; Bade 1989, pp. 78–79; Sion 1992a, p. 1, ill.; Brisbane–Melbourne–Sydney 1994–95, p. 144, ill.; Berson 1996, vol. 1, pp. 51, 57, 58, 63, 68, 70, 71, 82, 88, 103, 104, vol. 2, pp. 45, 64, no. II-HC6, ill.; Wilkin 1996, p. 49; Druick 1997, pp. 11–12, fig. 3; Ivinski 1997, pp. 532, 534, ill.; Lewis 2000, p. 177, fig. 111; Néret 2001, p. 190, ill.; Rand 2001a, pp. 19, 22, fig. 11; Cahill 2005, p. 37, ill.; Columbus 2005–6, p. 112, ill.; Dauberville and Dauberville 2007–10, vol. 1, pp. 528–29, no. 540, ill.; Distel 2009, pp. 1–2, 106, 124, fig. 106.

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a fine-weave twill fabric (22 threads/cm) with a glue/paste lining that was applied before the painting left France. The six-member mortise-and-tenon stretcher may be original. The impastos are in excellent condition, although one bit of flipped-over paint is embedded into the surface in the right background at eyebrow height. There are drying cracks through the thick impastos and small old losses in the paint and ground layer, scattered mainly in the blue color. During a 1994 cleaning, a thin

layer of old varnish was left on the hair, beard, jacket, and background areas due to some solvent sensitivity. Very few retouches appear under ultraviolet light. In 2005, remaining losses in the background and proper right eye were filled and inpainted. Flaking along the edges, caused by the adhesive tension of the paper tape, was consolidated.

The ground is a commercially applied pale gray layer, which shows through some of the costume and particularly the background areas. There may also be an artist-applied flesh tone laid in below the face colors, which is visible in thinner passages of the forehead. No underdrawing was detected, although there may be a thin blue paint sketch, still visible in the costume outlines. An incised line along the top edge and charcoal lines in the lower right, both drawn through the wet paint, suggest that the picture was squared up for stretching after it was painted. The wet-into-wet paint handling is very thick and vehicular in the face and hair, with slightly lower brushwork in the costume. The background paint is so thinned by dilution that it lacks body thickness. Colors used in the flesh were pre-blended on the palette; while colors in other areas, such as the mustache, were juxtaposed and blended on the picture surface.

1. Porcheron 1876; reprinted in Berson 1996, vol. 1, p. 103: “un portrait de l’auteur tout en hachures.”
2. Vollard 1938, pp. 184–5; translation from Ottawa–Chicago–Fort Worth 1997–98, p. 145.
3. See Ottawa–Chicago–Fort Worth 1997–98, p. 148.
4. See London–Paris–Boston 1985–86, pp. 12–13.
5. For further discussion, concluding that the Fogg canvas should indeed be regarded as a self-portrait, see Ottawa–Chicago–Fort Worth 1997–98, pp. 148, 289.
6. There is a handwritten receipt for this sale from Donop de Monchy to Rosenberg in the Rosenberg Archives. See The Paul Rosenberg Archives, a gift of Elaine and Alexandre Rosenberg, I.C.6.a., The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.
7. Charles Moffett and Ruth Berson both identify no. 214 as a portrait of Victor Chocquet and no. 211 as an unlocated portrait owned by Chocquet, and suggest that the Clark self-portrait was exhibited but not listed in the catalogue. See Washington–San Francisco 1986, p. 164, and Berson 1996, vol. 2, p. 45, no. II-HC6. Colin Bailey, however, proposes no. 214 as the Clark picture and no. 211 as the portrait of Chocquet, citing such evidence as Rivière’s review, where the critic mentions both “a portrait of an old man and his own” (“un portrait de vieillard et le sien”), presumably referring to the portrait of Chocquet and to the self-portrait. See Ottawa–Chicago–Fort Worth 1997–98, pp. 145, 289n2, 289n14.

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**267 | Woman Crocheting** c. 1875

Oil on canvas, 73.5 x 60.3 cm

Lower right: Renoir.

1955.603

A young woman sitting in a domestic interior is viewed in near profile, her attention focused on her crocheting; her figure is brightly lit from a light source—presumably a window—behind her right shoulder. Her long red-blond hair hangs loose, and she is humbly dressed in a plain skirt and a shift, which has slipped from her shoulder, baring her skin to the light. Her dress suggests that we should view her as a servant; the fireplace behind her, and the glass and vase placed on it, would appear to belong to a bourgeois household.

Images of women sewing were common in French genre painting in these years. Jean-François Millet, among others, had popularized the theme in his images of peasant interiors. Yet the associations of Renoir’s canvas are rather different. By placing the figure in a bourgeois interior, Renoir brings the figure emphatically within the realm of the art viewer rather than relegating her to the seemingly remote world of the rural peasant. We, the viewers, are invited to imagine that we are observing her unawares within this private space, which heightens the sexual charge of her undress. Yet this seeming informality is carefully staged; the detail of the chemise slipping from the model’s shoulder was a regular topos in mildly eroticized genre painting, notably in the work of Jean-Honoré Fragonard and Jean-Baptiste Greuze, and was repeated, in a more overtly erotic and voyeuristic way, in *Sleeping Girl* (see cat. 276).

It seems likely that the model who posed for the *Woman Crocheting* was Nini Lopez, who sat for many of Renoir’s paintings in the mid-1870s, including, it seems, *La Loge* (The Courtauld Gallery, London).<sup>1</sup> Georges Rivière, a close friend of Renoir in these years, noted that Nini modeled for many of his paintings between 1874 and 1880; she had “an admirable head of golden-blond hair” and was “the ideal model: punctual, serious, discreet,” though finally she disappointed her watchful mother by marrying a minor actor.<sup>2</sup> While she was modeling for Renoir, Rivière noted, the artist often depicted her as she sat sewing or reading in the corner of his studio, after a formal posing session. It seems likely that *Woman Crocheting* is the result of one of these occasions,