



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

VOLUME ONE

Edited by Sarah Lees

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

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Kathryn Calley Galitz, Alexis Goodin, Marc Gotlieb, John House,
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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

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Production by The Production Department,
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

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. Roglán, James Rosenow, Zoë 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

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including those of the actresses Brigitte Bardot and Gina Lollabrigida. He and his wife gave their sumptuous home, known as the Villa Fiesole, to the city of Cannes, where it is now open to the public. KP

PROVENANCE Robert Sterling Clark (1936–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS None

REFERENCES Cat. 123: Paris 1966
Cat. 124: None

TECHNICAL REPORT Cat. 123: The support is a coarse, unlined canvas (16 x 19 threads/cm), which is still supple. The pine stretcher is a five-member mortise-and-tenon design, and the “10 F” stamp on the back probably refers to the #10 standard French portrait size. The back fabric edges are all fraying slightly, and the left edge is the raw unprimed selvage of a commercially prepared roll of fabric. There is some cracking beginning along the fold-over edges, and some wear at the corners from frame contact. Minor traction cracks appear in the eye pupils. Ground cracks are beginning to form in the corners of the picture, running horizontally along the fabric’s warp threads. A chunk of charcoal is deposited near the lower edge, and a brush hair is embedded in the lower left paint. An old scuff, made when the paint was wet, runs through the signature. There is no varnish. Although there is a slight gloss in the flesh areas, the surface is more matte than on the companion portrait: her mouth, eyes, and some dark hair strokes are especially matte.

The commercial ground layer is an off-white color. The charcoal underdrawing is visible to the unaided eye in several hair strokes. Infrared reflectography of the drawing offers a more subtle facial expression in both the eyes and the mouth than the final result. The artist adjusted the jawline a number of times, and altered the focus of the eyes from glancing away from the viewer to a more direct, forward-facing gaze. The pupils are more matte than the surrounding paint, and may be the result of last-minute changes. The filmy costume shows little underdrawing line work, although there are smudges of charcoal on the left side. Although the paint is applied wet-into-wet in long thin strokes, from a slight distance the scumbling technique resembles a pastel in effect. There seems to be a clear, gritty component in the purplish red pigment. The paint layering on the flesh areas is the most substantial, and the white highlight lines are oddly prominent.

Cat. 124: The support is a coarse, unlined canvas (16 x 19 threads/cm) that is still flexible. The “10 F” stamp on the reverse may refer to the standard French portrait size. The five-member pine stretcher has a horizontal crossbar. There are no cracks in the paint except for some small traction cracks in what may be ink details. The edges and corners show some wear from framing. There is no varnish. Ultraviolet light fluorescence is confined to variations within the pig-

ments. Some horizontal warp threads are more pronounced on the surface, and there is a slight sheen in the face and collar in an otherwise matte surface reflectance.

The ground is an off-white commercially prepared layer, extending to the back edges of the wrapped tacking margins. A strong charcoal underdrawing contributes to much of the final image. The lines are more numerous when viewed with infrared equipment, and show a slight change in the tie as well as the line of the proper left shoulder. As on the companion portrait, the paint is applied wet-into-wet in feathery, unblended scumbles that resemble pastel work. Some of the underdrawing lines have been reinforced in the paint layer.

1. RSC Diary, 11 Mar. 1939.
2. Ibid.
3. RSC Diary, 15 Mar. 1939.
4. Paris 1966.

Francisco Domingo Marqués

Spanish, 1842–1920

125 | Drinking Song c. 1890

Oil on panel, 18.7 x 14.6 cm

Lower left: F. Domingo

1955.715

In the interior of a tavern, a group of men dressed in late seventeenth-century fashion drink and play music next to a fireplace. Three men in the foreground sit around a table with one playing a laud and singing a song, engaging his companions sitting before him. A dog lies quietly next to the musician, and in the background, two more individuals sit around a table, one of whom has a drum at his feet.

This work perfectly exemplifies Domingo Marqués’s finesse in painting historical genre scenes, in which he specialized. These representations, which were popular during much of the later half of the nineteenth century, evoked the everyday life of earlier periods and generally consisted of costumed figures in rustic or elegant settings that could be identified as belonging to a specific time or place. The revival of interest in the art of seventeenth century Flemish and Dutch artists such as David Teniers (1610–1690) and Philips Wouwerman (1619–1668) played an important role in the popularity of these scenes, especially in France. Perhaps the most prominent practitioner was Jean Louis Ernest Meis-



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sonier (1815–1891), who built much of his reputation and success on such historical genre scenes.

Domingo Marqués moved to Paris in 1875 and lived there for almost forty years. This long sojourn was thanks in great part to his success at creating genre paintings. This achievement is reflected in the many positive reviews he received during his lifetime, including those from the Spanish artist Mariano Fortuny (1838–1874) who hailed him as the “Spanish Meissonier.”¹ His paintings sold readily, often handled by some of the most prominent French art dealers, such as Adolphe Goupil and Henri Haro, as well as by important American agents like George A. Lucas. In fact, it is documented that many of Domingo Marqués’s paintings were acquired by American collectors, works that probably still remain in private collections in the United States.

Many of the finest works by Domingo Marqués, such as *Drinking Song*, were done in small format on panels. On these restricted surfaces, the artist displayed his technical virtuosity, reflected in the extraordinary care and refinement with which he applied the pigment and depicted numerous details. His dexterity with the brush can be seen in the fine modeling of the hands of the laúd player, the facial expressions of the figures, and the numerous objects found in the scene, such as the pitcher and glasses on the table and the three clay vessels sitting on the mantelpiece. The largest of the containers was originally bigger, but the painter corrected it in order to comply with the scale of the rest of the composition.

Closely related to *Drinking Song* is another painting by Domingo Marqués entitled *Love Song* (location

unknown).² Both paintings repeat many of the same elements, including the fireplace, the stool, the pitcher on the table, and the musician playing the laud, with some slight variations. The atmosphere is identical, with a man playing a string instrument, another smoking a pipe, and a third listening to the music. A collection of objects similar to those seen in *Drinking Song* is depicted in another Domingo Marqués painting, entitled *Concert in the Tavern* (private collection).³ This panel, signed and dated Paris 1891, features a man playing the same laud and the same dog adopting an identical pose, as well as a helmet and a piece of drapery resting on the same stool. The reutilization of such objects in different paintings was a common practice among genre painters, as they often collected decorative objects and costumes of the period and kept them in their studios to enhance the accuracy of their historical scenes.

The similarities between *Drinking Song* and *Concert in the Tavern* suggest that the Clark painting was most likely also made in France around 1890, a period when Domingo Marqués was fully established in Paris. In addition, a label on the back of the panel for the color merchant Alexandre in Paris indicates the probable source of Domingo Marqués's panel and paints.

By the early twentieth century, the work was in the possession of E. H. Cuthbertson, whose name is also recorded on a label on the panel reverse. Cuthbertson, as the sale of his collection reveals, owned an impressive group of paintings, including numerous works of the British School by artists such as John Constable, George Romney, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, as well as of the French Barbizon School with works by Camille Corot, Narcisse Virgile Diaz de la Peña, Charles-François Daubigny, and Théodore Rousseau. The only two Spanish paintings that appeared in the sale catalogue were by Domingo Marqués, one entitled *The Favorite Charger*,⁴ and the work now in the Clark, which sold for 57.15 pounds. About twenty-five years later, on 19 January 1935, Sterling Clark purchased the *tableautin* in London. Although there is documentation proving Domingo Marqués sold numerous genre paintings to American collectors during the last third of the nineteenth century, *Drinking Song* is the only work of this type by this Spanish painter in an American museum. MR

PROVENANCE E. H. Cuthbertson, Hertfordshire (until 1909, his sale, Christie's, London, 21 May 1909, no. 73, sold to Leggatt's); [Leggatt's, London, from 1909]; [N. Mitchell, London, sold to Clark, 19 Jan. 1935]; Robert Sterling Clark (1935–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Williamstown 1979b, no cat.; Williamstown 1983a, no cat.; Williamstown 1988b, no cat.; Williamstown 1988–89, no cat.; Williamstown 1992a, no cat.

REFERENCES None

TECHNICAL REPORT The support is a mahogany panel, 1.1 cm thick, with the grain running vertically and chamfers along the back of all four original edges. The panel has a slight convex warp in the upper half. There is a label on the back for the Parisian colorman Alexandre. The artist added a strip of mahogany (0.5 cm thick) of uneven width to the right edge during the process of painting. Although the paint was applied in a continuous manner onto the addition, a crack has formed across the join. There are only a few age cracks in the paint and ground layers. A lower yellow color is oozing up through cracks in the background paint above the yellow sleeve. Furrowed paint in the lower left is the result of early frame pressure, and frame abrasion is worse along the right edge. There is solvent abrasion in the signature and on the stretchers of the left stool, and pitting at the right end of the mantelpiece. The varnish is a slightly cracked yellow natural resin with darker residues trapped in paint recesses. In ultraviolet light, uneven vertical brush marks are detectable, as is a slightly heavier varnish deposit in the upper right. The painting was likely cleaned and revarnished during a 1935 treatment by Madame Coince.

The ground, which is an off-white color, was sanded prior to painting. No underdrawing was found, although there may be a brown ink or paint wash below the final colors. In reflected light, alterations in the paint can be seen in the seat of the musician and the entire position of the left-most figure. Microscopic examination seems to confirm the latter, as green paint is detected below the background color to the left of the green-shirted man. The paint is applied wet-into-wet in a vehicular consistency using a choppy style for the figures and a smoother finish for the background. The impastos have a knobby texture in the whites and bright colors, and are interspersed with glaze layers. Some final accents are done in black ink.

1. Temple 1908, p. 85.
2. This painting is reproduced in Rodríguez García 1950, p. 32.
3. This painting is reproduced in González and Martí 1989, p. 97.
4. Cuthbertson 1909, no. 74.