



**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

With contributions by Katharine J. Albert, Philippe Bordes, Dan Cohen,
Kathryn Calley Galitz, Alexis Goodin, Marc Gotlieb, John House,
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Kelly Pask, Elizabeth A. Pergam, Kathryn A. Price, Mark A. Roglán,
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
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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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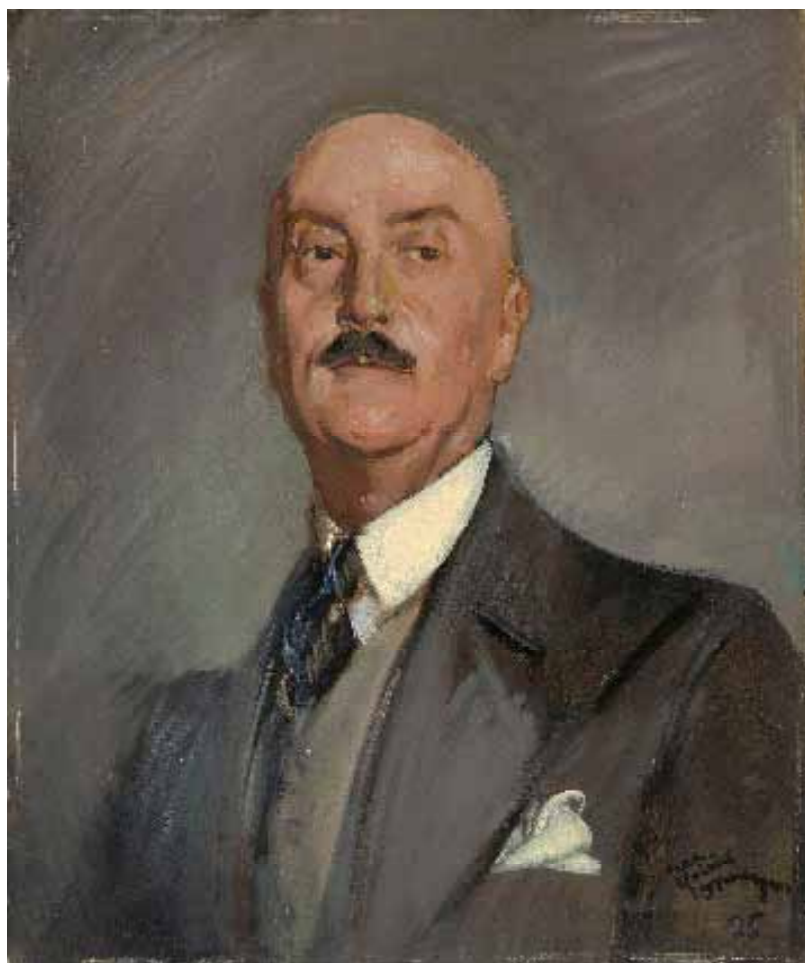
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Jean-Gabriel Domergue

French, 1889–1962

122 | Joseph Caillaux 1926

Charcoal and oil on laminate cardboard, 55.2 x 46 cm

Lower right: Jean / Gabriel / Domergue / 26

1955.718

A native of Bordeaux, Jean-Gabriel Domergue was schooled in Nancy before he went to Paris for his artistic training. He enrolled at the famed Académie Julian, studying under the direction of Jules-Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911) and Tony Robert-Fleury (1837–1911), and obtained the usual grounding in life drawing and naturalism characteristic of the academic tradition. In 1906, at the age of seventeen, Domergue debuted at the Salon. He showed great promise in his early

works, which ranged from history and genre painting to portraiture and landscape, and soon cultivated friendships with several important artists of the time, including the elderly Edgar Degas. Despite an association with painters known for their artistic experimentation, Domergue settled on a more traditional approach to his subjects, and enjoyed a long and profitable career, particularly as a portrait painter and illustrator.

This portrait is characteristic of Domergue's rather straightforward depiction of a male sitter. While offering an intimate bust-length view and giving the appearance of having been quickly painted, the overall look of the portrait is formal and serious, and one befitting the subject portrayed. The sitter is Joseph Caillaux (1863–1944), a French government official who served as finance minister and subsequently prime minister in the early years of the twentieth century.¹ Today he is best known for an unsuccessful attempt to institute an income tax in France and for his close association with a scandalous murder that curtailed his career, although not permanently. In 1914, his wife, the former Henriette Rainouard (1874–1943), whom he married in 1911, went to the office of Gaston Calmette, the prominent editor of the newspaper *Le Figaro*, and shot him to death. Madame Caillaux claimed to be avenging her husband's honor after Calmette published some criticism and innuendo regarding her husband's professional and personal life. She was acquitted following a trial that tantalized French society.² By the time this portrait was painted, Caillaux had pushed aside some of his former notoriety, which included, in addition to the Calmette incident, his own imprisonment for suspected treason, to become finance minister again in 1925. In the painting, Caillaux's formal dress, impervious expression, raised chin, and far-off look lend the portrait a dignity suiting the sitter's station in life and the tribulations he endured.

Domergue exhibited his portrait of Caillaux, as well as two studies for it, in Paris soon after its execution as part of a monographic exhibition comprising 225 works. It is not clear when, where, or why Clark acquired the portrait; he may have purchased it from the 1926 exhibition. Sterling and Francine Clark may have known Joseph Caillaux personally. The couple, at the time unmarried, was living in Paris during the murder trial and would undoubtedly have been among those watching the drama play out. The portrait, painted a dozen years after that pivotal event, may have particularly appealed to the Clarks, for in 1936 Domergue painted the couple's own portraits (cats. 123–24). KP

PROVENANCE Robert Sterling Clark (until 1955); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Paris 1926a, no. 10.

REFERENCES None

TECHNICAL REPORT The support is a gray cardboard laminate 0.4 cm thick, which has become brittle and slightly convex. The yellowing of the support is visible on the front, and the edges and lower corners are dented and frayed. The surface of the board is shiny as if sealed with glue size or varnish prior to being painted, possibly to fix the charcoal from smudging. There are inpainted spots of charcoal dust on the face, apparently transferred from another surface. Frame abrasion has occurred on all sides, but is worst along the bottom edge. There are small old and new scratches to the left of the signature. There is no continuous varnish over the paint film, although there is some ultraviolet light fluorescence in a stroke running across the top of the head and in the whites of the face. The surface reflectance is generally matte, with a low sheen in some areas, possibly indicating that some color mixtures include a resinous component.

There is no ground layer and much of the charcoal underdrawing remains as part of the final image. Charcoal lines are visible outlining the head, ear, and nose, and can be detected through the thin paint at many form edges. The eyes contain a good deal of charcoal. There is a paint change in the proper left shoulder, which started on a higher line. The paint is applied in quick wide strokes, varying from thin to moderate paste consistency. Some parts of the jacket are very thinly executed, and the background is very summarily laid in with sweeping strokes around the sitter. A sprinkling of charcoal particles on the paint seems to be transferred from another surface. The signature may be written with black ink and a brush.

1. Among the biographies of him is Bredin 1985. Caillaux's own memoirs were published in three volumes between 1942 and 1947.
2. Berenson 1995 and Dumarçet 1999 are two of the several publications dealing with this event.



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123 | Francine J. M. Clark 1936

Charcoal and oil on canvas, 55 x 46 cm
Lower right: Jean / Gabriel / Domergue
1955.719

124 | Robert Sterling Clark 1936

Charcoal and oil on canvas, 55 x 46 cm
Lower right: Jean / Gabriel / Domergue
1955.720

Little is known of the circumstances surrounding these portraits, which were executed in Paris by the popular society painter Jean-Gabriel Domergue (see cat. 122). Sterling and Francine Clark, both in their early sixties by the time, are each shown in bust-length format against muted backgrounds. Mrs. Clark's portrait exhibits a charming grace that is not surprising given her beauty. Her pleasant expression is complemented by silvery hair highlighted with bluish streaks, and by