



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

**VOLUME ONE**

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the literature, from the London *Times* obituary through the lavishly illustrated monograph published by Chris Beetles in 1986, where of two hundred works only eighteen are oil paintings.

Because of Goodwin's decades-long association with Ilfracombe and the dearth of oil paintings within his oeuvre, it is difficult to date *The Bristol Channel* with certainty. Nevertheless, the coloration and composition are similar to another oil, *Punch and Judy on the Beach at Ilfracombe*, which is signed and dated 1897.<sup>5</sup> In both, the turquoise water and the gaily colored holiday-goers give a sense of the attractions of the north Devon coast in the late Victorian period. EP

**PROVENANCE** [Ackermann & Johnson, Ltd., London, sold to Manton 17 Nov. 1994]; Sir Edwin A. G. Manton, New York (1994–d. 2005); Manton Family Art Foundation (2005–7, given to the Clark); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007.

**EXHIBITIONS** None

**REFERENCES** None

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a radially cut light-colored hardwood panel, probably poplar, 0.5 cm thick. The back of the panel is chamfered 1.3 cm on all four edges. There is no finish on the reverse and only a very slight convex warp. The painting looks recently cleaned, possibly in 1994 at the time of sale. The paint is in very good condition, with only a couple of slightly flattened impastos, probably the result of carrying the wet picture in a box or with other panels. There may be a few areas of slight solvent abrasion where glaze strokes pass over impastos. There is very minor inpainting in the upper left sky. The new varnish has an even sheen.

There is no ground layer, and the wood is visible through the paint layer in a few foreground areas. Sanding marks are visible across the wood grain under low magnification. No underdrawing was detected. An area above the top of the flagpole may be painted over as seen in infrared examination. The distant ship in the upper right was begun about 1.3 cm lower on the water and then partially painted out. In general, the paint is quite crisp and clean in handling, with only a few glaze details over thicker paint strokes. The paint stops short of most of the right and left edges. The painting is signed and titled in black ink.

1. See May 1983 and Smiles 1995.

2. Christie's 2007, pp. 8–9.

3. Ruskin 1903–12, pp. 212–13.

4. Quoted in Beetles 1986, no. 195.

5. *Ibid.*, no. 58.

## Jules-Adolphe Goupil

French, 1839–1883

### 158 | **Woman Seated** c. 1875

Oil on panel, 32.5 x 23.4 cm

Upper right: J Goupil

1955-748

### 159 | **Woman Wearing a Hat with a Blue Ribbon**

c. 1875

Oil on panel, 27.2 x 20.8 cm

Upper right: JG [monogram]

1955-778

Both of these little paintings on panel are characteristic of the work of the relatively little known Jules-Adolphe Goupil, and they could in fact also represent the same sitter. Neither painting is dated, but the fashions each woman wears suggest a date of about 1875 for the two images. In both works, the elaborate ensembles each woman wears are of primary importance, although the strong individuality of the models' features keeps the images from becoming mere decoration. The paintings are typical of the small, pleasing pictures that Sterling and Francine Clark liked to surround themselves with in their various homes.

The family origins of Jules-Adolphe Goupil are still somewhat unclear. He shares his surname with the well-known family of print publishers and art dealers, and is listed as the son of the patriarch of the firm, Adolphe Goupil (1806–1893), in the official French biographical dictionary.<sup>1</sup> When Clark purchased the *Woman Seated*, he wondered if there was indeed a relationship between the painter and the famous Goupil family, but he was unable to ascertain if this was the case from either the firm selling him the picture, or from another art dealer.<sup>2</sup> While Adolphe Goupil did have family members involved in the art world, including his sons Albert and Léon, as well as the successful painter Jean-Léon Gérôme, who was his son-in-law,<sup>3</sup> Jules-Adolphe seems not to have been the child of Adolphe Goupil. It is more likely that the painter under discussion is the son of the artist Frédéric-Auguste-Antoine Goupil (1817–1878), also known as Goupil-Fesquet. This particular Goupil is best known for accompanying the painter Horace Vernet, son of Carle Vernet, to



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Algeria and for the resulting illustrations he made for the publication *Voyage d'Horace Vernet en Orient* (1843). If this relationship is indeed the correct one, then the younger Goupil's early training was certainly in the Romantic style of his father, who also wrote several treatises on artistic technique.<sup>4</sup> Jules-Adolphe Goupil then entered the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris to study in the traditional manner, primarily under the tutelage of the brothers Ary and Henri Scheffer. Goupil first exhibited at the Salon in 1857, and received medals for his paintings there throughout the 1870s. He also showed his work, which consisted of portraits, history paintings, and genre scenes, in Brussels and Munich. The work that brought Goupil his greatest acclaim was probably the historical painting known as *The Last Day of Captivity of Madame Roland* (1875), now in the Musée de l'Hôtel de Ville d'Amboise.

In *Woman Wearing a Hat with a Blue Ribbon*, which was the first of the two paintings by the artist to be purchased by Sterling Clark, the overall appearance of the sitter is elegant, and her mood is introspective. The woman is shown in profile from the bust upward, her pale skin in direct contrast to the painting's dark background. Her elaborate *chapeau*, with its shimmering blue ribbons and white plume, dominates the composition and seems to weigh heavily upon the thoughtful countenance of the woman. In a similar manner, the voluminous bodice of her rust-colored dress and the high, white ruffled collar engulf her neck and torso. Close inspection of the left side of the painting, together with the technical examination, reveals that there were once ruffles down the front bodice of the dress as well. Had the artist not removed this extra ornamentation, the clothing would have



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seemed to engulf the sitter in an almost overpowering manner. Now, however, the general effect is balanced by the strong individuality of the woman's facial features, with her patrician nose, dark eyebrows, and full, slightly parted lips.

Clark purchased *Woman Seated* a little more than two years later. It is a charming and rather detailed little painting that, according to Sterling Clark, was "just the kind of small picture I like and quite well painted."<sup>5</sup> In it, an elaborately dressed young woman sits on a bench, her gloved right hand resting on the top of her parasol. She wears an elegant daytime ensemble, and is perhaps readying for, or alternatively returning from, a promenade. The woman's outfit is decorated with a multitude of pleating, lace, and flourishes, all carefully delineated by the artist in small scale. The coloring is rather muted, as the woman is dressed in brown and

tan, and is set against a dark green background. The earth tones are enlivened by touches of blue used to decorate the parasol and the plumed hat she wears. Since the woman is shown in full length and in rather small scale, it is clear that the artist wanted to present an image of current style, much like a fashion plate, rather than a portrait of an individual. Given the ubiquity of Parisian fashion as presented by the popular French periodicals devoted to current dress, such as the *Journal des Desmoiselles* or *La Mode Illustrée*, it is not surprising to see that painters working in Paris would emphasize current fashion as well.<sup>6</sup>

The dark hair and strong facial features of the sitters in both pictures, together with their elegant couture and the similar style of their forward-tilted hats, make it relatively certain that the works were painted at about the same time, and probably show the same

model. Whether the Clarks consciously chose to bring these two works together or whether chance and consistency of taste played their role, the two paintings offer a charming display of Parisian fashion and style about 1875. KP

**PROVENANCE** Cat. 158: Private collection, London;<sup>7</sup> [H. Blairman and Sons, New York, sold to Clark, 25 Nov. 1942, as *A Victorian Lady*]; Robert Sterling Clark (1942–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

Cat. 159: [Carroll Carstairs, New York, sold to Clark, 31 May 1940, as *The Blue Hat*]; Robert Sterling Clark (1940–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

**EXHIBITIONS** Cat. 158: New York 1943b, no. 91; New York 1946a, no. 41, as *Lady with a Parasol*; Williamstown 1956a, pl. S-9; Williamstown 1959b, ill.; Williamstown 1979b, no cat.; Memphis and others 1995–96, p. 94, no. 43, ill.

Cat. 159: Williamstown 1959b, unnumbered cat., ill.; Williamstown 1979b, no cat.; Williamstown 1982a, no. 10, ill.

**REFERENCES** Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, nos. 68–69, ill.

**TECHNICAL REPORT** Cat. 158: The support is a mahogany panel 1.3 cm thick, with a vertical grain. The reverse may be varnished, the chamfers are 1.9 cm wide, and the panel has a slightly twisted warp running from the lower left to the upper right corner. The widely spaced traction crackle in the dress is accentuated by a dark material within the cracks; it is unclear if this is a lower paint layer or a later retouching. Some abrasion can be seen in the dark petticoat, the hat feathers, and the outlines of the figure. There is a smooth, painted-out shape to the lower left of the stool legs. The signature in the upper right, applied in what may be brown ink, is abraded. The examination prior to a 1994 partial cleaning of the figure noted extensive overglazing, especially in the background, and very dense ultraviolet fluorescence, with retouches beneath a tinted varnish. The background still fluoresces quite densely, and there is an old hairline crack network in the remaining early varnish. There is some fog-giness or bloom in the old varnish in the right background near the sitter's knee, in the right half of the skirt, and along the lower edge. Although most of the surface retains at least some old varnish, parts of the face, bodice, and skirt are more thoroughly cleaned.

The off-white ground is likely comprised of several commercially applied layers, with an artist-applied reddish imprimatura layer. Some indication of an underdrawing in the bodice and gloved hand can be seen using infrared reflectography. Dark, nearly vertical strokes are also visible in the background. A brown paint sketch is visible at the edges of the costume below the final paint layer. The paint is applied in thin, vehicular strokes and very low fluid impastos. Parts of the final image retain the brown preliminary sketch. The

background, which was created using a green glaze over a warm orange-brown color, produces a grainy appearance in low magnification. A thin circular area in the lower left, where the upper paint appears to be missing, looks scratched out when viewed in infrared reflectography. A circular shape in the upper right and dark curved bands through the background may relate to the wood grain.

Cat. 159: The support is a mahogany panel 1.1 cm thick, with a vertical grain. The reverse is coated with varnish and has chamfered edges 1.9 cm wide. The large penciled “3” on the back may refer to the standard #3 French portrait size. There is extensive frame abrasion to the paint and ground layers along the top and bottom edges. Traction cracks that occur throughout the background appear to be submerged below overpaint. Scattered traction cracks in the hat outlines, feathers, and hair are inpainted, and the right side of the red costume, where it merges with the background, has been extensively repainted. Gold leaf debris is visible in the hat bow. The varnish, which has its own crackle network running with the wood grain, has a moderate fluorescence in ultraviolet light. A fingerprint and muddy area occur in the dark portion of the neck below the lace collar, and there are several areas of fractured varnish. The painting was probably last cleaned in 1935 by Mme Coince of Paris.

The ground is a commercially primed off-white layer, with a thin gray-brown imprimatura layer, possibly applied by the artist. There are dark outlines, possibly paint, in the face and hat, with additional lines around the nose that are visible in infrared reflectography. The wide traction cracks, hidden below the overpaint, are also visible in infrared. There may be a brown paint sketch below the final colors. There may also be a paint change, seen in reflected light, where the ruffles once extended down the front of the costume. Cracks through the red and white costume reveal black paint below. The thin, vehicular paint was applied with small brushes. The background glaze was applied after the figure was completed, and it is presently muddy, probably due to overpaint.

1. See H. Blémont's entry on Jules Adolphe Goupil in *Dictionnaire de biographie française* 1933–, vol. 16, p. 762.
2. RSC Diary, 25 and 27 Nov. 1942.
3. See, for example, Bordeaux–New York–Pittsburgh 2000–2001. Gérôme married Adolphe Goupil's daughter, Marie, in 1863.
4. His books include *Le pastel, simplifié et perfectionné* (Paris, 1864) and others on watercolor and oil painting.
5. RSC Diary, 25 Nov. 1942.
6. For more on this subject, see Steele 1988.
7. According to H. Blairman and Sons, who sold the painting to Clark; RSC Diary, 25 Nov. 1942.