



**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

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## Daniel Hernández

Peruvian, active in France, 1856–1932

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**172 | Pierrette** c. 1878

Oil on panel, 27 x 19 cm  
Lower right: Daniel Hernandez  
1955.765

This painting was sold to Robert Sterling Clark in 1935 as *Pierrette*, although the picture has also been known as *Girl with Roses* over the years. Hernández treated the subject of a woman in costume several times, including at least two other *Pierrettes*, and two paintings of clowns. The *Pierrette* in the collection of Glasgow’s Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum measures 63.5 x 34.3 cm, quite a bit larger than the Clark painting. A collection catalogue from 1904 describes this version as a “woman in fancy costume, with a fan

in her right hand, half resting on a console table, on which is a bouquet of roses.”<sup>1</sup> Another version with the same woman and costume sold at Christie’s, London as *The Masked Ball* in 1989.<sup>2</sup> In this picture, the woman stands rather than sits or leans against a table—it is as though the three paintings together represent a progression showing the same figure moving through each position. In each of the pictures, the woman wears the same cream or off-white sleeveless dress with light blue circular decorations attached to the bodice and a wide sash gathered around her hips. She also wears a pointed white hat with matching blue ribbon at its base, pale blue stockings, gold bangles midway up her forearm, a gold ring, and delicate pointed cream shoes, visible in two of the paintings. Hernández changed the accessories in each version. The model holds a white feathered fan near the side of her face in the Glasgow picture, while in *The Masked Ball*, she wears a pinkish cape trimmed in white fur draped over one shoulder, and clasps a black mask in her left hand, in keeping with the painting’s title.

Hernández was not alone in his interest in depicting Pierrette, the female counterpart to the character Pierrot, or Pedrolino, from the Italian commedia dell’arte. Numerous artists and writers in the nineteenth century used these characters as inspiration for, or direct subjects of, their works. The figure of Pierrot appears in a wide range of depictions, including Jean-Antoine Watteau’s *Gilles* (c. 1720; Musée du Louvre, Paris), Jean-Léon Gérôme’s *Duel After the Ball* (1857; Musée Condé, Chantilly), and Nadar’s photographs of 1854–55 of Charles Deburau in the role of Pierrot, among many others. Pierrette was not one of the original commedia dell’arte characters, but had emerged by the later nineteenth century, particularly in France.

Artists working in the same highly finished, academic style that Hernández employed, including Jean Béraud (1849–1935) and Raimundo de Madrazo (1841–1920), often painted these popular subjects. Béraud adapted the Harlequin costume in several paintings of a female figure, Harlequine, wearing a skirt with the traditional diamond-shaped pattern.<sup>3</sup> Madrazo’s *Pierrette* (private collection) was perhaps one of the better-known versions, as it was exhibited at the 1878 Paris Exposition Universelle.<sup>4</sup> It was described as the “fresh and attractive work of a colorist” in a review of the Exposition in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, and was illustrated with Madrazo’s drawing after his painting.<sup>5</sup>

Pierrot was usually shown in a billowing white suit

with large circular pom-poms that ran up the center of the jacket and highlighted the pockets. In their *Pierrettes*, Hernández and Madrazo clearly represent the female version of this costume. The sitter in the Clark painting has the typical characteristics of a Pierrette—a pointed hat with a ribbon tied around it (the hat was originally pointier in the initial underdrawing) and a white dress with large circular pom-poms. Rather than suggesting a specific theater figure, however, Hernández depicts a fashionable woman ready for a night out, wearing a dress inspired by the stock character. Her smile and sideways glance at the viewer add to the coquettish nature of her pose, her cheeky look enhanced by raised eyebrows. Hernández must have known Madrazo’s *Pierrette*, since the painting had been exhibited in 1878, and the two artists moved in the same circles, which included Mariano Fortuny (1838–1874), Madrazo’s brother-in-law. Indeed, the model in Hernández’s *The Masked Ball*, with her white-trimmed pink cape and black mask, is strikingly similar to Madrazo’s *Pierrette*.

The broad appeal of these figures extended into popular imagery in the work of artists like Jules Chéret, several of whose lithographs—including *Columbine and Harlequin*—Sterling Clark owned.<sup>6</sup> Clark also acquired a painting by Madrazo of a similar subject, *The Singer* (cat. 202), which depicts a woman in a diamond-patterned dress that suggests the Harlequine. The Clarks clearly appreciated the polished style and attractive subjects of these works, and, given Francine’s background as an actress at the Comédie Française, their theatrical context may have held additional appeal. KAP

**PROVENANCE** [N. Mitchell, London, sold to Clark, 11 Sept. 1935, as *Pierrette*]; Robert Sterling Clark (1935–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

**EXHIBITIONS** Williamstown 1979b, no cat.

**REFERENCES** None

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a mahogany panel 1.1 cm thick with chamfers 1.3 cm wide on the reverse edges. Severe frame abrasion and chipping paint are evident in the lower right corner. An old frame rabbet furrow along the lower edge suggests that the painting was originally framed while the paint was still drying. There are narrow drying cracks in the red background color. The varnish, although thin, is now yellowed. The ultraviolet light fluorescence is even and light, and it appears from close examination of the paint layer that the varnish has never been removed.

The ground appears to be composed of two smooth-surfaced, off-white layers, which show through in many places. There may be graphite underdrawing lines, reinforced with a gray wash sketch. In infrared reflectography, strong outlines of forms, such as the hat and arms, are detectable, showing that the hat was more pointed in the initial drawing. The painting is executed with quick, open brushwork. The background colors are particularly vehicular in consistency and were painted after the figure. There are low impastos in the flowers and the lace of the skirt hem. The painted image stops short of all four edges.

1. Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum 1904, p. 86. The author would like to thank Hugh Stevenson, Curator of British Art at Kelvingrove, for his assistance.
2. Christie's 1989, no. 61.
3. O 421–24.
4. For a reproduction of this work, see Christie's 2000c, no. 85.
5. Lefort 1878, p. 482, ill. between pp. 478 and 479: "un frais et appétissant morceau de coloriste."
6. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.2392.

**173 | The Model** c. 1900

Oil on canvas, 52.7 x 34.5 cm  
 Lower left: Daniel Hernandez  
 1955.764

Although Daniel Hernández is not well known today, he was a lauded artist at the turn of the century. Not only did he win awards in Paris for his paintings, but he was also a major artistic influence in his native Peru. Born to the Spaniard Don Leocadio Hernández and the Peruvian Doña Basilia Morillo, Hernández began taking art lessons at the age of twelve in the capital Lima, in the workshop of the Italian artist Leonardo Barbieri. He traveled to Italy on a scholarship in the 1870s and moved to Paris after about ten years. In 1900, he won a gold medal at the Exposition Universelle, and the following year he was awarded the *chevalier* of the Legion of Honor.

As *The Model* demonstrates, Hernández was expert at painting diaphanous material, allowing the shape of the figure underneath to be seen through the sheer fabric. Painted with bravura technique, *The Model* has been put down on canvas rather quickly. Both the bust-length profile format and the rapid execution recall the work of Giovanni Boldini, with whom

Hernández was acquainted, particularly several of his late portraits of women.<sup>1</sup> The figure is nude but for the clouds of material that swirl around her in waves of muted color—aqua, teal, and white. The rapid handling and considerable impasto of the brushwork in the fabric and background serve to set off the smooth, detailed finish of the model's torso and face.

The subtle coloring of the painting gives it a timeless quality and an entirely abstract, idealized sense of place. The darkest components are the woman's hair, incorporating purple and burgundy strokes of paint, her eyes, and her red lips. Her surroundings include areas of aqua and teal green, and a few touches of bright yellow-green at lower left. The rest of the canvas is filled with pale whites, grays, and flesh colors. Her hair appears to be held by two arrow-shaped adornments, which might hint at an allusion to the attributes of mythological figures such as Diana or Cupid, further underscoring the idealized nature of the image.

Hernández often depicted women at leisure, daydreaming, or explicitly posing for the artist, as in *The Model. Laziness* (1902) a painting that sold at auction in 2010, shows a woman on a couch in three-quarter view, leaning her head on her bent right arm as she holds her place in a book with her left hand.<sup>2</sup> The low-cut dress, vacant stare, and plain background recall the Clark picture, although the Empire style of the sofa and dress give it a greater specificity. Another similar image is a poster for Job cigarette papers, printed sometime in the 1890s, showing a woman reclining, hand on her forehead, holding a cigarette.<sup>3</sup> The figure in this image likewise wears a sheer, flowing, low-cut dress. While the subject and purpose of *The Model* are unclear, its generalized nature might suggest that it is related to Hernández's role as an illustrator for posters as well as for books, among them novels by Honoré de Balzac.

Hernández returned to Peru in 1918 and organized the National School of Fine Arts in Lima. He was director until his death in 1932. It was here that he exerted the most influence on Peruvian artists of the next generation. As one book on cultural history notes, "Hernández's own work is fairly conventional, but he had a solid mastery of technique and disciplined work habits and in the role of Director he was to prove extremely effective. . . . [He] ensured that new generations of painters received a solid training."<sup>4</sup> KAP

**PROVENANCE** [N. Mitchell, London, sold to Clark, 17 Nov. 1935, as *The Model*]; Robert Sterling Clark (1935–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.