



**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,  
Simon Kelly, Richard Kendall, Kathleen M. Morris, Leslie Hill Paisley,  
Kelly Pask, Elizabeth A. Pergam, Kathryn A. Price, Mark A. Roglán,  
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PRECEDING PAGE 2: Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Snake Charmer* (cat. 154)

**REFERENCES** Sutton 1986a, pp. 318, 339.

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a lightweight wood, possibly poplar, panel, 0.6 cm thick, with no chamfering on the reverse; it was roughly cut from a larger board. The grain runs horizontally, and the panel has a very slight convex warp. There are old dents and scratches in the wood near the right shoreline which occurred prior to painting. There are wax fills and retouches below the varnish in the sky and along the left and lower edges. Gold leaf and red bole have transferred to the top edge of the picture from the frame. There is older frame and possibly cleaning abrasion, which is partially masked by a toned varnish applied in the 1939 Beers Brothers cleaning. A fine network of zigzag-patterned varnish cracks follows the wood grain. The coatings are very yellow, brittle, and chipping. Dirt is trapped in the hat and in some flattened impastos. The coatings have a moderately dense fluorescence in ultraviolet light and are quite shiny. Several signature letters may have been strengthened.

The ground layer is a thin, off-white wash, which merely fills the wood grain and was probably applied by the artist. There are scattered and sketchy charcoal or graphite lines. In infrared reflectography, a line along the horizon can be seen, as can another in front of the girl's sleeve and a group indicating blades of beach grass. The paint is thinly applied in an extremely open and sketchy manner, with low impasto work on the figure. It is possible there is an artist-applied varnish between paint layers, which would have presented problems during cleaning.

1. See Paris–London–The Hague 1983, pp. 192–93. Two other versions are in the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
2. Dieuwertje Dekkers in Groningen–Amsterdam 1999–2000, p. 143.
3. Paris–London–The Hague, p. 23.
4. An invoice to Sterling Clark's account from Durand-Ruel, New York, indicates that the painting was cleaned in 1939, and thus provides a date by which Clark owned it. See the Clark's curatorial file.

## Charles-Émile Jacque

French, 1813–1894

### 178 | Interior 1852

Oil on panel, 23.8 x 19.7 cm

Lower left: ch. Jacque 1852

1955.781

Artists in nineteenth-century France, particularly painters of landscape and genre, often worked with knowledge of and perhaps in competition with their predecessors in seventeenth-century Holland.<sup>1</sup> Charles-Émile Jacque began his career by copying a head of a woman by Rembrandt, using the same print-making technique, etching, that Rembrandt had. Closer to Jacque's experience in Barbizon were the etchings of Adriaen van Ostade (1610–1685) that show peasants at home, eating, or in taverns, drinking.<sup>2</sup> Jacque made copies after some of these prints, mostly of drinkers.<sup>3</sup> The magazines *L'Artiste* and *Le Magasin Pittoresque* published illustrations after works by Dutch artists in the 1840s, and it was the latter that provided the model for Jacque's painting *Interior*.



Fig. 178.1 Etching after Adriaen van Ostade (Dutch, 1610–1685), *The Family*. From *Le magasin pittoresque* (Aug. 1847), p. 265





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In August 1847, *Le Magasin Pittoresque* reproduced one of Van Ostade's masterpieces, *The Family* (fig. 178.1).<sup>4</sup> The French print, made two hundred years after the Dutch one, duplicates the disorderly kitchen crowded with domestic wares—pots, baskets, and cooking and eating implements, down to the saucepan and spoon on the floor a good distance from both table and hearth. If the nineteenth-century printmaker accurately reproduced seventeenth-century Dutch things, he sweetened the scene by making the figures slightly less worn, slightly more comely. Faces are smoothed, subtracting years, and the printmaking lines, for purposes of reproduction, are darker

and crisper, yielding a more dramatic chiaroscuro with more light in the foreground, emphasizing the figures.

Five years after the print after Van Ostade's print appeared in *Le Magasin Pittoresque*, Jacque painted this small panel, clearly inspired by the seventeenth-century Dutch scene. The scene is the same. A family gathers for a meal. The mother nurses the baby while the father cuts bread. The same pyramidal composition obtains: the father, the tallest figure, is flanked by nursing mother and older offspring and animal.

Jacque carried further the sweetening of the image that the illustration for *Le Magasin Pittoresque* began. Jacque's painting does not reproduce Van Ostade's

print. Rather, it transfers it to his own time. By 1852, Jacque and his family had been living in Barbizon for three years, and their house was likely similarly plain and functional. The family depicted is young, the mother still pretty. Where Van Ostade had a dog, Jacque includes a chicken, as it was just at this time, 1852, that he began to raise chickens commercially (see cat. 179). The children in Van Ostade's print are rendered faceless by pose and hat brim; the young child here is healthily plump. Where the Dutchman presented an assortment of basins and cups, their circumferences forming a ragged frieze of circles two-thirds of the way up to the ceiling, the Frenchman scattered circular forms throughout the picture and included a hat hung over a jacket and gleaming pottery jugs. Jacque also radically reduced the clutter of Van Ostade's print, including painting over a pan on the floor to the right of the hen.<sup>5</sup> Walls are largely bare, planes and volumes emphasized. The ceiling timbers and background are only sketched in, further concentrating attention on the family members.

Added to this domestic scene is a second adult woman who might be a servant or maid, seen in the background to the right pouring liquid from one vessel into another. Nineteenth-century French peasants frequently hired servants to help with the chores of the house and barnyard (cleaning, cooking, butter and cheese making), as well as day laborers to assist with the heavier work in the fields (plowing, harvesting, cutting wood).<sup>6</sup> Such a detail does not appear in other paintings of French peasant life. Jean-François Millet's works, for instance, suggest that farmwork is done only by the few people he depicts. If the second woman is indeed a servant, Jacque's *Interior* is a more accurate depiction of French country life than most other paintings of its kind. *Interior* is, for all that, a painting made by an artist keenly aware of the conventions of art making. Light pours in from the upper left and falls on white shirt, white tablecloth, apron, dish, cap, and neck cloth. Calm and coolness are conveyed by the blue-gray tonality; this is a home of contentment.

More than a decade later, Jacque returned to the subject in the etching *Le Repas (The Meal)*.<sup>7</sup> An amalgam of his free adaptation of Van Ostade's print and details from it, *Le Repas* reduces the number of depicted elements even further. A basin and bowl on the floor are analogues for Van Ostade's saucepan and spoon, and a dog, as in the Dutch print, takes the place of the chicken. Again following Van Ostade, Jacque includes in the background a box bed, sub-

stituting for the fireplace in the painting. Unusual in Jacque's oeuvre in their emphasis on family life, *Interior* and *Le Repas* signal the artist's ongoing engagement with art of the past and its currency for his own time and work. FEW

**PROVENANCE** [Possibly F. & J. Tempelaere, Paris]; Robert Sterling Clark (by 1955); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

**EXHIBITIONS** None

**REFERENCES** None

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a flat oak panel 0.8 cm thick with the wood grain running vertically. The reverse has chamfers 2.2 cm wide with a scored line along the inner edges. The back also bears stamps of the dealer Tempelaere and the colorman Luniot Ganne. The paint is well preserved and shows no age crackle. In 1987, the varnish was thinned only, due to solvent sensitivity in the paint layers. A portion of the original yellowed varnish remains on the surface, and there are a few small retouches in the skirt of the woman at the left. In ultraviolet light, the irregular old varnish layer can be seen, principally in the lower right quadrant and the lower edge.

The thick ground is comprised of off-white layers, with a warm brown imprimatura over the surface. The painted image stops 0.6 cm short of all four edges, and the resulting outer band has been masked over with gray paint. There is a black line below the gray band at the top border of the image. Truncated black ink lines, possibly laid in with a pen, are visible throughout the thinly painted areas. Black ink may also be found in upper paint layers. The paint is quite thin, especially in the broadly applied background and the loosely drawn figures at the right, allowing the imprimatura and underdrawing lines to be seen. Elsewhere the paint is thin to moderate in thickness with very low, soft, vehicular impastos in light-toned areas. There are several artist's changes, including a painted-over pan on the floor to the right of the hen, now visible due to solvent abrasion. The proper left arm and cap of the woman at the left were also altered. There may be a change in design below the visible paint between the main male figure and the hen, seen as hidden vertical brushstrokes. The signature is done in brown ink.

1. Chu 1974.
2. Amsterdam 1998.
3. Guiffrey 1866, nos. 58, 59 (1845), 109 (1846), and 123 (1846).
4. For the original Van Ostade print, see Amsterdam 1998, pp. 153–54, no. 46.
5. See Technical Report.
6. Guillaumin 1904.
7. Guiffrey 1866, no. 194.