



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

VOLUME TWO

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, and Fronia E. Wissman

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Details:

TITLE PAGE: Camille Pissarro, *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf* (cat. 253)

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PRECEDING PAGE 474: Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Onions* (cat. 280)

PAGES 890–91: Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, *The Women of Amphisa* (cat. 3)

in the paint, and active flaking in the left rocks, upper sky, and along the left, top, and bottom edges. The natural resin varnish layer is extremely discolored toward the greenish yellow and has its own crack system. There is a drip through the varnish to the right of the sailing ship. Considerable retouching has been done in the sky and central foreground ocean. The ultraviolet light fluorescence is very dense, almost hiding the large amount of restoration.

The ground is a commercially applied off-white layer that shows here and there through the image. With the unaided eye, dark graphite underdrawing lines are visible on the wrecked mast in the lower left and in the large sailing vessel. Infrared examination revealed drawing lines for all four ships and wrecks, but none for the rocks or water. In addition, losses were seen along the upper right edge, suggesting that the losses required filling material. The paint is quite vehicular, which may be the cause of the traction cracks. The paint was applied wet-into-wet, with the sky laid in first. Parts of the wreck were painted over ocean colors, with additional waves applied later. The whitecaps in the water show moderate level impastos.

1. "Death of a Celebrated Painter," *Hull News*, 10 Dec. 1887; reprinted in Credland 1987, pp. 36–37.
2. "King Death," *The Hull Arrow*, 15 Dec. 1887; reprinted in Credland 1987, p. 36.
3. See Goedde 1987.
4. Boase 1959, pp. 332–46.

Pierre Joseph Redouté

French, 1759–1840

259 | Flowers 1820

Oil on canvas, 41 x 33.2 cm
Lower right: P. J. Redouté f^{lit} 1820.
1955.839

Pierre Joseph Redouté was born into the fourth generation of a family of painters. After studying with his father, Charles Joseph (1715–1776), an interior decorator for the abbey in their hometown of Saint-Hubert, Luxembourg, Pierre Joseph worked as an itinerant decorator and portraitist. In 1782, he moved to Paris to assist his brother, Antoine Ferdinand (1756–1805), in painting stage scenery. He also spent hours sketching the flowers in the Jardin des Plantes, where he met wealthy amateur botanist Charles Louis L'Héritier de Brutelle (1746–1800). From this important patron,

Redouté learned how to dissect plants and illustrate them in a scientific manner. L'Héritier de Brutelle commissioned Redouté to contribute illustrations to the volume *Stirpes novae, aut minus cognitae, quas descriptionibus et iconibus* (1784–89), the first of many botanical publications illustrated by Redouté.¹

Today Redouté is one of the most recognized names in nineteenth-century flower painting. During his lifetime, Redouté enjoyed the patronage not only of Queen Marie-Antoinette, but of Napoleon's first wife, the Empress Josephine; he also educated the daughters of King Louis-Philippe in the art of drawing, deftly negotiating shifting political regimes to maintain favor with wealthy and influential patrons. Redouté in fact illustrated several volumes specifically for Josephine, including *Le Jardin du Malmaison* (1803–5), which featured rare flower specimens found in the gardens and greenhouses of this country estate. For this and other projects, Redouté worked with watercolors, painting his subjects on expensive vellum in the tradition of the *Collection des vélins*.² Engravers were then hired to transcribe his watercolors into color stipple engravings. Redouté oversaw most of his publications, making color corrections to the copper plates during printing and also supplying a hand-colored corrected final copy of the prints.

Redouté also painted with oils, preferring vellum as a support, but also utilizing canvas, as in the case of the *Clark Flowers*. This work features a loosely gathered posy of six species of flowers. A pink rose, which resembles the Duchess of Orleans variety, a pale yellow *Hibiscus trionum* (commonly known as "Flower-of-an-Hour"), and a lavender "Rose of Sharon" (*Hibiscus syriacus*) form a stable triangle at the center of the composition. Smaller, more delicate flowers are arranged around these central blooms and include a sprig of white phlox at left, a violet-blue stalk of a variety of *lobelia* at center, and a sprig of coreopsis (*Corcopsis elegans*) at right.³ *Flowers* differs from the majority of Redouté's botanical images, which usually feature only one plant specimen in various stages of development, a principal depiction sometimes supplemented with illustrations of the plant's bulb, the mature flower's stamen and/or pistil, or the plant's fruit. (The scientific Latin classification for the plant and the French vernacular were often printed on the bottom of a page as well.) *Flowers* belongs to a period in Redouté's later career when he returned to decorative flower painting, depicting lush posies of flowers for wealthy collectors. In *Flowers*, Redouté



259

experimented with flower selection, color, and composition without sacrificing botanical detail.

The flowers in the Clark painting are carefully worked, the colors of the petals gently modulated, especially on the rose, some of whose pale pink petals are delicately edged with white. The paint that articulates the flowers is applied smoothly and evenly. Redouté added a gray background around the posy after the individual flowers and leaves were completed. Applied thinly and unevenly, this paint gives the support a translucent slightly wrinkled appearance. It is almost as if Redouté sought to imitate the qualities of vellum on this canvas (perhaps in order to heighten the value of the work by imitating the more costly material).⁴ There are no known prints made after this work, making it unique among Redouté's production.⁵

Robert Sterling Clark purchased this painting from Knoedler, New York, in February 1941. Although Redouté was unknown to him at the time, he described the work as "charming" and asked that it be sent to his home on approval so he could compare it with his "early Fantin Roses," a work now known as *Roses in a Bowl and Dish* (cat. 134).⁶ Redouté's posy evidently measured up to the much-loved Fantin-Latour still life, as Clark purchased *Flowers* the following day. AG

PROVENANCE [Arnold Seligmann, Rey & Co., New York]; [Knoedler, New York, sold to Clark, 26 Feb. 1941]; Robert Sterling Clark (1941–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Williamstown 1958a, ill.; Williamstown 1959b, ill.; Williamstown–Hartford 1974, pp. 91–93, no. 56, ill.; Williamstown 1979b, no cat.

REFERENCES Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, no. 102, ill.; Sutton 1980, p. 321, ill.; Kurata 1980, fig. 40.

TECHNICAL REPORT The original commercially primed fabric is a moderate-weight linen (19 threads/cm). The reverse bears the colorman's stamp for Belot, Paris. In 1996, the canvas was treated with moisture and infused with Beva 371 to reduce cupped cracks that had become obtrusive. The original five-member mortise-and-tenon stretcher was retained. The long, winding cracks are widely spaced and run through both paint and ground. A thick yellow varnish removed in 1996 was determined not to be the original coating. There are small, old matte highlights or retouches in all the light-colored flower petals. Their slightly yellow fluorescence in ultraviolet light suggests the presence of zinc white, which was not available in 1820. This may indicate that they are either restorations or were added later by the artist. Most of the image paint seems to be in good condition, with only a few areas of abrasion in yellow-green shadow glazes along some leaf and stem details. There are a few residues of older varnish in the impastos at the flower centers, and a few new retouches in the center green leaf array and along the edges.

The commercial priming consists of what looks like two cream-colored layers. There is no underdrawing visible in infrared light or under magnification. The flowers were painted first, followed by the stems and leaves, with the background color carefully laid in around all the plant forms. The paint is built up using small brushes, probably sables, even in the background where a brush 0.6 cm wide was used. The only impastos appear in the white petals and the stamens at the heart of each blossom. The signature appears to be in ink rather than oil paint.

1. Redouté also illustrated L'Heritier de Brutelle's *Sertum Anglicum* (1788), which featured selections of plants from Kew Gardens, as well as the botanist's *Cornus* (1788), and *Gerianologia* (1787–88). Later in his career, Redouté produced his own illustrated volumes, the most famous of which are *Les Liliacées* (1802–16), with text by Augustin Pyramus de Candolle, François de la Roche, and Alire Raffenu-Delile, and *Les Roses* (1817–21), text by Claude Antoine Thory.
2. Redouté contributed over six hundred vellums to this collection, which was started by King Louis XIII (reigned 1610–43) and is now in the collection of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

3. I am grateful to Jude Kundmueller for our conversation about the flowers depicted in this painting.
4. Redouté used high quality vellum for his watercolors of flowers, many of which are today in pristine condition, the parchment surface smooth and largely wrinkle-free. See, for example, the original drawings for *Les Liliacées*, reproduced in Mallary and Mallary 1986, discussed on p. 20.
5. The dealer Knoedler, who sold Clark the painting, suggested that this canvas may have been a model for *velours grégoire*, or printed fabric made in Lyon, France. See the Clark's curatorial file.
6. RSC Diary, 25 Feb. 1941.

Henri Regnault

French, 1843–1871

260 | Scene from the Spanish Inquisition

c. 1868–70

Oil on canvas, 86 x 65.3 cm

Lower right: HR [monogram]

Gift of the Joseph F. McCrindle Collection

2009.12.4

This colorful painting appears to show a chaotic scene of religious terror, set in front of a carved architectural façade of stone with a protruding balcony at the top and a deep arched doorway in the center. Three main clusters of figures compose the lower three-fourths of the composition. Cutting a diagonal across the lower right, two men drag the body of another across the ground while a fourth man hunches over the unconscious figure's lower half. Behind them on the left, two robed figures, one possibly a monk, flank a priest-like figure dressed in white with a peaked hat. A spray of brilliant red blood stains the front of the man's white robe, pooling on the floor in front of him. Immediately behind the priest figure, a large flag or banner is hoisted into the air, perhaps heralding the presence of a religious envoy. Behind these two groups is a jumbled scene where bodies and other colorful forms spill out of the archway, where a large pile of debris partially blocks the dark entrance. Several figures are attempting to scale this pile and cross over the archway's threshold, while others appear to be emerging from within this void. To the right of the archway, an unknown mass, perhaps a clothed figure, disappears

over a wall into the darkness. The painting entered the Clark from the Joseph F. McCrindle Collection with the provocative, if unverified, title *Scene from the Spanish Inquisition*. This idea was probably prompted by the clothing of the standing group at left and what may be interpreted as the torture of the prone foreground figure, but the precise subject remains unclear.

Given its ostensible subject, the picture was most likely executed sometime between 1868 and 1870 while Regnault was living in Spain and Morocco. After being awarded the Prix de Rome in 1866 for his painting *Thetis Giving the Weapons of Vulcan to Achilles* (École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris), the artist soon moved to Italy and began several history paintings. Less than two years later, he petitioned for permission to continue his work elsewhere in Europe while still receiving a Prix de Rome bursary. He traveled first to Madrid and Granada, where he studied the work of Velázquez and Goya. By 1870, Regnault and fellow artist Georges Clairin (1843–1919) had moved to Morocco, where they had a house and painting studio constructed. Later that year, the Franco-Prussian War broke out, and although his Rome Prize made him exempt from military service, Regnault enlisted as a foot soldier. He was killed on 19 January 1871, shortly before the war's end. A monument honoring the artist by Henri-Michel-Antoine Chapu (1833–1891) was erected at the École des Beaux-Arts the following year.

With its slashing brushwork and cursory representation of detail, this painting likely served as a large oil sketch for a larger oil painting that was never completed. In keeping with his academic training, Regnault often produced a series of sketches, both in pencil and in oil, before executing a finished work. This process might stretch over several years, as it did for his oil painting *Automedon with the Horses of Achilles* (1868; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), which went through several drafts of pencil sketches and at least two oil sketches, both of which mirror the McCrindle painting in their technique and careful placement of color. The sketchy application of paint also recalls several of Regnault's earlier works in the still life and history painting genres, including *Cavalier* (1861; private collection, Paris), *Death of the Deer* (1865; private collection, Paris), *Scene of Battle* (1864; private collection, France), and *Sketch for The Burial of Christ* (1864; private collection, France), the last of which also features a group of figures receding into a darkened arched doorway.¹ These four works, like the McCrindle painting, are animated and colorful, with