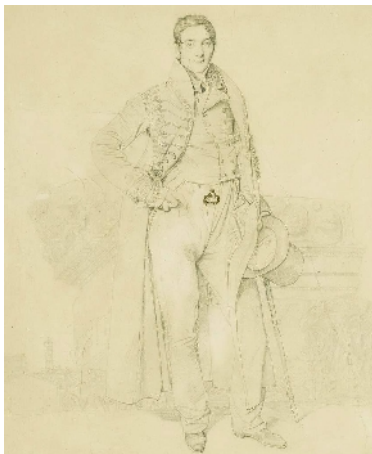


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Treasures of the Veil-Picard Collection

Old Master and XIXth Century Paintings and Drawings, Miniatures

Paris - Christie's is honored to announce the sale *Treasures of the Veil-Picard Collection*, which will be held in Paris on 23 June 2010. This exceptional ensemble, referenced as one of the most valuable collections in the field of 18th and 19th century French paintings and drawings, bears the seal of one of the most prestigious lineage of French collectors.



Among those prestigious works are three drawings by **Jean-August-Dominique Ingres** including the famous *Portrait of the architect Alexandre Bénard* (estimate: €400.000-600.000). With the Roman Forum as a backdrop, this elegant and charming man is shown in an informal, naturalistic pose. The minute precision of Ingres's depiction of the costume is remarkable, particularly in his treatment of the watch-fob, for which he used bronze highlights. Young Bénard, his hair brushed over his forehead in a windswept style, expresses all the nonchalance of the Restoration years. Beneath his frock coat he is wearing a richly-decorated waistcoat, while the ornamental braiding on his coat references the uniforms of the First Empire and of the French armies who had occupied Italy since 1815.



A beautiful *Portrait of the Comtesse Amédée de Pastoret* (estimate €350.000-400.000) shows her beneath a hat with rippled edges which is ornamented with ostrich feathers. The Comtesse de Pastoret (1795-1876) was the wife of the Count Amédée-David de Pastoret (1791-1857), an important patron of the artist whose portrait he painted in 1826 (Art Institute of Chicago). Born into a very ambitious family, Amédée-David strove from an early age to advance himself in the French administration. In addition, he fulfilled his artistic ambitions by being elected associé de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts de Paris and this is probably how he managed to get Ingres elected to the Academy a few months later.



In 1740, Jacques-André Portail was appointed as Surveyor of the King's paintings, in which capacity he benefited from lodgings at the residence of the Surintendance in Versailles. He executed several views of the castle and the orangery, as well as the gardens of Versailles, which brought him recognition from the King. In spite of an artistic career that strayed from the fame and honors of the Academy of Painting, Portail's sheets were admired and sought-after both by his enlightened contemporaries and by collectors of the 19th century, such as Marius Paulme, Philippe de Chennevières and the Goncourt brothers, the latter having owned several drawings including the present sheet *Deux jeunes pages* which pictures two young pages

(estimate: €150.000-180.000). This work is in the tradition of the studies of the heads of young black men that were usually preparatory for the figure of Balthazar in the *Adoration of the Magi*.



Known as a painter of still life, **Jean-Siméon Chardin** turned in the early 1930s to genre painting. His success grew immediately, and brought a new clientele of aristocrats and wealthy travelers to the artist. In 1740, Chardin exhibited *Le Bénédicité* and its pendant *La Mère laborieuse* at the Salon, before offering them to the King. The success of these compositions was immediate and immense. *The Bénédicité* was engraved by Lépicié in 1744, and the artist was required to produce numerous versions of it over the next twenty years. *Le Bénédicité* (estimate €600.000-800.000) is the only known sketch for the Louvre painting and presents a unique testimony to Chardin's way of working. The freedom of the present sketch shows more a 'first thought' painting than a traditional compositional model. Many differences are

evident between the sketch and the finished painting, showing the fluidity and flexibility of Chardin's working process. In the sketch the mother is seated, while the elder sister stands on the left; in the version displayed in the Louvre, the mother stands, while the elder sister sits in the centre of the composition.



Amongst the five miniatures offered during the sale, let us keep in mind the particularly rare oval on ivory miniature from **Pierre-Adolphe Hall** called *Portrait de Dominique Vivant Denon* first Directeur of the Musée du Louvre (estimate: €70.000-80.000). He is depicted being seated, his left hand reaching an Etruscan vase dated 1786, which is the year of the execution of the miniature. That same year, Denon sold his collection comprising five hundred and twenty-five Etruscan vases assembled in Italy between 1774 and 1779 to the Surintendant des Batiments, Comte d'Angivilliers. The collection was displayed at the Sèvres manufacture, where it remains today, so that pieces could be studied by students. Pierre Adolphe Hall was appointed official portrait miniature

painter to the king. He soon gained notoriety as a talented artist and his workshop quickly

became a crowded artistic centre frequented by artists such as Hubert Robert, Jean-Baptiste Greuze or Mme Vigée-Le Brun. Despite his Swedish origin, Hall is now regarded as one of the best French miniaturists of the second half of the 18th Century.

The collection also includes *Apotheosis of Hadrian*, (estimate : €100,000-150,000), a previously unknown study for the Royal Palace in Madrid painted by the Spanish artist **Mario Salvador Maella** and a drawing by **Jean-Antoine Watteau** *Two heads of women*, (estimate : €100.000-150.000).

Auction:

June, 23rd 3pm

Viewing

June, 19 10am-6pm

June, 21 10am-6pm

June, 22 10am-6pm

Christie's - 9 avenue Matignon - 75008 Paris

Images available on request

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