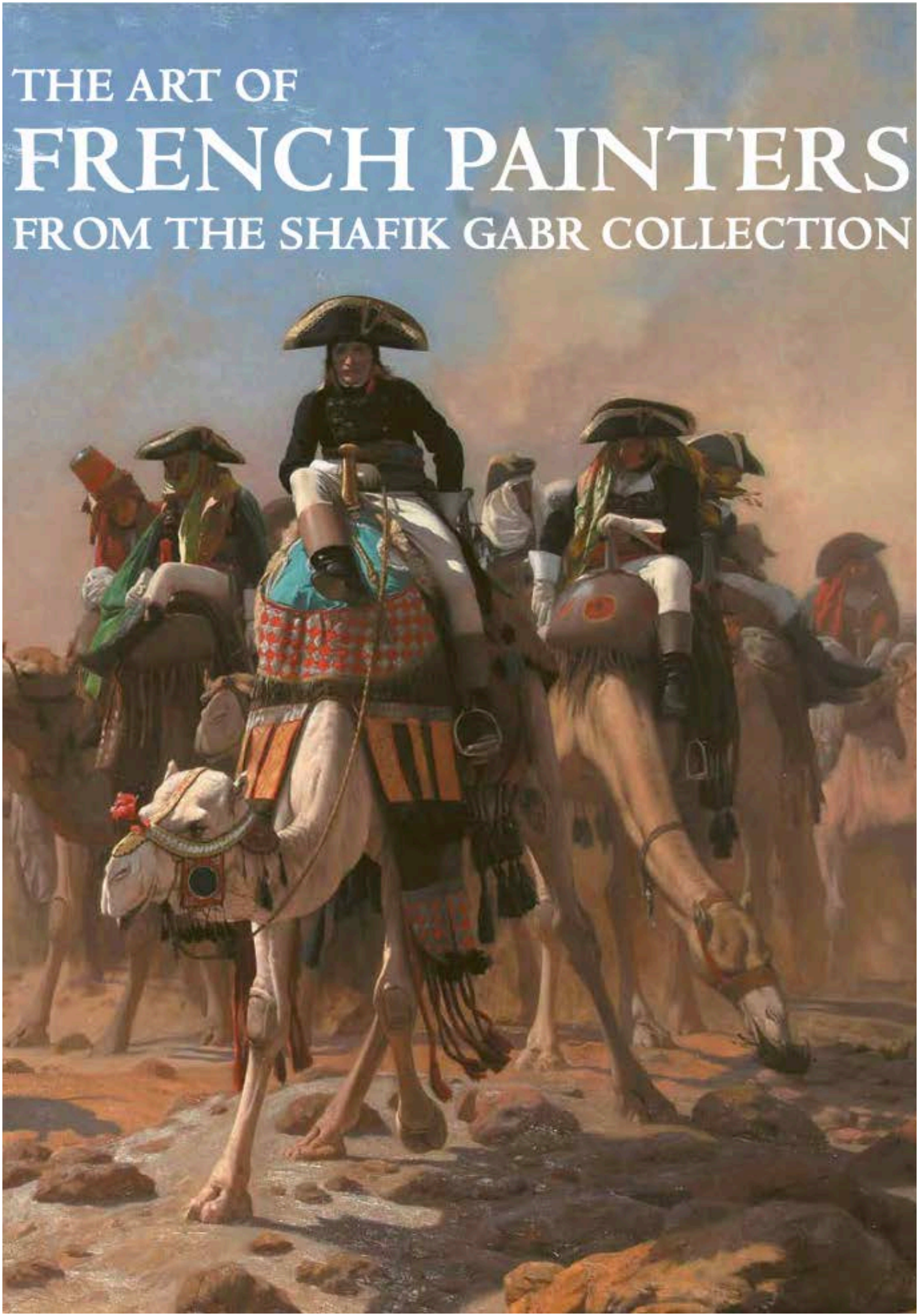
THE ART OF FRENCH PAINTERS FROM THE SHAFIK GABR COLLECTION



THE COLLECTION

The Shafik Gabr Collection is a physical manifestation of the collector's relationship with the world of the Orient, an appreciation of the differences as well as the similarities in American and European visions and expressions of that world, and the opportunity such a collection presents for dialogue and a developing appreciation between the Western and Oriental worlds.

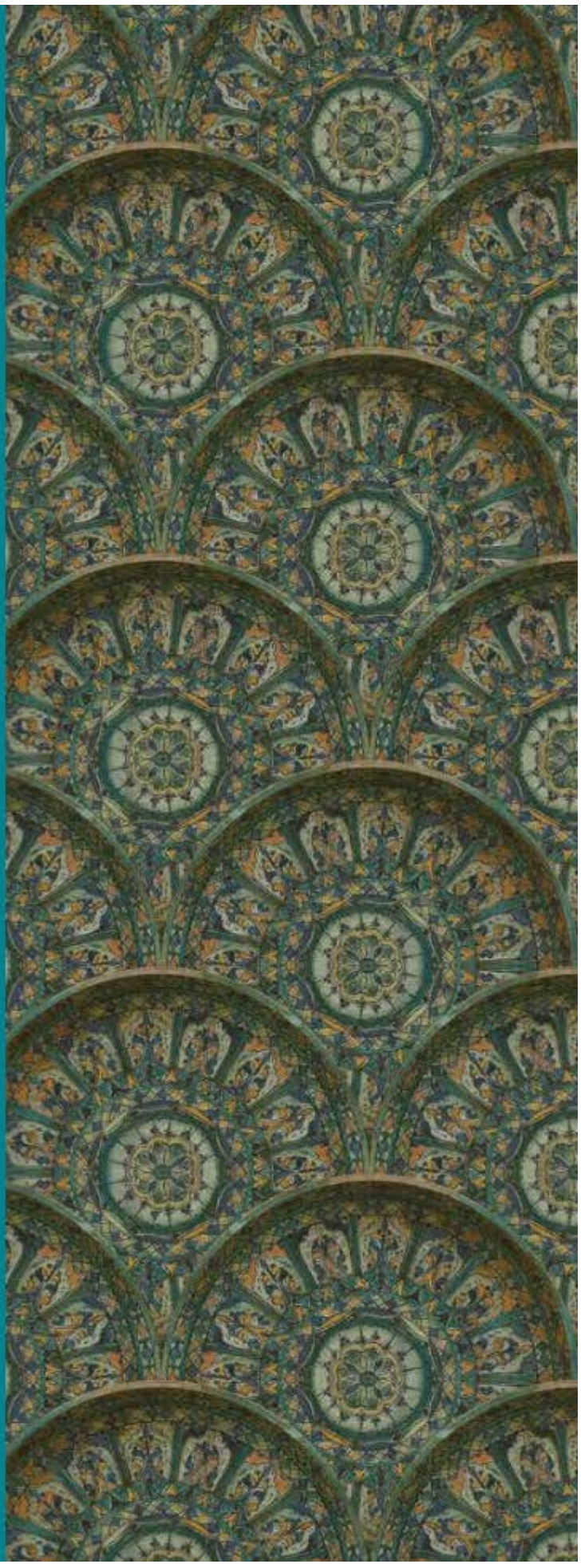
Beginning with his first acquisition, *Egyptian Priest Entering a Temple* by Ludwig Deutsch, Shafik Gabr has, over the course of almost three decades, assembled a collection that is impressive both in its richness and variety. With a large number of works by famed Austrian artist Ludwig Deutsch, as well as some of the finest examples of work by the great Orientalist masters such as Jean-Léon Gérôme, Frederick Arthur Bridgman, Gustav Bauernfeind, David Roberts, John Frederick Lewis, Étienne Dinet and many others, the Collection has become one of the most complete and magnificent tributes to the world of Orientalism in private hands, and therefore an important collection for scholars and art lovers alike.

ORIENTALISM IN FRANCE

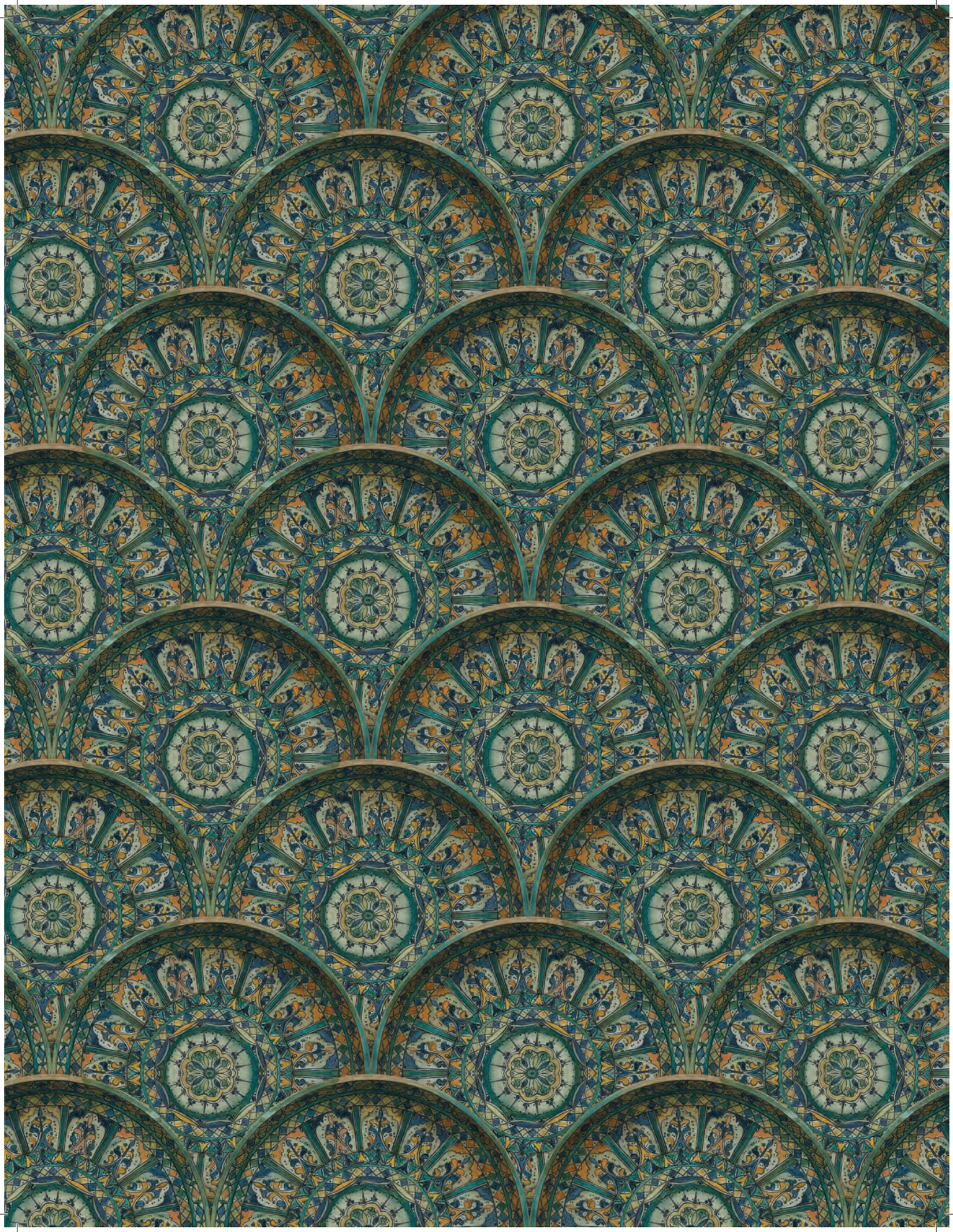
Though virtually every European country had its own national school of Orientalism by the middle of the nineteenth century, it was France that dominated the genre. With artists like Eugène Delacroix, Jean-Léon Gérôme, and Jacques Majorelle, the latter two successfully working through the century's end, it is easy to see why French Orientalist painting was regarded as the pinnacle that others should strive to achieve.

During the course of their travels, and in their studios after the fact, French Orientalist artists created images that reflected their curiosity and growing compassion for Middle Eastern countries and its peoples, and their desire to bridge the cultural gap. This sentiment, along with an impressive talent for realism, masterful handling of paint, and virtuoso evocations of color, light, and atmosphere, would come to define French Orientalist art, and today serve as the clearest indication that these artists experienced the East with open eyes and open minds, and a desire for understanding.

In this booklet, masterpieces of French Orientalist art from the Shafik Gabr Collection are presented in order to show the diversity and depth of this historically significant field.



Cover: Jean-Léon Gérôme,
Napoleon And His General Staff In Egypt (detail)



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THE ART OF FRENCH PAINTERS FROM THE SHAFIK GABR COLLECTION

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INTRODUCTION

Orientalism*

The art of face-to-face engagement between East and West, of listening, looking, and learning with the objective of understanding cultural, religious, and ideological differences to allow for a better world by constructing bridges of understanding between all the peoples of this Earth.

*definition by M. Shafik Gabr

When I first encountered the art of Orientalism, over a quarter of a century ago in a small gallery in Paris, I must admit I did not know much about the genre. It took years of inquisitive research, reading, and getting acquainted with the artists, their work and their history to really appreciate this genre and to come to an understanding of what Orientalism is, and what it means today not only for the West but also for the Orient itself.

A key historic event that cannot be ignored, is Napoleon Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt at the very end of the 18th century. During my studies of Orientalism, I found that this is often used to legitimize viewing the genre as a continuation of European colonialism.

To be clear and transparent, Orientalism has received some historic negative criticism in a political framework of colonialism and occupation. Colonialism and occupation are historical facts, but we, as humans, must always learn from our past rather than be shackled by it.

Whilst Orientalism may have, in the eyes of some, a negative connotation historically, in the framework of art, culture, and social interaction I believe Orientalist painters were a bridge between East and West at a time of limited means of communication and travel. Furthermore, the period of Orientalism was the most significant time of artistic pilgrimage that brought together seeds of improved dialogue between different societies and laid the future for peace and mutual dignity between peoples. Thus my definition of Orientalism, which we need now more than ever for the benefit of future generations instead of conflict, war and anti-Semitism.

A large number of Orientalist artists (apart from ones which I like to call 'armchair Orientalists' – ones who never went to the East and never visited the places they painted) discovered the East in a similar way to my journey of discovering Orientalism – through painstaking research and genuine inquisitiveness. Their paths were not always easy – travel in the 19th century was often arduous and slow (not to mention hazardous at times), and language and cultural barriers were an issue to be addressed. After all, these were new and unknown territories to the Westerners.

These Orientalist artists were not discouraged by the hardships. They spent time, resources, effort and kept an open and curious mind, with a purpose not to colonize the East, but to absorb, understand, and depict it.

And perhaps the best representatives of these types of painters are indeed the French Orientalists. Jean-Léon Gérôme visited the Near and Middle East seven times, often organized trips and safaris for his friends, and even spoke basic Arabic. Étienne Dinet spent many years in Algeria and even converted to Islam and changed his name to Nasr'Eddine Dinet. Théodore Frère, in 1853, established a studio in Cairo, becoming the court painter there. The viceroy of Egypt even elevated him to the rank of "*bey*".

The French Orientalists were dedicated to fully exploring the East, and this is clearly revealed by their paintings. They portray the Orient with genuine curiosity and accuracy. Their work is characterized by immediacy and first-hand experience which leads to understanding and bridge building. This is combined with their impressive talent of realism in art, masterfully handling colour, light, atmosphere and perspective.

It took Gérôme, Dinet, Frère, Discart, Rousseau, Majorelle, Boulanger, Lazerges and many of their esteemed Orientalist colleagues engagement, exposure, cultural appreciation and societal knowledge in getting to know the people of the East in order to understand and depict them, thus creating and building bridges of awareness and understanding between the East and the West.

This is the perspective of Orientalism that I would like people to become more aware of – that it can be a vehicle for deeper understanding of cultures and their values, similarities and differences. Learning is key to understanding, and understanding is key to mutually beneficial cooperation. In my opinion, the only way we can continue to build these bridges in the 21st century is by making people meet and engage face to face, and approach each other with appreciation. I felt that in this face-to-screen rather than face-to-face age, it is important more than ever to put effort into really, truly getting to know one another.

And in achieving this, the French Orientalists – these artists, explorers, and above all communicators between the East and the West – have a lot to teach us.

M. Shafik Gabr

The mission of one of the Shafik Gabr Foundation's initiatives—*East-West: The Art of Dialogue*—is to promote greater mutual understanding by building bridges between emerging leaders from Egypt and the US, by instigating dialogue and the exchange of ideas between these two cultures. Established in 2012 in response to the increasing tensions building between the East and West, the Foundation sponsors and fosters exchanges between emerging leaders from Egypt and the US, and each year adds new countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Lebanon, Jordan, and Bahrain. For more information, please visit http://eastwestdialogue.org


J.L. GÉRÔME

FRENCH ORIENTALISMS: RE-VIEWING A GENRE

Though virtually every European country had its own national school of Orientalism by the middle of the nineteenth century, it was France that dominated the genre. With artists like Eugène Delacroix, Étienne Dinet, Jean-Léon Gérôme, and Jacques Majorelle, it is easy to see why French Orientalist painting was regarded as the pinnacle that others should strive to achieve. What is curious, however, is the stylistic, temperamental, and political diversity of the artists who participated in this movement, and the willingness of contemporary audiences to embrace them all.

Sustained contact between France and the countries of the Arabic-speaking world had begun in 1798, when a French army led by General Napoleon Bonaparte entered Egypt. Though Napoleon's efforts to secure the country were ultimately unsuccessful, the impact of his expedition for the arts cannot be overestimated. With Napoleon had come the Scientific and Artistic Commission, headed by the artists Vivant Denon and Pascal Coste. They, along with a team of scholars and scientists, the *savants*, set out to record all aspects of ancient and modern Egypt, for the first time in the visual arts. The official publication of the Commission, the *Description de l'Égypte*, was published in Paris between 1809 and 1828 in multiple, lavishly illustrated volumes. It would become the single most influential resource for artists, architects, and designers in the early to mid- nineteenth century, and, as such, the greatest success of Napoleon's ill-fated campaign.

With this as the acknowledged origin of French Orientalism, and its continuation under France's occupation of Algeria between 1830 and 1962, it is little wonder that its politics have received as much attention as the purely formal characteristics of its art. It is now common parlance to speak of the dark side of the genre, rife as it is with hegemonic strategies, racist overtones, and exploitative intent. (These were pointed out most cogently and impactfully by Edward Said, in his incendiary *Orientalism* of 1978.) And yet, despite a history that undeniably includes elements of imperialism's worst, it is the ability of French Orientalism to be more than an expression of these politics that impresses most. In no other art historical genre are Black and Arab subjects more visible, declaring their potential agency and the mattering of their lives. In no other genre did artists expand their geographical horizons so greatly, or challenge themselves so consistently to confront what they might otherwise have chosen to avoid. In no other genre do such a range of competing techniques and styles, from the glass-like surfaces of Academic paintings to the impressionist vigor of watercolor and ink drawings made *en plein air*, find expression and acceptance for so long a period of time. And in no other genre does the range of subject matter speak so clearly to the curiosity of its practitioners, and their widely opened eyes. Not a style, not a date, not a single state of mind, French Orientalism was borne of the moments when two cultures met each other in an Arabic-speaking land. It is the purpose of this book, chronicling the French Orientalists in the collection of M. Shafik Gabr, to recover this dialogue, and to listen closely to what each party was inspired to say.

Dr. Emily M. Weeks

Opposite: Jean-Léon Gérôme, *After the Bath*

EL HIASSEUB, THE ARAB STORY TELLER

Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888)

Signed and dated 'G. Boulanger.1868' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
22 x 31 in. (56 x 78.5 cm.)
Painted in 1868

Provenance:
Claudius Gerentet Collection, Paris;
Sale: Christie's, London, 25 November 2009, lot 7 (as *El Hiasseub, Conteur Arabe*)

Literature:
E. Chesneau, '*El Hiasseub, Conteur Arabe*, par Gustave-Rodolphe Boulanger,' in E. Lièvre, *Le Musée Universel*, Paris, 1868 (illustrated in black and white)
E. About, 'Le Salon de 1869,' in *Revue des deux Mondes*, June 1869, pp. 750–51
T. Gautier, 'Le Salon de 1869,' in *L'Illustration*, 29 May 1869
T. Gautier, 'Le Salon de 1869,' in *Le Journal Officiel*, 19 June 1869
P. Mantz, 'Salon de 1869,' in *La Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1869, p. 11
M. Chaumelin, *L'Art Contemporain*, Paris, 1873, pp. 263, 391–92
J. Mesnard, *Les merveilles de l'art et de l'industrie: antiquité, moyen …* . Paris, 1873, p. 289
G. Lafesnestre, *L'Art Vivant – La peinture et la sculpture aux Salons de 1868 à 1877*, Paris, 1881, p. 130
E. Montrosier, *Les artistes modernes*, Paris, 1881, no. 23
E. Montrosier, 'Gustave Boulanger,' *Revue illustrée* 6.69 (1888), p. 280 (illustrated in black and white)
F. Javel, *Catalogue des oeuvres de Gustave Boulanger*, Paris, 1889, p. 8
P. C. Périer, *Propos d'art à l'occasion du Salon de 1869*, Paris, 1889, pp. 118–20
K. Robert, *Traité pratique du modelage et de la sculpture*, Paris, 1889, p. 143
M.-M. Aubrun, 'Gustave Boulanger, peintre éclectique,' in *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire de l'art français*, 1986, no. 72, cat. 110, pp. 168, 197–98 (illustrated in black and white p. 198)

Exhibited:
Paris, Salon, 1869, no. 295
Paris, Musée Goupil & Cie, 1869, no. 1027 (as photograph)

Orphaned at a young age and adopted by a Creole relative in Saint-Domingue (now Haiti), Boulanger's early years were marked by a spirit of internationalism and an interest in other countries and cultures. By 1840–41 he was in Paris and by 1845, ailing in health and at the recommendation of his uncle, he was in Algeria. The trip would determine the course of his artistic career.

Boulanger's fascination with the peoples of Algeria is evident throughout his oeuvre, and has led, along with his minutely detailed technique, to his designation as an 'ethnographic Orientalist' by contemporary art historians.[1] In the present work, *El Hiasseub, The Arab Story Teller*, Boulanger's skill as a figurative painter is at its best. Before a hut of dried palm branches, a group of Arab men listen in rapt attention to a storyteller, sitting cross-legged on the ground. The storyteller's brilliant yellow turban sets him apart from the group, but the curve of his back, echoed by the tree just behind, positions him formally and firmly within the composition. To his right, silhouetted against the hut's opening, a man smokes a *chibouk* and eyes the storyteller with a sideways glance. By his side is a standing figure in a pale blue *burnous*, also watching intently.

Opposite this pair, in loose red *shalwars*, tall leather boots with laces untied, and an elaborately draped headscarf, another Arab man stretches out across a makeshift blanket, stomach to the ground and face hidden from view. His head is turned away from the storyteller, as if distracted for a moment. His seated companion, who wears equally colorful clothing but of a different style, turns his head as well. Their attention seems to have been caught by a trio of standing figures, listening with various degrees of concentration to the narrative at hand. The sloping oval shape of this figure group creates a strong diagonal through the center of the composition, which is broken by the strong vertical lines of palm trees and two additional Arab figures in the background. They, walking slowly toward the group, appear to be telling stories of their own.

Some years after *El Hiasseub* was painted, Boulanger began teaching at the Académie Julian and, after 1882, he joined the staff of the Institut de France. His influence on an entire generation of students – male and, at the Académie Julian, also female – was made greater by his personal popularity, and by the continued acclaim for his art. (A protégé of Delaroche and Gérôme, and educated at the École des Beaux-Arts, Boulanger had been trained by the best.) Boulanger's careful brushwork, witnessed here in the rendering of each leaf and branch of the vegetation and in the ethnographic precision of the figures and their costumes, confirms his abilities as a documentary painter and a master of Orientalist art. The celebrated French critic Théophile Gautier applauded Boulanger's efforts when the painting was shown at the 1869 Paris Salon, writing: 'After Ancient Greece, Mr. Gustave Boulanger travels with us in Algeria and shows us *El Hiasseub, Conteur arabe*, seated at the entrance of a hut and charming with his words a group of fascinated listeners. The artist excels in describing these noble and pure people who, in their *burnous*, look like ancient statues coming down from their pedestals.'[2] Gautier's opinion was shared by many of his contemporaries and in the years beyond; indeed, the enduring popularity of *El Hiasseub* is evidenced by the number of advertisements for photographs, prints, and reductions of the work, even years after Boulanger's death.

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1 See Marie-Madeleine Aubrun, 'Gustave Boulanger, peintre éclectique,' in *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire de l'art français*, 1986, no. 72, cat. 110, pp. 168, 197–98.

2 Théophile Gautier, 'Le Salon de 1869,' in *L'Illustration*, 29 May 1869.

THE COURTYARD OF THE PALACE DAR KHEDAOUDJ EL AMIA, ALGIERS

Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888)

Signed and dated 'G. Boulanger 1877' (lower left)
Oil on canvas
33 x 45 in. (83.4 x 113.8 cm.)
Painted in 1877

Provenance:
Estate of Mary Dolly Schuchard;
Sale: William Doyle Galleries, New York, 6 November 1997, lot 40 (as *Arabian Harem*);
Private Collection, USA;
Sale: Sotheby's, New York, 24 April 2003, lot 46 (as *Le Harem du palais*);
Private Collection, London;
Sale: Christie's, New York, 26 October 2005, lot 33 (as *La Cour du Palais de Dar Khdaouedj El Amia, Alger*)

Literature:
E. Montrosier, 'Gustave Boulanger,' Revue illustrée 6.69 (1888), p. 274 (illustrated as engraving and titled *Intérieur mauresque*)
R. Hadjoudj, 'The palace of Khdawaj the blind … Generation's myth,' *Assihar Touristic Magazine*, May/June 2019, p. 23 (illustrated in color)

A masterpiece of Boulanger's oeuvre, *The Courtyard of the Palace Dar Khdaouedj El Amia, Algiers* is also one of his most enigmatic works. The details of its commission are not known and the significance of its architectural setting has only recently been acknowledged. The painting is set in the sixteenth-century palace of Dar Khedaoudj El Amia (House of the Blind), located near the Souk El Djemaa (Friday Market) on the Rue Mohamed Akli Malek in the lower Casbah neighborhood of Algiers. Boulanger has chosen to focus on the famed courtyard of the palace, which may have been opened to the public or for privately arranged tours in the 1860s or '70s.[1] Boulanger's own travels to North Africa after 1845 included many of the region's landmarks; it is possible that the present painting draws from Boulanger's first-hand experiences, as well as from contemporary photographs and a vivid artistic imagination.

Boulanger began his artistic training in Paris, first as a student of the history painter Pierre-Jules Jollivet in 1840–41 and then under the academician Paul Delaroche. It was at this time that he met the artists

1 Though the layout of the building is similar to other houses and palaces of the Casbah, with a courtyard surrounded by two levels of galleries, the location of the courtyard is unusual in Algerian architecture. Rather than on the first or ground level, it occupies the second level of the house.

Jean-Louis Hamon, Henri Picou, and Jean-Léon Gérôme, the latter of whom may have inspired his interests in neoclassicism and Orientalism. In 1845, Boulanger traveled to Algeria, where he made the sketches that would inspire him for the remainder of his career. He enrolled at the École des Beaux-Arts upon his return to Paris and, in 1849, won the prestigious Prix de Rome. By 1859, Boulanger was sending Orientalist works to the Paris Salon, based on his travels in North Africa. They were executed in a clean, academic style, that nevertheless demonstrated Boulanger's talents as a colorist and narrator, able to suggest the vitality of modern – and especially domestic or familial – Arab life.

Boulanger's technique, indebted to his teachers and particularly to the influential example of Gérôme, allows each detail of this scene to be appreciated both in an instant and over time. The wooden balustrade, hexagonal floor tiles, and distinctive composite columns of Dar Khdaouedj El Amia are all accurately rendered, as are the colorful wall tiles that add yet another layer of pattern to Boulanger's highly decorative image. Echoing these elaborate designs are several carpets strewn across the floor or hung on carved wooden rods between the horseshoe or keyhole arches that run along the perimeter of the courtyard. Their saturated hues – bright reds, deep burgundies, and a range of blues – are picked up by the clothing of several of the figures that occupy the space.

Gustave Boulanger, *The Courtyard of the Palace Dar Khedaoudj El Amia, Algiers*

The Palace of Dar Khedaoudj El Amia

In the center of the composition, two men and two women gather around a small wooden table inlaid with mother-of-pearl. It is placed upon a carpet, and at the edge of a reflecting pool. Atop the table is a brass *dallah* or coffee ewer and a drinking cup of blue-green glass, which is nestled inside a golden-hued cupholder. The men are seated cross-legged, conversing, while one drinks and the other smokes his *chibouk*. A pair of red leather slippers has been cast aside, adding a gloss of ease and relaxation to an otherwise intense vignette; the expressions on their mustachioed faces are pensive and unsmiling, as if the topic of debate is of some importance. Their two female companions are also conversing, though one is far more informal in her pose. She lies, fully extended, her torso propped up by her elbows and her stomach cushioned by the firm red pillow that lies atop the patterned rug. The woman she speaks to is shown from the back, her long black braids finished with blue ribbons and small blue bows trailing down her shoulders and past her waist. Her garments are of a pale pink brocade with wide gold trim; her ample sleeves are diaphanous and flow easily as she moves. The woman's green and gold striped cummerbund draws the eye to a figure seated in the background to her right, who wears a similar wrapped belt around her hips. She turns her head to acknowledge yet another female figure standing at her side. This woman leans against the twisted shaft of one of the many columns in the courtyard and holds an ornate fan. Just behind her, on the far left of the composition, is a Black African servant with a baby cradled in her arms. She also has an architectural backdrop, this time a heavy wooden door. Another child, this one older by several years, plays across the courtyard on the right. She pulls a rag doll along the ground with her; its pose reflects her own.

The building, shown here by Boulanger as an active, living site with verdant vines and potted trees and residents young and more mature, is believed to have originally (ca. 1570) belonged to Yahia Reis, an Ottoman naval officer who served under admiral Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha. In 1789, Hassan El

Khaznadji, treasurer of the Algerian Dey Baba Mohammed ben-Osman, acquired the building from the Cohen-Bakri family, affluent Jewish merchants originally from Livorno, Italy. (The building is sometimes referred to as Dar Bakri for this reason.) According to legend, El Khaznadji re-named the palace after his blind daughter Khdaouedj, who lost her eyesight while admiring her celebrated beauty in the mirror.[2] Upon her passing, the palace remained in the Khaznadji family until the French colonial occupation in 1830. From that time and until 1839, the building served as the first City Hall of Algiers. It was then in the charge of several senior officials – until 1947 – and in 1987, the palace was reopened by decree as the Musée Nationale des Arts et Traditions Populaires (Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions). This history is secondary to Boulanger's intention, however, as his Orientalism is more atmospheric than didactic, more aesthetic than documentary, and more familiar than exotic. As Eugène Montrosier observed in his brief biography of the artist in 1888, ". . . Africa had opened up new horizons for him, had stirred in him unforgettable emotions, but had not thrown him into the great current into which Delacroix was to venture . . . Gustave Boulanger brought back the brilliance of the Orient in his eye rather than in his thought. He dreamed of a quieter Orient, with broad lines, fine types, gently pleated draperies; an Orient with the sky of Greece," ("Gustave Boulanger," *Revue Illustrée*, v. 6, no. 69, 15 Oct. 1888, pp.274 –80).

Gustave Boulanger in his studio sketching, *c.*1885.

2 Rabia Hadjoudj, 'The palace of Khdawaj the blind … Generation's myth,' *Assibar Touristic Magazine*, May/June 2019, pp. 22–23.

THE SMOKER

Guillaume Étienne André Brossard (1808–1890)

Signed 'Brossard' (upper right)
Oil on canvas
27 ¼ x 35 in. (69.3 x 89 cm.)

Provenance :
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 12 June 1995, lot 214

Brossard was born in la Rochelle, France, and began his artistic training in Paris in the 1820s under the guidance of Antoine-Jean Gros and Paul Delaroche. Despite his long association with the Paris Salon (he exhibited there from 1833 until 1880), little is known of Brossard's career or life. The sunlit views of his hometown and the many society portraits that he created form an unlikely backdrop to the small number of atmospheric and vigorously painted images of the Middle East that also belong to his oeuvre. Though it is not known whether these paintings were based on first hand observation, they are instructive and insightful nonetheless. They demonstrate Brossard's unique ability to take historical facts and circumstances and elevate them to something more compelling, and to the realm of art.

The theme of a man (or woman) smoking was a common trope in nineteenth-century Orientalist art, and was often coupled with the depiction of a dramatically lit interior space, crowded with exotic *bric-à-brac*. (Delacroix's *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* [1834, Louvre] undoubtedly helped popularize the theme.) In addition to providing artists with the opportunity to practice their chiaroscuro, these claustrophobic, smoke-filled rooms invited nineteenth-century European audiences to indulge their fantasies of languor and excess, and to witness the Orient of their dreams. Some would go so far as to create luxurious smoking rooms in their own homes, designed to look like a scene in an Orientalist painting. Brossard's work is different, however, and departs from these exploitative trends. Rather than including a picturesque *hookah* or an intricately decorated *chibouk*, the artist gives the old man a cigarette, known to every Parisian *fumeur*.

The introduction of cigarettes into Egypt and throughout the Ottoman Empire took place in the middle of the nineteenth century. The latest fashion in Europe, this mode of tobacco consumption was embraced with enthusiasm in the region, by women and men alike. Indeed, by the turn of the century, cigarettes had become more popular than any form of traditional pipe, and luxury Egyptian (and Turkish) cigarettes were being produced locally and exported throughout the world. Advertising for cigarettes also became a burgeoning phenomenon, with manufacturers promoting their goods in British and European industrial fairs and social clubs, and to everyone from international nobility to

army and navy troops.[1] Within these various contexts, the act of smoking gained a variety of different social meanings: it could be regarded as an inexpensive pastime or a vehicle for social gatherings, or a refined recreational pursuit featuring a luxury commodity. In Brossard's hands, the act of smoking becomes something else as well: it is a means to demonstrate the unexpected familiarity and closeness of Middle Eastern culture, and the people he portrayed.

As topical a subject as Brossard's painting presents, it also features the kind of standard studio still life that viewers of Orientalist paintings had come to expect. Rugs, brassware, pottery, musical instruments, and weapons – the latter rendered benign by their forgotten placement on the floor – are all included by the artist, positioned neatly to allow for the optimum view. The chaos of the Middle Eastern marketplace that travelers described, and the dusty, winding alleys of each city's crowded bazaars, is alluded to in Brossard's moody scene, but the overall effect is one of methodical contemplation and a calmed-down evaluation – perhaps enabled by a few comforting inhalations of a half-smoked cigarette.

Guillaume Étienne André Brossard, *The Smoker*

1 Relli Schechter, "Selling Luxury: The Rise of the Egyptian Cigarette and the Transformation of the Egyptian Tobacco Market, 1850–1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35.1 [Feb. 2003], p. 59.

THE WATER CARRIER

Félix Auguste Clément (1826–1888)

Signed and dated 'FA. Clément 1872' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
28 ¾ x 23 5/8 in. (73 x 60 cm.)
Painted in 1872

Provenance:
Berko Fine Paintings, 2013

Studying first at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, Clément entered the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1848. His teachers included the neoclassical painter Michael Martin Drolling, and François-Édouard Picot, best known for mythological, historical, and religious subjects. By 1856, Clément had won the Prix de Rome and in 1862, he was in Egypt, where he remained for six years. Several commissions in that country came from Prince Said Halim Pasha and from members of the Khedive's family, but there were also opportunities for the artist to make independent sketches inspired by his own interests and motivations. At the urging of his friend and colleague Jean-Léon Gérôme, Clément met and traveled with other painters in Egypt, including Jean Lecomte du Nouÿ. The influence of both Gérôme and Lecomte du Nouÿ can be felt in Clément's works, though much has been transformed.

The special quality of Clément's work is made clear by *The Water Carrier*, painted at the height of his career in 1872: It is both a portrait and an ethnographic study, a person and a type. The model is familiar; she reappears in another work in Clément's oeuvre, created that same year (Cf. *Women Selling Water and Oranges on the Road to Heliopolis* [1872, Musée des Beaux Arts de Nice, France].) Her costume and necklace are identical in both images, and the silver bracelet is as well. (This was a common style in Egypt, and was worn predominantly by Bedouin women in Siwa Oasis.) In the background, the Nile River is visible, a symbol of the enduring splendor of the Egyptian civilization and a reminder of this woman's humble daily task. Filling her large pottery jug with water from the river or a nearby well, she will walk to her village with it balanced on her head; when the jug is empty, she will return for more. The rhythm and repetition of this centuries-old endeavor complements the message of Clément's art – this is not a painted chance encounter, but an image for the ages, identifying the essence of Egyptian women and stating (in European eyes, at least) who they really are.

Clément participated in the Second Annual International Exhibition of London in 1872, the same time that *The Water Carrier* was completed. The following year, 1873, saw him at the Vienna World's Fair (Weltausstellung 1873 Wien) and in 1878, at the Exposition Universelle in Paris. Years later, Clément's international presence was still being strongly felt: Having served as a professor at the École nationale in Lyon from 1874 to 1877, he traveled to Algiers, seeking relief in its warmth from chronic bouts of failing health. He died in that city in the winter of 1888.

Félix Auguste Clément, *The Water Carrier*

ALONG THE NILE

Louis-Amable Crapelet (1822–1867)

Signed and dated 'Am. Crapelet 1863' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
10 ½ x 17 ½ in. (26.5 x 44.5 cm.)
Painted in 1863

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, 9 December 1996, lot 181

Louis Amable Crapelet received his training in the studio of the famous French master Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot. Oil sketches by this artist, distinguished by their bravura of brushstroke and clarity of color, as well as by their landscape subjects, seem to have influenced Crapelet's own work, as the present painting attests.

In 1852, Crapelet departed France for Cairo, where he began an extensive, two-year Nile tour. A trip to Tunis in 1859 resulted in an illustrated article for the journal *Le Tour du Monde* in 1865. Though Crapelet did not produce many paintings, those that he did were largely Orientalist in theme, and emanated from sketches made on the spot. A view of Luxor was exhibited at the Exposition Universelle in Paris and, one year later, in 1866, Crapelet exhibited several of his Egyptian works at the Paris Salon. (He had made his debut at that venue two decades earlier, in 1846.) Today, watercolors by Crapelet depicting the Egyptian landscape are in the collection of the Louvre.

Along the Nile is an engaging example of Crapelet's Orientalist style. Less concerned with the precise details of the landscape before him, Crapelet instead focuses on light, color, and mood. The busyness of the water's edge, with boats docking, women washing, and camels drinking, is reflected in the energy of his brushwork, while the even tonalities, broken only by a few well-placed daubs of red, yellow, and blue paint, underscore the rhythmic and enduring nature of the daily activities he had witnessed.

The panoramic format of the composition was one adopted by several artists who travelled to the region. Reminiscent of the stereographs that were by this time all the rage, Crapelet's 1863 view seems almost three-dimensional in its deep perspective and thus vigorously real. Stereoscopes had become wildly popular in the mid-nineteenth century, with more than 500,000 being sold by the London Stereoscopic Company by 1857. By 1862, nearly every well-appointed Victorian parlor had one of these apparatuses, through which over a million specially devised photographic images – including many of the Middle East – were pored over by male and female audiences alike. The ability of the stereoscope to "transport" the viewer to another place was, in fact, one of its most popular and valued features: Companies even organized their stereograph collections into "tours," which were marketed to consumers as a means to

"visit" historic sites without actually having to leave the comfort of their homes: "You look through your stereoscope,' a writer in the London *Times* raved, 'and straightaway you stand beside the fabled Nile, watching the crocodile asleep upon its sandy shore … ."[1]

The mechanics behind this new obsession were straightforward enough: the viewer, when looking through the stereoscope's dual prismatic lenses, was provided with two pictures of the same subject, taken from slightly different points of view and spaced two and a half inches apart. (This approximates the distance between the eyes.) Through the process of refraction or reflection, the eye would conflate these disparate images to produce a single, seemingly solid, three-dimensional picture.

The experience of this "reality effect," however, was rather less prosaic. As Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing in 1859, breathlessly explained:

> The first effect of looking at a good photograph through the stereoscope is a surprise such as no painting ever produced. The mind feels its way into the very depths of the picture. The scraggy branches of a tree in the foreground run out at us as if they would scratch our eyes out. The elbow of a figure stands forth so as to make us almost uncomfortable. Then there is such a frightful amount of detail, that we have the same sense of infinite complexity which Nature gives us … . Oh, infinite volumes of poems that I treasure in this small library of glass and pasteboard! I creep over the vast features of Rameses, on the face of his rockhewn Nubian temple; I scale the huge mountain-crystal that calls itself the Pyramid of Cheops. I pace the length of the three Titanic stones of the wall of Baalbec,— mightiest masses of quarried rock that man has lifted into the air; and then I dive into some mass of foliage with my microscope, and trace the veinings of a leaf so delicately wrought in the painting not made with hands, that I can almost see its down and the green aphis that sucks its juices. I look into the eyes of the caged tiger, and on the scaly train of the crocodile, stretched on the sands of the river that has mirrored a hundred dynasties. I stroll through Rhenish vineyards, I sit under Roman arches, I walk the streets of once buried cities, I look into the chasms of Alpine glaciers, and on the rush of wasteful cataracts. I pass, in a moment, from the banks of the Charles to the ford of the Jordan, and leave my outward frame in the arm-chair at my table, while in spirit I am looking down upon Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.[2]

Though Crapelet's intentions were not recorded at the time, it is tempting to see in his panoramic painting the desire to provide his viewers with this same, transporting effect.

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1 1 January 1858.

2 For Holmes' full essay, see Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," *Atlantic Monthly* 3 (June 1859): 738–48.

HALT BY EGYPTIAN RUINS

Louis-Amable Crapelet (1822–1867)

Signed and dated 'Am. Crapelet 1861' (lower left)
Watercolor on paper
11 x 17 ¾ in. (28 x 45 cm.)
Painted in 1861

Provenance:
Sale: Étude Tajan, Paris, 25 October 1994, lot 341

Crapelet may have made several trips to Egypt, or have simply worked from drawings made during his tour of that country in the early 1850s in order to produce more 'finished' compositions at a later date. *Halt by Egyptian Ruins* possesses characteristics of both a sketch made on the spot and an image composed in the studio, well after Crapelet's return. It also, however, holds the possibility of being a rare and valuable record of a vanished ancient landmark, made just months before it was destroyed. It is this tension between fact and fiction, document and fantasy, that has rendered Crapelet's works so compelling, from the nineteenth century until today.

The subject appears to be a fabrication, based on fading memories of Crapelet's Nile tour and misremembered details of the ancient temples of Philae or Kom Ombo. But it may also have been inspired by Crapelet's visit to a temple at Armant, twelve miles south of Luxor, built by Cleopatra for her son Caesarion before her death in 30 BCE. This temple was destroyed in 1861 when its stones were used for the construction of a sugar factory; it was known to contemporaries largely from a photograph taken by Francis Frith in 1857 and published in his album *Egypt and Palestine* the following year (vol. I, pl. 5), and from a much older illustration included in the *Description de l'Egypte*.

Cleopatra's Temple at Armant *c.*1857

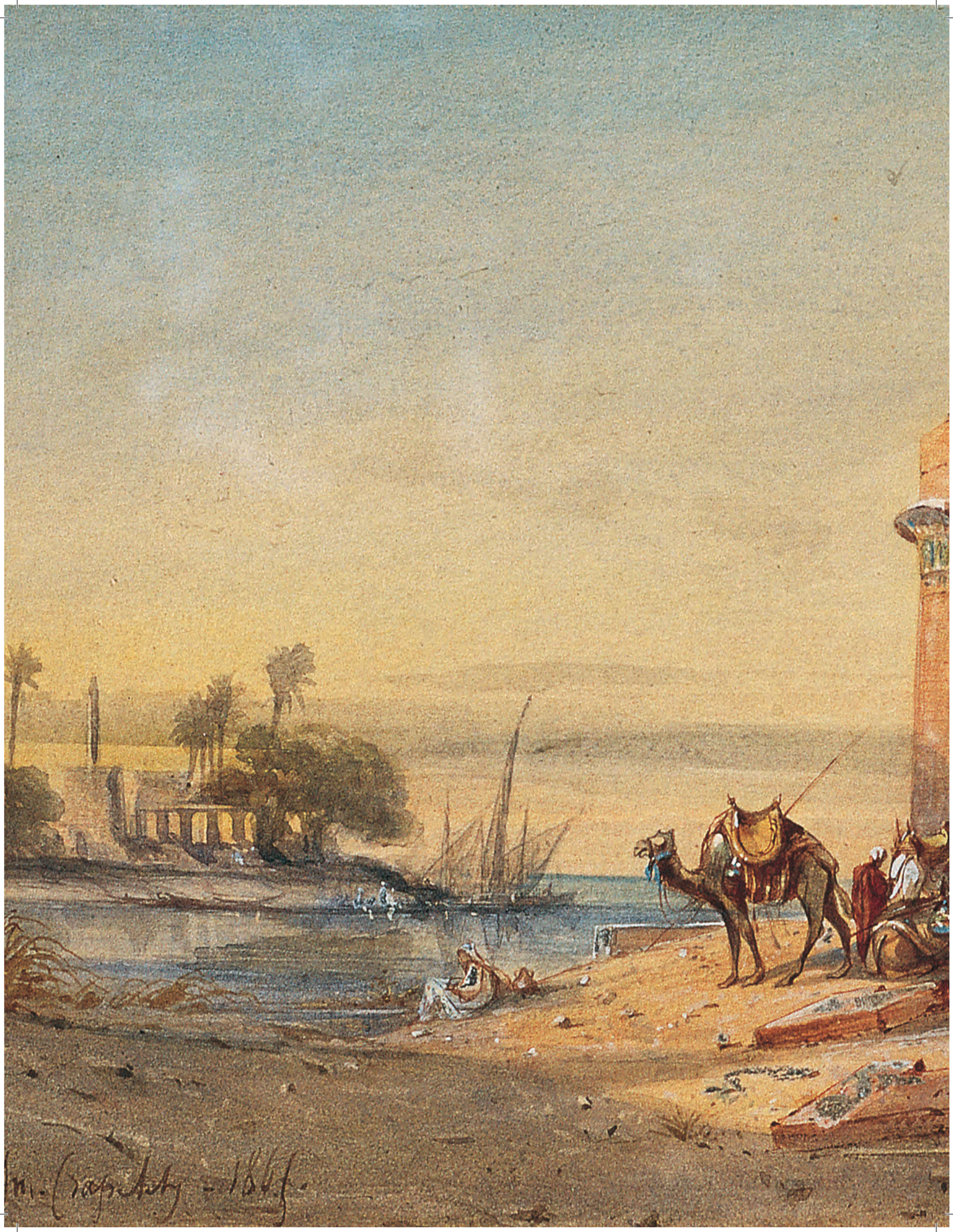
The efforts of French artists to record the monuments of ancient Egypt had begun in earnest in 1798, when a French army led by General Napoleon Bonaparte entered Egypt. With Napoleon came the Scientific and Artistic Commission, headed by the artist Vivant Denon. Denon, along with a team of scholars and scientists, called *savants*, set out to record all aspects of the country, from its flora and fauna to its most renowned Egyptological sites. The official publication of the Commission,

the *Description de l'Égypte* was published in Paris between 1809 and 1828 in multiple, lavishly illustrated volumes. It quickly became the preferred sourcebook for Orientalist painters, who turned to its images when their own knowledge or creativity failed them. If not a direct descendant of Denon's exceptional project, with Cleopatra's temple as its connective line, *Halt by Egyptian Ruins* may certainly be considered a tangential or spiritual heir.

Similar too to Crapelet's painting were the works of the Scottish artist David Roberts, a former theater painter who favored archaeological accuracy over fantasy and personal delights. Roberts's dramatic images of ancient Egyptian sites, staffed, as here, with tiny personages for scale, were immediately successful, with demand far exceeding supply. The answer to this were volumes of lithographs, produced in England during the 1830s and distributed worldwide. It is possible the Crapelet at some point in his career saw Roberts's topographical works, either in person or by these means, and in them found a muse.

The technique that Crapelet employs and the tradition that he follows both speak to first-hand observation, rather than to studio work. In the nineteenth century, watercolor had developed into a highly portable and fast-drying medium, making it a favorite among travelling artists. Ease of use meant that numerous works could be created *in situ*, and carried home for later use. Watercolor also, in the opinions of its champions, perfectly captured the particular qualities of light and air, the vibrancy, and the almost palpable sense of energy that the Middle Eastern landscape offered. Crapelet's image, which shifts between transparent washes of color and the more concentrated application of luminous pigments, effectively conveys this, again suggesting that the painting was a record of reality, as fleeting as that was.

Louis-Amable Crapelet, *Halt by Egyptian Ruins*



STUDIES OF AN ARAB MAN

Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863)

Studio stamp (lower right)
Pencil on oatmeal paper
4 ½ x 8 ¼ in. (11.4 x 20 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Christie's, London 11 March 2014, lot 389;
Gift

As the undisputed leader of the Romantic movement and a founding member of Orientalism, Eugène Delacroix holds a special place in the history of the genre. The trip to North Africa in 1832 which launched his storied career, however, happened quite by chance. The painter M. E. Isabey had been asked to accompany a diplomatic mission led by the Comte de Mornay, official envoy to the Sultan of Morocco, but his concern over recent political agitations in Algiers and elsewhere in the region led him to decline. Delacroix was asked to go instead.

The trip lasted only six months, but its impact on the artist was profound. To a friend in Paris he wrote that he was 'dizzy' with what he had seen.[1] Hundreds of drawings and watercolors, as well as seven sketchbooks, letters, and the artist's *Journal* resulted, which documented Delacroix's journey in image and in text. Together they form an unprecedented and incomparable archive, which Delacroix continued to draw from throughout his career. Despite this library of first-hand visual and textual information, however, Delacroix's goal was never one of straight transcription: The paintings he created upon his return to Paris were impassioned, emotive expressions of a very personal Orient – one in which color was nearly palpable and the Antique was alive and well. (As Delacroix himself famously wrote of North Africa, 'Rome is no longer in Rome.')[2]

The sketches from which these paintings drew were equally full of life – though now expressed through an economy of means. As in the present work, they were meant to evoke the idea or essence of the subject rather than its details, like glosses to a text. (Delacroix's experience with lithography undoubtedly contributed to his confidence with line, and the simplicity and clarity of pencil and pen and ink.) Here the artist's focus is an Arab man, identifiable by his turban and *burnous*. Delacroix's admiration for the robed figures he encountered, and his preference for their ways, is made clear by an entry in his *Journal*:

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1 Barthélémy Jobert, *Delacroix* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997), p. 83.

2 Delacroix made the remark in a letter to A. Jal on 4 June 1832, in which he recommended that students be sent to North Africa to study antiquity. See Jean Stewart, ed. and trans., *Eugène Delacroix. Selected Letters 1813–1863*, New York, 1971, p. 192, translated from A. Joubin, ed., *Correspondence générale d'Eugène Delacroix*, Paris, 1935–38.

'[They are] closer to nature in a thousand ways; their dress, the form of their shoes … As for us, in … our ridiculous pinching clothes, we are pitiful.'[3] This combination of ethnographic journalism, philosophical musing, and a pure and virtuoso minimalism rarely seen in nineteenth-century Orientalist art, give Delacroix's sketches a timeless iconicity that has never gone out of style.

In his own lifetime, the importance and special appeal of Delacroix's sketches were recognized as well. As the great painter Eugène Fromentin astutely penned: 'People wanted him to be more true, more naïve, perhaps they wanted him to be more Oriental … rest assured, however, that the most beautiful elements in his work are the most generalized ones.'[4] But perhaps the truest words were those written by Delacroix himself, in the *Journal* that his Middle Eastern travels had largely filled: 'Perhaps the sketch of a work is so pleasing because everyone can finish it as he chooses. The artist does not spoil the picture by finishing it; only, in abandoning the vagueness of the sketch he shows more of his personality by revealing all the range but also the limitations of his talent. To finish requires a heart of steel: one must make a decision about everything.'[5]

Eugène Delacroix, *Studies of an Arab Man*

3 *The Journal of Eugène Delacroix*, trans. Walter Pach, New York, 1937, p. 122.
4 Eugène Fromentin, *Une année dans le Sahel, in Ouevres complètes*, Paris, 1984, p. 326.
5 C. Marks, *From the Sketchbooks of the Great Artists*, New York, 1972, p. 254.

BATHER IN OASIS

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed 'E. DINET' (lower left)
Oil on canvas
39 ½ x 32 in. (100.4 x 81.3 cm.)
Painted in 1920

Provenance:
Private sale, Paris, 1995

Literature:
É. Dinet and S. Ben Ibrahim, *Tableaux de la vie arabe*, Paris, 1922, p. 13 (illustrated in black and white)
D. Brahimi and K. Benchikou, *La vie et l'œuvre d'Étienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, catalogue raisonné no. 278

Though Algeria transformed nearly every aspect of his work after his arrival in 1884, Dinet's figurative paintings remained indebted to his early academic training at Paris's Académie Julian.[1] The human body is convincing in his art, its anatomy understood, as each model was drawn from life. In the present work, the woman's posture is understated and real; she has been interrupted before her bath. Hand raised, she shields her eyes from the brilliance of the North African sun, which illuminates facets of her silver jewelry and the folds of her loose and open-necked green dress. Far from the sensual odalisques of his Orientalist colleagues, Dinet's female subject is confident and bold; she is a thinking individual, who confronts the uninvited viewer with a muscled body and an unapologetic gaze.

Between 1884 and 1904, Dinet traveled frequently between Algeria and Paris, exhibiting Orientalist works in both locations and learning Arabic as well. In 1904, he moved permanently to Bou-Saâda, a southern town in Algeria that would become his artistic and personal muse. Writing of the images he produced during his first year there, the American art critic Frederick Morton observed: 'No other painter has evidenced such an intimate knowledge of the East; no one has caught and recorded with such fidelity the spirit of the Orient — people, topography, atmosphere, everything in his canvases is true to fact; no one has vitalized his pictures with the breath that is not of the Occident.'[2] This ability to merge the realities of Algeria and its peoples with an aesthetic that immediately and powerfully appealed is Dinet's true gift as an artist, and his genius contribution to the genre.

1 Dinet studied here with Bouguereau between 1881 and 1882.
2 Frederick Morton, *Brush and Pencil* 8.4 (January 1904), p. 251.

Étienne Dinet, *Bather in Oasis*

CAIRO: HAZE, DUST AND MORNING FUMES

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed, inscribed and dated 'A. Migeon/Souvenir du Caire/E. DINET 1897' (lower left) inscribed on the reverse 'Tombeau des khalifes'
Watercolour, gouache, charcoal and pencil on paper
10 7/8 x 18 ¼ in. (27.7 x 47.7 cm.)
Painted in 1897

Provenance:
Sale: Christie's, Paris, 17 December 2008, lot 1 (as *Etude pour Le Caire: brumes, poussières et fumeés du matin*)

As his letters attest,[1] Dinet's visit to Egypt in 1897 did not have the same transformative effect on his life and career as did Algeria. There were moments, however, that were pure magic. In *Mirages: Sceenes de la vie arabe*, a book he co-authored with his friend Sliman Ben Ibrahim in 1906, the latter recalled a view of Cairo they had observed, and the beauty of the many minarets that defined the city's skyline: 'It is a joy to behold their slender and graceful arabesque design, and to hear the *muazzin's* moving call to prayer…[T]he haze, like a cloud of incense covers the city as if to help hide the beauty and so many souvenirs…[S]moke emanating from the houses echoes the thoughts of the city's inhabitants.'

The haze that Dinet depicts here, as it descends over the city and meets the lifting smoke, dissolves the details of the architecture just as the text describes. It also allows Dinet to explore a palette very different from the saturated hues and rich tonalities of the majority of his figurative art. Occasionally Dinet produced a version of a painting entirely in grisaille, or shades of gray, in order to evaluate and manipulate the use of light within a given work, and also, perhaps, to allow the definition required in its translation to a print. In his skill as both a colorist and an artist with a far sparer approach, Dinet is reminiscent of Delacroix and Jean-Léon Gérôme.

The sketch, intended for a friend and executed *en plein air*, was the inspiration for a later painting of the city that was exhibited throughout Paris and in Dusseldorf.[2] A related work, painted in oils on cardboard in 1899 and featuring the same scene in the evening, is now in the collection of the Dahesh Museum of Art,[3] and a panorama of Cairo is also part of Dinet's oeuvre.[4] An Orientalist version, perhaps, of Claude

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1 See Dinet's biography written by his sister, Jeanne Dinet Rollince, *La Vie de E. Dinet*, Paris, 1938.

2 See Denise Brahimi and Koudir Benchikou, *La vie et l'œuvre d'Étienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, catalogue raisonné no. 129. The sketch was dedicated to Gaston Migeon, curator of the Louvre between 1902 and 1923 and author of *Le Caire, le Nil et Memphis*, published in Paris in 1928.

3 Brahimi and Benchikou, catalogue raisonné no. 445.

4 Ibid., catalogue raisonné no. 444.

Monet's impressionist views of the Gare Saint-Lazare, this small series suggests both a nineteenth-century fascination with science and weather and their effects on a single focal point, and the extraordinary variety that can be found in Dinet's art.

Though the originality of Dinet's vision is unquestionable, the skyline of Cairo had lured artist's brushes before this work was painted. The great French artist Jean-Léon Gérôme had included an aerial view of the city in his *Bonaparte in Cairo* of 1886 (Hearst Castle, California) and David Roberts had executed his extraordinary pencil and watercolor *Panorama of Cairo* (1839, private collection) several decades earlier, in a climate that had become enraptured by such sweeping scenes. The relationship of such images to cartography, and to the imperial impulse to survey, conquer, and map, cannot escape twenty-first century scholars' revisionist readings, or the tendency to politicize the genre. But the poetry of these paintings is just as important to mention, and the awe that these artists so clearly felt toward this storied city, as they looked with fresh and curious and widely opened eyes.

This painting was dedicated to Gaston Migeon (1861-1930) who, as curator of the Louvre Museum from 1902 to 1923, built up its first collections of Islamic art. Gaston Migeon also organized exhibitions, wrote books, including *Le Caire, le Nil et Memphis* in 1928, and was closely linked to many collectors and artists, notably Dinet.

Étienne Dinet, *Cairo: Haze, Dust And Morning Fumes*

COUNCIL IN THE NIGHT

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed 'E. DINET' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
44 ½ x 57 in. (113 x 145 cm.)

Provenance:
Purchased from the artist by the father of the present owner in Algeria in 1923

Exhibited:
Algiers, *XXVe Salon Officiel de la Société des Artistes Algériens et Orientalistes*, 1924, no. 65 (as *Conciliabule dans la nuit* and loaned by the father of the present owner)

Literature:
M. Vidal-Bué, *L'Algérie des Peintres, 1830–1960*, Paris, 2002, p. 241 (illustrated in color)
M. Kaddache, *Histoire du nationalisme algérien: 1919–1939*, Paris, 2003 (illustrated in color on the cover)

Though best known for his depictions of the women and children of Algeria, and in particular the dancers of the Ouled Naïl tribe, the subject of *Council in the Night* occupies an important place in Dinet's Orientalist oeuvre. Dinet's admiration of Bedouin culture is reflected in several of his paintings, including *The Lookout* of 1906 [see p. 46] and in the details of his biography. His frequent travels with Bedouin tribes and his profound respect for their way of life inspired a preservationist philosophy, and a sustained critique of France's enduring and escalating colonialist policies. Dinet's efforts at 'salvage ethnography' in fact mark each of his canvases, and give to his images a depth of meaning and a purpose that are often overshadowed by the sheer brilliance of their visual effect.

In the present work, Dinet presents a rare glimpse into the masculine world of Algerian tribal society. Five men, four with flintlock muskets, crouch down together in the dark of night. (The inclusion of these arms may indicate Dinet's desire to correctly record the modernization of the Bedouin, and to suggest the loss of their traditional cultural ways.) Each of the men wears a sage green *burnous*, an elaborately wrapped white turban, and a white *djellaba*. The liberal use of chiaroscuro – a vestige, perhaps from Dinet's academic training and appreciation of the works of the Renaissance masters – adds drama to the scene; the composition glows like the burning embers of the fire that, though not visible, illuminates the temporary gathering spot of this group.

The faces of the men bear a range of rapt expressions. Dinet's consummate skill as a portraitist – again, attributable to a conservative academic education based on the study of physiognomy and the classical human form – is evident in the individualization of each striking countenance; certain of these figures

must have been particular favorites of the artist, as they appear in others of Dinet's works. The figure on the left, for example, can be found in *Tête d'homme*, *Chasseur à l'affut dans les dunes*, and *Halte de révoltés*, while the eldest member of the group, grasping a cane, bears some resemblance to one of the men in *Spectators Admiring a Dancer* (1905).[1] The repetition of these figures from canvas to canvas serves to create a self-referential narrative of sorts; like stills from a very personal movie, they work together to tell a story beyond that depicted in any single composition.

Despite the intense realism of these figures, and the precision with which Dinet has recorded each element of the environment around them, the subject itself is an ambiguous one. Why have these men gathered at such a late hour, and why have they come so heavily armed? Are their whispered words and elaborate scheming meant to protect them from a forbidding entity close at hand, or are they – as hunters, bandits, or smugglers - the real danger that brews? Instances of local tribal rebellion against the occupying French had not gone unnoticed by Dinet, who often expressed concern at the threat to Algeria's indigenous culture that colonialism posed. Could Dinet's subject be meant as a commentary on these contemporary politics, with the members of this animated group organizing their plans for continued resistance against the French?

Dinet's obvious delight in crafting such captivating scenarios, and his uncanny skill at bringing them so persuasively to life, may be indebted to the lengths he himself went to experience Algerian culture; having devoted nearly fifty years to a residence in that country and converting to Islam in 1913, one contemporary critic found it possible to claim that, '. . . Dinet, in a large measure, has become one of the strange people he loves to paint . . . he looks and acts the Arab chief.'[2]

Contemporaries' appreciation of Dinet's distinctive approach, and fascination with his avant-garde lifestyle, is evidenced by the sheer volume of Orientalist works he created and sold during his lifetime, and the adventurous circumstances of their procurement. Purchased in Algeria in 1923, *Council in the Night* is one of the scores of paintings sold from his villa on the outskirts of Algiers in Saint-Eugène to private collectors who travelled specifically to meet Dinet. (Many of these were still in progress when they left his studio.) This particular work was then immediately exhibited in Algiers at the XXVe Salon Officiel de la Société des Artistes Algériens et Orientalistes of 1924 (no. 65), one of the many Salons and organizations Dinet participated in in North Africa and Europe, before being lost to view until today.

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1 These works are all in private collections.

2 *Brush and Pencil* 8.4 (January 1904), p. 255.

THE LOOKOUT

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed and dated 'E. DINET 1906' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
19 ¾ x 24 in. (50.3 x 61 cm.)
Painted in 1906

Provenance:
Private Collection, France;
Sale: Christie's, Paris, 17 December 2008, lot 15 (as *Le Guetteur*)

Dinet's ardent interest in Algerian life and his commitment to rendering it in paint, led him to include a range of original subject matter in his oeuvre. In *The Lookout*, the artist presents a portrait of an Arab man, seen from a slightly elevated position and at close range. Dinet's talents as an ethnographer are evident in this intensely studied visage, and in the flintlock rifle the man holds steady in his hands. The man's furrowed brow and lined face carry years of experiences; he has clearly been in this position many times before. Though Dinet does not reveal the object of the lookout's attention, or provide an explanation as to who the figure is, he has created a painting of such interest and intensity that it is hard to look away.

The Lookout was painted in 1906, two years after Dinet had settled in his beloved Bou-Saâda. There, in this southern Algerian idyll, Dinet found his lifelong muses. The women of the town, with their distinctive jewelry, costume, and tattooing, would most often occupy his brush. But he also created a series of paintings of Bedouin men, often armed and at the ready, rendered in a mixture of compelling techniques and styles. Ethnographic on the one hand and vigorously impressionistic on the other, they convey the intensity and enthusiasm of Dinet's ever-exploring gaze.

Khardiache Frères, *Portrait of a Bedouin with rifle on his lap*, ca. 1895–1905

Depictions of Bedouin culture had become popular in nineteenth-century Romantic literature and poetry, as Europeans' fantasies of escaping their starched-collar lifestyles and too-rapidly industrializing world became increasingly present in their minds. Hunting with falcons, sparring on horseback, and sleeping under the stars with only the belongings that could be carried, seemed a welcome alternative to a complicated metropolitan life. Alexander Kinglake wrote of this rebellion against one's place in society in his great Orientalist novel of 1844, *Eothen*: [T]here comes to [a man] a time for loathing the

wearisome ways of society – a time for not liking tame people – a time for not dancing quadrilles – not sitting in pews … a time in short for scoffing and railing … all our most cherished institutions,' (xii–xiii). The popular British author Eliot Warburton also found 'something romantic in the Arab mode of life, which never seems to lose its zest … and every one who has wandered with these wild sons of freedom [the Bedouin] where all else are slaves can understand the feeling.'[1]

The strident masculinity that Bedouin culture was seen to possess was also a source of respect and awe; the weaponry and bellicose attitudes of Bedouin warriors were expressions of a power that European men admired. From Delacroix's swirling scenes of lion hunts and fantasias to T. E. Lawrence's iconic white robes, set against the historical backdrop of Arab guerilla warfare during the First World War, the romanticization of the Bedouin at battle was vivid and enduring. Though somewhat subdued in comparison, the present image nonetheless suggests these trending themes. Dinet's subject crouches at the ready, intent upon whatever impending danger might await.

Étienne Dinet, *The Lookout*

1 Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, 2 vols. (London, 1844–5), 1:274.

THE LOVERS

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed 'E. DINET' (upper right)
Oil on canvas
35 x 45 ¼ in. (89 x 115 cm.)
Painted in 1928

Provenance:
Jeanne Dinet-Rollince (sister of the artist);
Louis Viriot;
Sale: Versailles, 8 March 1981, lot 79;
Sale: Enghien-les-Bains, France, 16 October 1983, lot 37;
Djillali Mehri, Paris;
Private Collection, Paris;
Sale: Christie's, Paris, 20 June 2013, lot 13 (as *Les amoureux*)

Exhibited:
Paris, Petit Palais, *Centenaire de la conquête de l'Algérie*, 1930, no. 459

Literature:
P. Seutenac, *Renaissance de l'art et de l'industrie*, November 1931, p. 323 (illustrated in black and white)
D. Brahimi and K. Benchikou, *La vie et l'oeuvre de Etienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, p. 237, catalogue raisonné no. 328 (illustrated in color, p. 132)
Etienne Dinet et les peintres orientalistes, Djillali Mehri Collection, Paris, 1988, p. 51, no. 71 (illustrated in color)

In *The Lovers*, one of Dinet's last works before his death in 1929, the artist presents perhaps the most iconic subject in Orientalist painting: the reclining female figure. In Dinet's ever-inventive hands, however, the tradition of the odalisque has been disrupted and transformed. Held firmly in the arms of a young Arab man, and clothed in layers of voluminous fabrics, Dinet leaves little room for Europeans' voyeuristic gaze. The sober expression and penetrating stare of the man, moreover, as well as his possessive grasp, deny the glosses of playful eroticism or explicit sensuality that might typically be associated with this theme, and leave in their stead an unfiltered and brazen look at all aspects of modern Algerian life.

Dinet's confidence in his ability to render Algeria as it was, with little concern for Western expectations or desires, arose from the details of his own biography. Having moved to that country after a transformative visit in 1884, Dinet immersed himself in the local culture, learning Arabic and formally converting to Islam in 1913. (Dinet was among but a handful of Europeans to accomplish the Haj or pilgrimage to Mecca; he did so in 1929. He even co-authored a book entitled *The Life of Mohammad, the Prophet of Allah*)

Such extraordinary efforts to embrace Algerian culture and, he would later proclaim, to 'promote Franco-Muslim mutual understanding,' were reflected in the intensely realistic paintings that Dinet produced from the last decade of the nineteenth century forward. Many of these images were based on first-hand observation and on contemporary photographs, which Dinet used both for their documentary advantages and for formal inspiration: the cropped edges and close-up views featured in many of Dinet's compositions are heavily indebted to this mechanical device.

Not content to merely replicate the camera's lens, however, or to offer what ethnologists could also ably do, Dinet added his own, distinctive mark to each of the images he created. In the present work, a confectionary palette and a flurry of impressionistic brushstrokes serve to reject the starkness and stillness of photography and the calculated methodologies of a scientist's approach, and remind the viewer of the artist's active involvement in the architecture of the scene. Dinet's actual presence is documented by a slightly earlier (ca. 1925) photograph of the artist on his terrace, painting a man in the embrace of four Ouled-Naïl women. In addition to such staged *tableaux*, and indicative of his appreciation and knowledge of North African visual and literary arts, Dinet may also have been inspired by Arabic poetry, which often featured embracing couples and other amorous scenes.

Étienne Dinet, *The Lovers*

NIGHT DANCE

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed, inscribed and dated 'E. DINET Laghouat 1891' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
22 ½ x 28 ½ in. (57.3 x 72.4 cm.)
Painted in 1891 (in Laghouat)

Provenance:
Léonce Bénédite Collection;
Mrs. Maynard;
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 12 December 1995, lot 188

Exhibitions:
Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, *Exposition internationale de peinture,* 1891–92, no. 29
Paris, Société nationale des Beaux-Arts, 1892, no. 347
Paris, Palais de l'industrie, *Exposition de l'Art musulman* (premier Salon des Peintres orientalistes français), 1893, no. 270 (as *Fête de nuit*)
Paris, Société nationale des Beaux-Arts, 1894, no. 1987 (as *Fête de nuit [Laghouat]*)
Paris, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Rétrospective Dinet* à *l'Exposition coloniale internationale*, 1931, no. 31

Literature:
G. Vuillier, *La danse*, Paris, 1898, p. 319 (as *Fête de nuit a Laghouat*) (illustrated as a black and white engraving)
É. Dinet and S. Ben Ibrahim, *Mirages: Sceenes de la vie arabe*, Paris, 1906, p. 169 (illustrated in black and white)
J. Dinet-Rollince, *La Vie de É. Dinet*, Paris, 1938, p. 70 (illustrated in black and white)
D. Brahimi and K. Benchikou, *La vie et l'œuvre d'Étienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, catalogue raisonné no. 257, p. 37 (illustrated in color)
L. Thornton, *La femme dans la peinture orientaliste*, Paris, 1993, p. 136
Revue de l'art, Paris, 2006, p. 67 (as *Fête de nuit*)
O. Nefedova, *A Journey into the World of the Ottomans: The Art of Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737)*, Milan, 2009, p. 71 (illustrated in color)

One of Dinet's most impressionistic works, the *Night Dance* of 1891 depicts the immediacy and energy of an Algerian woman's performance before a captivated crowd. In the foreground, the heads of three Arab men are pushed up against the picture plane, as if they sit in the space of the viewer. From this vantage point, they look up and outward at the red-robed woman, who is in the middle of her dance. Her arms are raised and her fingers are clasped together to gracefully hold a red scarf against the back of her head. Around her waist a heavy silver amulet mirrors the design of the thick

silver bracelets she wears around her wrists. The elaborate headdress of the woman covers long loose and braided locks of black hair that cascade down around her golden necklaces and upper sleeves; these passages are rendered with rapid-fire brushstrokes that are as effortless and animated as her rhythmic moves. The dancer's red dress extends to the floor, swirling around her in a single, spiraling gauzy twirl.

In the background of the composition, Dinet's ability to shift between ethnography and emotion, documentation and subjectivity, is displayed in his rendition of the group of onlookers who kneel on the ground to watch the magic unfold. The artist's training at the Académie Julian in Paris has largely been abandoned; indeed, the academic rules of conservative nineteenth-century French painting were immediately overshadowed upon his arrival in Algeria in 1884. Inspired by the landscape, culture, and people of that country, Dinet settled there permanently in 1904, finding a new palette and a freer style. Laghouat, the site where the present work was painted, was an early favorite of Dinet's. Here the Ouled Naïl, a Berber tribe whose women were renowned for their dancing prowess, gathered to perform. Dinet's fascination with the dance on this particular night is clear, but it is not its provocation or the physical figure of the dancer that attracts his roving eye. It is the ring of glittering candlelight against the darkness, with all the mystery and intimacy that it evokes, the gathering of men and women in this moment, and the calm, detached demeanor of the dancer in the midst of such a heady frenzy that he seeks to capture and record.

Étienne Dinet, *Night Dance*

SPECTATORS ADMIRING A DANCER, 1905

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed and dated 'E DINET / 1905' (lower left)
Oil on canvas
33 by 40 ¼ in. (84 by 102.5 cm.)
Painted in 1905

Provenance:
Galerie Allard, Paris;
Marquis du P. (by 1911);
Verney Seymour Ackroyd, Bradford, Yorkshire (by the 1940s);
Thence by descent

Exhibited:
Paris, Salon de la Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, 1906, no. 402 (as *Dans un café de danseuses [un groupe de spectateurs]*)
Paris, Galerie Allard, 1924 (as *Groupe de spectateurs admirant une danseuse*)

Literature:
É. Dinet and S. Ben Ibrahim, *Mirages: Sceenes de la vie arabe*, Paris, 1906, p. 171 (illustrated in black and white)
L. Vauxelles, *Le Salon de 1906*, Paris, 1906, p. 32 (illustrated in black and white)
Les Arts 53 (May 1906), p. 12 (illustrated in black and white)
C. Mauclair, *Action africaine* 3 (March 1912), p. 8 (illustrated in black and white)
Afrique du Nord illustrée 287 (30 October 1926), p. 7 (illustrated in black and white)
G. Audisio, *Larousse mensuel* 318 (August 1933), p. 473 (illustrated in black and white)
D. Brahimi and K. Benchikou, *La vie et l'oeuvre de Etienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, p. 196, catalogue raisonné no. 154 (as *Groupe de spectateurs dans un café de danseuses*)
L. Thornton, *Women as Portrayed in Orientalist Painting*, Paris, 2009, p. 136 (as *Group of Spectators in a Dancers' Café*)

Painted shortly after Dinet moved permanently to the Algerian oasis town of Bou Saâda, and in the same year that he became an Officer of the *Légion d'Honneur*, *Spectators Admiring a Dancer* is both one of the artist's most typical and most exceptional works. Dinet's interest in the women of Algeria, and in particular the dancers of the Ouled Naïl tribe, was well established by 1905, and images of these performers had become a prominent part of his now-exclusively Orientalist oeuvre. (Dinet's *Night Dance* of 1891 is an early example of this theme.) Unlike these works, however, in which the elaborate costumes and rhythmic gestures of the female dancers are made the focus of the composition, here the dancer is

an absent presence on the scene, evoked only by the gestures and expressions of the Algerian men who watch her perform.

The dramatic, raking light that crosses Dinet's canvas highlights the countenances of each of the men in the audience, emphasizing their various states of rapt wonder and delight. (The critic George Lafenestre, writing on Dinet in 1890, had commended the artist for his understanding of light and shadow, and numbered him 'among the first to express the extraordinary and unexpected effects of the sun on figures in the open air.')[1] The artist's belief in the narrative potential of facial expression, and its importance to the meaning and interpretation of a work of art, is here made abundantly clear: Each visage that Dinet records demands individual attention, as it not only provides information about the nature of the unseen performance, but about the lives and distinct temperaments of the spectators as well. As one man languidly smokes his cigarette, another intently sips his tea, and a third puts his hands to his head in a gesture that hovers between comfortable practicality and utter disbelief; in their miens and in their actions, and in the weathered face of the mustachioed elder in the foreground, with steel-blue eyes locked forward, Dinet confirms his reputation as an accomplished portraitist and documenter of human emotion.

Dinet's ethnographic precision – reminiscent of the collage-like facial studies of Emile Deckers, among other artists from this school – was not without qualification. Indeed, the artist's own impassioned enthusiasm for his subject matter may be gauged by the impressionistic style of the work, with its animated brushstrokes and swirling, sinuous lines of thickly applied paint. These more emotive formal qualities – a far cry from the stillness and cold objectivity of the photographic images that often inspired him – imbue the canvas with a sense of immediacy and vitality, and suggest the energy and engagement of the hand that created it.

Dinet's enduring study of the Ouled Naïl tribe, and North African culture more generally, was also aided and informed by his close personal friendship with the Algerian writer Sliman Ben Ibrahim. (Their bond was allegedly forged in 1888 when Sliman saved Dinet's life during a desert skirmish.) As a cultural insider, Sliman provided Dinet with a wealth of valuable information, and gave him entrée into those aspects of Algerian society that were denied to most foreigners. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that in this painting Dinet withholds his newfound expertise, eliminating the one figure European audiences would undoubtedly have most wanted to see. (Likely begun in Algeria and completed during his annual return to Paris each winter, *Spectators Admiring a Dancer* was exhibited at the Salon de la Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1906 [no. 402]. An engraving after this work was included in Dinet's *Mirages*, published in the same year, a project undertaken with Sliman, to whom this painting was inscribed [*verso*] and dedicated.)[2] Confounding all expectations, and offering a viewpoint that few other commercial artists would have dared, *Spectators Admiring a Dancer* stands as a highly original – and deeply personal – contribution to the genre.

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1 George Lafenestre, 'Les Salons de 1890,' *Revue des Deux Mondes 3* (1890), p. 925. For similar recognition and praise, see Léonce Bénédite, 'Art et Orient: L'oeuvre d'Etienne Dinet,' *Art et decoration* 14 (1903), p. 308.

2 Étienne Dinet and Sliman Ben Ibrahim, *Mirages: Sceenes de la vie arabe*, Paris, 1906, p. 171.

THE CHILDREN OF BOU SAÂDA ON THE TERRACE

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed 'E. DINET' (center left)
Oil grisaille on artist board
19 ½ x 15 ½ in. (49.5 x 39.4 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Étude Tajan, Paris, 7 November 1994, lot 120

Bou-Saâda, or the 'City of Joy,' was to become both Dinet's home in Algeria and his source of inspiration after moving there in 1904. Its streets, its architecture, and above all its people, captivated the artist for nearly thirty years.

Here, a group of children jostle for place atop a terrace wall, anxious to see the events taking place on the street below. Dinet's attention to the jewelry, distinctive tattooing, and individual facial features of each young girl suggests the ethnographic quality of his art, and its ability to preserve even the most fleeting and seemingly inconsequential moments of Algerian daily life.

The personalities of each girl, which Dinet captures so effectively through his sensitive and exacting style, serve to animate the composition as well. Each girl looks outward, a different expression on her face. Their eyes tell the stories of who and how they are. Dinet looks to another feature, too, to give life to those he paints. As two hands clutch a younger child around the waist, another hand is extended downward, grasping the rough-hewn wall. The hands of a third girl cradle her face and chin and just behind her, a hand rests solidly on a young girls' hip. This network of fingers and palms, pressed on cloth or stone or skin, suggest that these bodies are real and full of feeling, vitality, and breath.

The Children of Bou-Saâda on the Terrace, with its monochromatic range of gray hues, was meant as an illustration for *Le Désert*, a collection of Saharan tales written by Dinet's friend Sliman Ben Ibrahim and translated and illustrated by Dinet. An oil version on canvas entitled *Sur les terrasses un jour de fête à Bou-Saâda* (also *Fillettes à la terrasse*) was donated in 1933 to the Musée Fabre in Montpellier,[1] and an intensely detailed painting of the terraces of Laghouat is now at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. Two studies for this painting are also reproduced in the artist's catalogue raisonné, again suggesting Dinet's interest in the subject and his attempts to refine it to this perfected point.[2]

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1 See Koudir Benchikou and Denise Brahimi, *La Vie et l'œuvre d'Étienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, catalogue raisonné no. 175.

2 See Benchikou and Brahimi, p. 86, no. 176; p. 88, no. 177.

Étienne Dinet, *The Children Of Bou Saâda On The Terrace*

WRESTLING BATHERS

Étienne Dinet (1861–1929)

Signed 'E. DINET' (lower right)
Oil grisaille on artist board
18 x 1 ¾ in. (45.7 x 35 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Étude Tajan, Paris, 7 November 1994, lot 119

Exhibition:
Paris, *Rétrospective Dinet à l'Exposition coloniale internationale*, 1931, no. 53

Literature:
S. Ben Ibrahim, *Le Désert*, color illustrations by Étienne Dinet, Paris, 1911, p. 57 (illustrated as *Un Groupe de joyeuses compagnes s'amusant à lutter*)

Dinet's image of young female bathers frolicking in the river conveys the energy and exuberance of his Orientalist art.[1] His passion for Algeria, and in particular for the southern town of Bou-Saâda, inspired numerous paintings of its inhabitants going about their daily lives. Here, ethnographic details – from the distinctive headdresses and jewelry that the girls wear to the tattoos that embellish their sun-browned skin – are rendered with the animated, lush brushstrokes of a painter driven by emotion as well as scientific intent. Even without the rich colors that characterize so much of Dinet's art, the vibrancy of this playful image is striking, and pervades its every subdued hue.

The girls are set against the rocky shore of a river in Bou-Saâda, which is surrounded by a verdant grove of palms. The rounded forms of the river stones accentuate the curves of their naked bodies and provide an imaginary sensory contrast between hard surfaces and supple, soft skin. The unashamed confidence of the bathers in their state of undress, and the sheer joy they take in their spontaneous act of play, suggest the artist's sense of comfort as well. Dinet lived for over 50 years in southern Algeria, taking the Arabic name Nasreddine Dinet and eventually converting to Islam. In addition to painting, Dinet also became an accomplished translator of Arabic literature; the present work was one of several grisailles (monochrome images comprised of shades of gray) meant to illustrate *Le Désert*, a compilation of Saharan tales collected by the Algerian essayist (and Dinet's traveling companion and friend) Sliman Ben Ibrahim, and translated by Dinet.

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1 The painting is related to another oil, *La Lutte des baigneuses*, painted in 1909 and now in a private collection (see Koudir Benchikou and Denise Brahimi, *La Vie et l'œuvre d'Étienne Dinet*, Paris, 1984, 1991, catalogue raisonné no. 293).

Étienne Dinet, *Wrestling Bathers*

THE CONNOISSEUR

Jean Discart (1856–1944)

Signed and inscribed 'J. DISCART Paris' (lower right)
Oil on panel
19 1/3 x 15 in. (49 x 38 cm.)

Provenance:
Private Collection, 1996

Discart's friendship with the preeminent Orientalist painter Ludwig Deutsch, first as a student in Vienna and later in his adopted city of Paris, influenced the art that he created throughout his career. Here, the realistic painting style and specific subject matter suggest their common interests, but in Discart's hands, they become entirely his own.

The connoisseur of the painting's title holds a ceramic vase in his hands as the seated shopkeeper makes his sales pitch. Scattered around his outdoor storefront, on a small wooden table and upon the ground, are additional *objets* on offer. A decorated red glazed vase (a match to the one being held aloft), incense burners and candle wicks, smoking pipes, platters and pottery carafes, prayer beads, a tambourine, and a hanging bronze and blown glass lamp taken from a nearby mosque add up to an eclectic mix of local goods, many of them repeated in other compositions by the artist and likely drawn from his own collection of souvenirs.

Exotic to tourists, who were descending upon such shops and marketplaces in growing numbers as the nineteenth-century wore on, some of these items would undoubtedly have been familiar to the prospective buyer pictured here. Swathed in white robes and with his headscarf loosely wound, he represents another type of passerby – a local, rather than a foreigner, who clearly appreciates the rich Islamic culture of which he was a part.

True to Discart's spirit, however, marked by intelligence and wit, the vase that the connoisseur has chosen is not an average ware. It is a foreign import, one of many that crossed North Africa's borders at the time, and was likely mass produced for expanding markets worldwide. The care that Discart has taken to render the expression of the man's face as he contemplates this commercial piece reveals the truth of what the painting shows – that this is an image of a modern Arab marketplace, in which culture has been outsourced, exported, and imported, and manufactured to appeal.

Jean Discart, *The Connoisseur*

THE HAREM GUARD

Jean Discart (1856–1944)

Signed, inscribed and dated 'J. DISCART 1885 Paris' (lower right)
Oil on panel
13 x 9 1/3 in. (33 x 23.8 cm.)
Painted in 1885

Provenance:
Sale: Christie's, London, 15 June 2010, lot 27

The figure of an elaborately costumed male guard, bristling with weaponry and positioned at the entrance to a palace, harem, or otherwise sacrosanct space, would become a favorite motif of Orientalist painters in the nineteenth century, and particularly of the artists Rudolf Ernst and Ludwig Deutsch. By 1885, the year that Discart's version of this subject was painted, both artists were exhibiting their dramatic, photo-realistic images of Arab sentinels in Paris. It is likely that Discart witnessed these enormously popular works and was profoundly influenced by them. Indeed, Discart's longstanding friendship with Deutsch, forged when the two were students in Vienna and solidified when they traveled together to Paris, would seem to make their awareness of each other's works all but certain.

Far from an imitator or copyist, however, Discart's guard paintings are uniquely his own. The psychological intensity and atmospheric stillness of Deutsch's subjects are present, but so is the mind of the artist himself. The shimmering gold and red headdress of *The Harem Guard*, the intricate embroidery of his jacket and cummerbund, and the elaborate woodcarvings of the door and frame behind him are rendered by a hand that is more visible than in Deutsch's slick surfaces, and more energetic and emotive in effect.

As the inscription on Discart's painting indicates, it was painted in Paris, as much from imagination and memory as from first-hand observation. Discart had arrived in that city in 1880–81, having moved from Italy and concluded his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna only a few months before. (Discart's professor at the institution was Anselm Feuerbach; he later tried – unsuccessfully – to study under the popular Leopold Karl Müller, who was also teaching at the Academy in these years.) A growing interest in Orientalism – one of the most popular genres in Europe at the time – led Discart to Tangiers and Morocco. His travels to the region would continue until at least 1920 (the details of Discart's life are intermittently obscure) and inspired numerous works focusing on the peoples and daily life of North Africa. Many of these were shown at the Paris Salon and in Orientalist exhibitions after 1884, establishing Discart as one of the most familiar and accomplished painters of the genre.

Jean Discart, *The Harem Guard*

THE KNIFE SHARPENER

Jean Discart (1856–1944)

Signed and inscribed 'J. DISCART. TANGER' (lower right)
Oil on panel
25 1/3 x 18 ¾ in. (64.4 x 47.5 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Christie's, London, 17 June 2004, lot 101 (as *L'aiguiseur*)

Between 1850 and 1900, the galleries of Paris were filled with images of working-class peoples and their trades. Part modern ethnographic portrait, part nostalgic 'type,' these images represented a way of looking at the world that had deep roots in the past. In 1500, the *Cries of Paris* were published, an anonymous series of wood engravings depicting the street vendors and laboring poor who lived in the city of lights.[1] The detailed documentation of these figures – from their costumes and accessories to the poses that they struck – was highly influential, and was adapted throughout Europe during the sixteenth century, culminating in the *London Cries* a century later. As Europe's geographical interests expanded and curiosity about the world grew, the example of the *Cries* proved a useful framework for organizing the overwhelming diversity of foreign life. With its underlying concepts of classification and categorization, and its effortless shift between the real and the ideal, it introduced local populations in an encyclopaedic venture, by artists who were as much ethnographers and journalists as they were *imagineurs*.

The Knife Sharpener was created within this layered context, an expression of Renaissance precedents, modern sensibilities, and Discart's own, persistent interest in the depiction of life on the streets. In the markets of Morocco and the alleyways of Tangiers, he sought out the full spectrum of trades and tradesmen, studying and sketching them with an ethnographer's intense focus and an artist's unique flair. In the present work, a Moroccan man checks the blade of a *flyssa*, or traditional Kabyle Berber sword. It, and the range of North African daggers around him, is rendered with the accuracy that had already, by the time of his first travels in the 1880s, made Discart's name. The man's heavy *burnous* has been removed while he works, and reveals his spotless attire. A brilliant white *djellabah* and a red vest and turban stand out among the subtle earthen hues of his setting. Discart's skill at rendering a multitude of surfaces – cobbled stone streets, leather, wood, pottery, and brass – creates a scene at once realistic and picturesque. As the knife sharpener lifts his foot and presses down on the pedal, turning the wheel to sharpen the blade, Discart's commitment to documenting the 'cries' of Tangier, and creating great art in the process, could not be clearer.

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1 The 'Cries' were named for the cries that the vendors shouted as they peddled their wares through the streets.

Jean Discart, *The Knife Sharpener*

THE POTTERY WORKSHOP, TANGIER

Jean Discart (1856–1944)

Signed and inscribed 'J. DISCART. TANGER' (lower right)
Oil on panel
13 ¾ x 18 in. (35 x 45.5 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Christie's, London, 6 January 1946, lot 179;
Sale: Sotheby's, New York, 22 October 2009, lot 18;
Sale: Sotheby's, London, 24 April 2012, lot 11 (*as L'Atelier de poterie, Tanger*)

Jean Discart's fascination with the Moroccan city of Tangier and its daily life is evident in his art. Here, Discart focuses on a potter at work in his shop, surrounded by examples of his wares. Berber ceramics, including an elaborate candlestick on a high and ornately painted shelf, along with dishes, bowls, and water jugs, some from the Kabylia region of Algeria, fill this interior space, To the right of the potter is a large platter, in the typical Moroccan style of Fez.[1] Its bright blue, green, and yellow pattern is unique in the painting, but the colors are repeated throughout the composition, including on the pottery vessel the man holds atop his knee. (This color scheme, in fact, is evident in many of Discart's works.) Discart's own experience as a painter adds a gloss of realism to the scene: he has taken great care to include the accoutrements required for this art, from picturesque paint pots to the crumpled papers used by the potter to dab and blot.

In the midst of this still life is a little pottery vase with a drooping red poppy inside. This may or may not allude to the poppy's cultivation for the production of opium, and to the associated attributes of sleep or intoxication that this had. However, the poppy had also become a symbol of war and remembrance by this time. In 1871, Kabylia – the region that produced many of the items in Discart's composition – was the site of a serious native insurrection against the French, igniting a series of animosities that would continue well into the twentieth century.

Incidental details such as this are numerous in Discart's works, and suggest the origins of his artistic career. Having studied with the noted history painter Anselm Feuerbach at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Discart travelled to Paris with his friend and fellow painter, Ludwig Deutsch. The latter would become known for his precise rendering of Middle Eastern subject matter, and for the jewel-like glow of his art. Here, Discart has chosen to paint on panel, a traditional support with specific qualities that he

1 Since the arrival of highly skilled Moroccan potters in the fifteenth century, Fez has been regarded as the center of ceramic production in Algeria. By the nineteenth century, its trademark blue pottery, exquisite glazes, and geometric and floral motifs were coveted by acquisitive tourists and serious collectors alike.

and Deutsch both admired. Oil paint applied to its surface could achieve a brilliant opacity and a level of precision that match the ambitions of the potter that Discart paints: he, like the artist himself, looks at the task before him with intensity and focus, and with all the assurance of a true master of his art.

The realism of Discart's technique evokes another possible influence as well – that of photography. Images of Arab craftsmen and the trades had become increasingly popular – and readily available – by the second half of the nineteenth century, when Discart's image was made. Numerous artists referred to photographs in their studios, long after their travels were over, in order to fill in the details that their rapid sketches or memories hadn't captured. It was only left to add a bit of creativity, and of course a brilliant repertoire of color.

Interestingly, this type of scene – a pottery artisan working on his craft in a traditional way – can still be seen in Morocco to this day, a fact that brings Discart's image even more vividly to life.

Jean Discart, *The Pottery Workshop, Tangier*

MARKET DAY, ASSIOUT, EGYPT

Charles-Theodore Frère (1814–1888)

Signed 'TH. FRERE' (lower left)
Oil on panel
8 ¾ x 14 ½ in. (22.2 x 36.7 cm.)

Provenance:
Mathaf Gallery, London;
Sale: Christie's, London, 13 June 1997, lot 173

In *Market Day, Assiout*, Frère provides an abundance of incidental detail, all carefully observed. A group of Bedouins descend upon a bustling marketplace on the outskirts of Asyut, their camels walking leisurely toward the action. Two of the men wear heavy woolen *abayehs*, or outer garments, with traditional broad vertical stripes. The spears of the foreground figures, silhouetted against the sky like attenuated minarets, break the emphatic horizontality of the scene. This device, grounded in reality but here transformed into a formal solution, is characteristic of Frère's Orientalist art.

In the cloudless sky above, a flock of birds fly in formation against a swathe of brilliant blue. Dust rises up on the left, kicked up by the camel's slowly moving hooves. Their arrival is unremarkable; it is part of the rhythm of the day. A crouching Arab figure in the foreground, accompanied by his dog, does not even bother to look up from his smoldering campfire; he has better things to do.

Strategically located between Upper and Lower Egypt, Asyut is today the largest town in Upper Egypt. The city was first settled in pharaonic times (ca. 3100 B.C.E.) and was closely associated with the gods Anubis (a jackal) and Wepwawet (a wolf), both funerary deities. In Graeco-Roman Egypt, the city was renamed Lycopolis, meaning 'City of the Wolf.' In the nineteenth century, when Frère would have known it, Asyut was a thriving regional capital and port of call for ships sailing the Nile. By 1874, it was also connected to Cairo by rail. Such accessibility guaranteed a steady rise in Asyut's economic prosperity, and in the

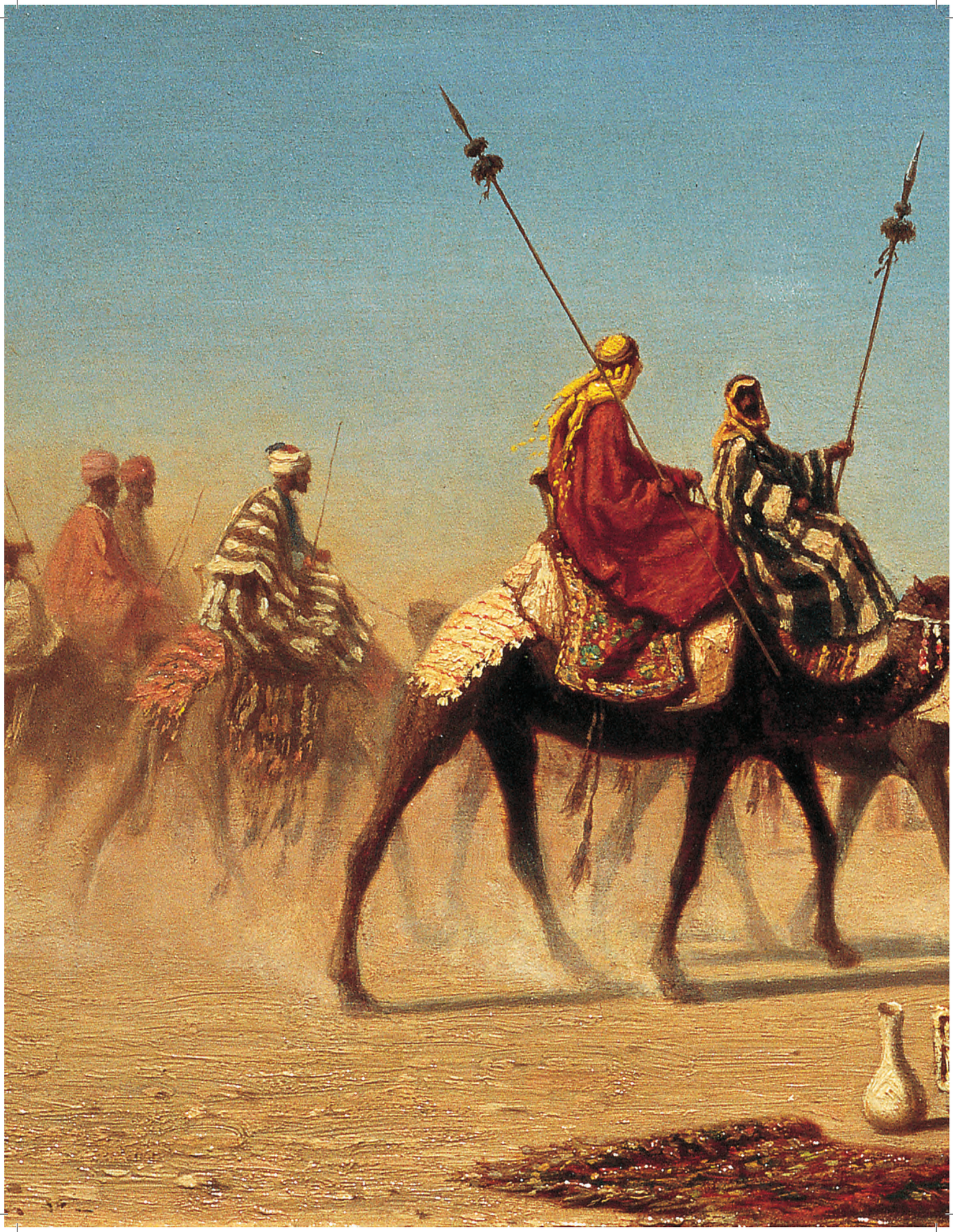
Market, Asyut, Egypt

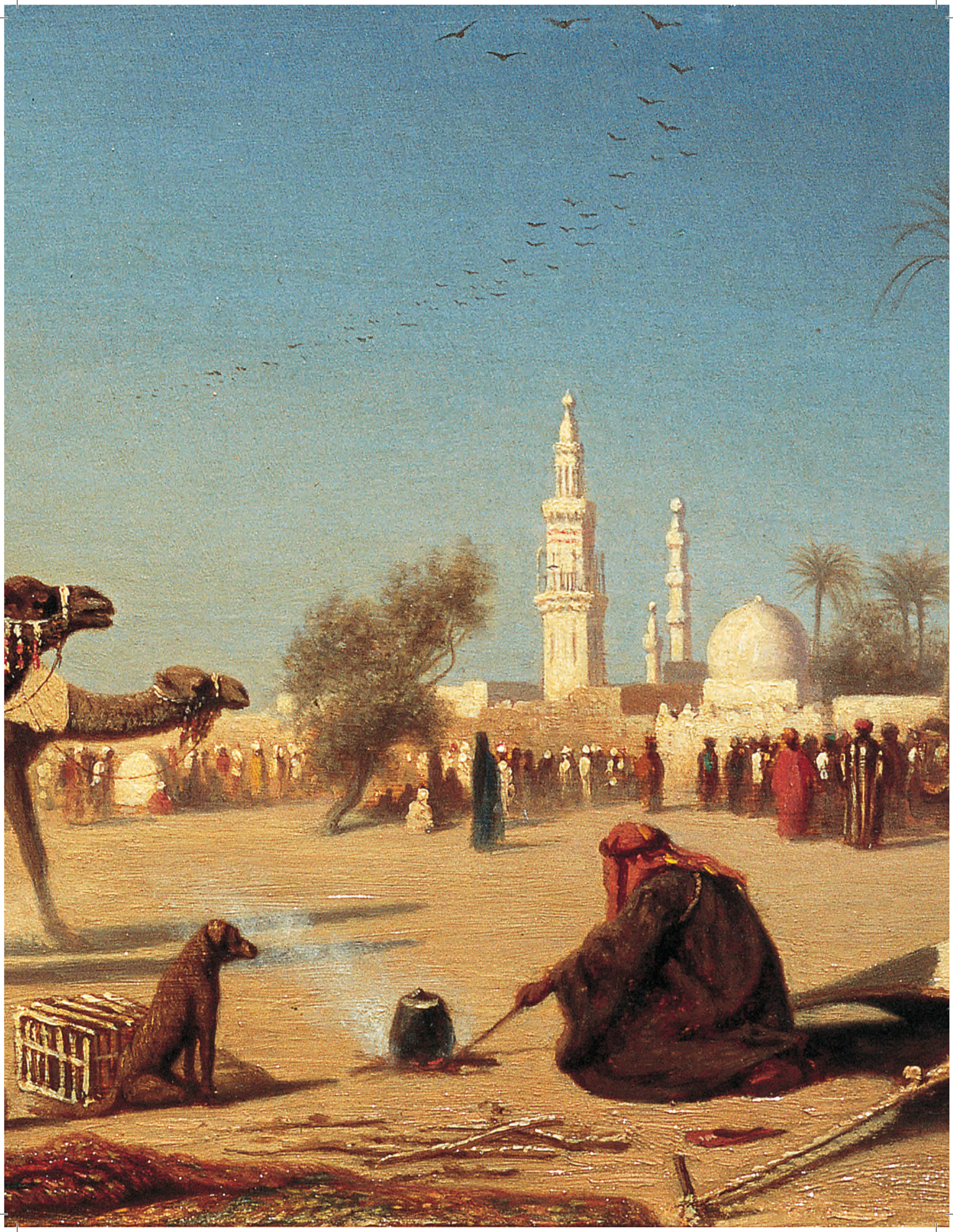
growth of its population. Palatial residences with gardens lined the riverfront, and markets burgeoned with imported goods, many from Sudan. (The town also continued to hold its regular slave market, which had been, until the 1850s, the largest in Egypt.) In George Ebers' *Egypt: Descriptive, Historical, and Picturesque* (London, 1881), the market-life of Asyut is described in vivid terms:

> ... [W]e ride into the town, over a dyke road shaded by fine sycamores, and past the huge Government buildings. The long bazaar, well furnished with goods, is swarming with people, for to-day is Sunday, and a market-day in Siout, and crowds of country-folk have come into the town, which has 30,000 inhabitants of its own. There is plenty indeed for European to gaze at in this motley assemblage ... (vol. 2, p. 184).

Frère's own experience of Asyut may have come in 1869, when he travelled with the French Empress Eugénie throughout Egypt, en route to the opening ceremonies of the Suez Canal. Frère's numerous sketches executed *en plein air*, often in watercolor and with an impressionistic flair, later provided the source material for paintings such as this – small landscapes rendered in oil upon a wooden panel. Luminous, intimate, and filled with incidental details, their freshness and vivacity are one of the most appealing characteristics of Frère's Orientalist art.

Charles-Theodore Frère, *Market Day, Assiout, Egypt*





A COFFEE SHOP IN BALEANE

Charles-Theodore Frère (1814–1888)

Signed 'TH. FRERE' (lower left); inscribed and dated on the reverse: 'Un cafe a Baleane Haute Egypte Th. Frere'
Oil on panel
9 x 14 ½ in. (22.8 x 36.9 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 12 June 1996, lot 95

Charles-Théodore Frère numbers among the most prolific of French Orientalist painters, as well as the most commercially successful. Drawn to landscape painting from an early age, Frère began his studies with Jules Coignet and Camille Roqueplan. A transformative trip to Algeria led to Frère's first Orientalist painting, exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1839. From that year forward, he dedicated his career to Orientalism, exhibiting regularly in Paris and abroad.

Of all the countries to which he traveled, Egypt would have the greatest impact on the artist – indeed, to accommodate both his fascination with the country and the demand for Egyptian subjects among contemporary travelers and collectors, Frère decided to open his own studio in Cairo. (As a sign of respect, he was accorded the title of 'bey' by the Egyptian government at this time.) The wisdom of this venture can be demonstrated in both professional terms – Frère's Egyptian works sold almost as fast as he could paint them and earned him royal patronage from a variety of countries – and in personal terms as well. Frère's growing familiarity with his environment brought a new confidence and a heightened sensitivity to his art, which was soon translated into every aspect of his Orientalist subjects. Their distinctive, luminous palette, precision of line – a facet undoubtedly informed by his skill with woodcuts and engravings – and stillness of subject may be considered the synthesis of Frère's Egyptian experiences, as well as innovative and poetic records of travel in their own right.

Baleane *c.*1900

In the present work, Frère's ethnographic, emotive, and environmental concerns are seamlessly combined. From the

foreground to the background, an abundance of incidental and instructive cultural details are added in order to provide a compelling document of Middle Eastern daily life. Interestingly, the main action is not presented front and center in the scene; it is subtle, distant, and must actively be sought out. The men that hover in the entranceway of the local coffee shop, sitting, standing, and talking, are the merest of suggestions, hinting at their existence rather than demanding to be seen. The shop itself is a modest open room, proving that it is the spirit of community rather than the refinement of the architecture that truly defines this space. Outside, more men gather and camels quench their thirst. Pigeon towers in the background suggest a home to roost. Into this desert landscape, and through all of these devices, Frère brings abundant life.

The town of El Balyana, located on the west bank of the Nile in Upper Egypt, is situated near the ancient Egyptian city of Abydos. The latter was a favorite subject for Orientalist artists and writers, including, most famously, Delacroix and Lord Byron.

Charles-Theodore Frère, *A Coffee Shop in Baleane*

CAMPSITE AT SUNSET

Charles-Theodore Frère (1814–1888)

Signed 'TH. FRERE' (lower right)
Watercolor on paper
10 ¾ x 14 ½ in. (27.2 x 36.7 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 9 December 1996, lot 177

In 1851, Frère traveled to Greece, Constantinople (modern Istanbul, where he would spend eighteen months), Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. The latter would have the greatest impact on the artist, as the number of works he created in and of that country attest.

In 1869, Frère was again in Egypt, this time with the French Empress Eugénie and her entourage on the occasion of the inauguration of the Suez Canal. The opening of the Canal, which was held on17 November, was an important moment for artists, as well as for politicians and members of Egypt's and Europe's cultural elite. Some, like William Simpson, had been commissioned by contemporary newspapers and journals to record the pomp and circumstance as it unfolded; others were special guests, invited as ambassadors or symbols of good will. Jean-Léon Gérôme's invitation came as a result of his well-known stature in his native France; Isma'il Pasha recognized his status as one of the most illustrious artists of the age, particularly one who was fast making Egypt his most consistent painted theme.

Frère made good use of his extended time in Egypt, executing several watercolors both during and in the moments not preoccupied by the numerous festivities planned for the event. (Ceremonies, feasts, and entertainments were designed to last three weeks.) The present work, entitled *Campsite at Sunset*, suggests his adeptness in this increasingly popular medium, a favorite of traveling artists and those concerned with conveying the transitory nature of atmosphere and weather. The rich palette of the sky, with its gradated washes of burnt orange, warm persimmon, and golden yellow, is subtly echoed in the gently illuminated *kafiyas* of the seated Arab figures below. Similarly, the soft peaks of the tents on the right are mirrored in, and balanced by, the humps and undulating necks of several camels on the left. These noble animals, the constant companions of the Bedouin, stand sedately or hunker down, their legs bundled under them, in preparation for the long (and remarkably chilly) desert night. It is a quiet moment of repose during Frère's otherwise busy and highly orchestrated Egyptian days.

A symbol of Egypt's importance to European trade, the Suez Canal was to provide improved access between England and East Asia by linking the Red Sea with the Mediterranean. Ferdinand de Lesseps, a former diplomat and French engineer, with considerable knowledge of Egypt, led the project from the beginning of the Canal's construction in 1859. The ceremonies for the opening were planned by Ismai'il

Pasha, and no expense was spared. Weeks of ceremonies, feasts, and entertainments took place in Ismailiya, which had been beautified and outfitted with three elaborate, elevated pavilions made specifically for the day. After ten years of hard work, executed by an estimated 1.5 million people, the 101-mile Canal was finally done – and the lives of those in Frère's *Campsite* would be in subtle ways transformed.

With the opening of the Canal, tourism in Egypt reached new heights, both in terms of the number of people who visited and the ease and level of sophistication of their experiences en route. For the local population, the changes were also many. More hotels and businesses catering to the Western crowds meant more staff and shopkeepers, as well as dragomen (translators) and guides. While the quiet of Frère's painting would not have been unknown, particularly in its location far from urban life, it would have held a special nostalgia for both travelers and Egyptian audiences at this extraordinary time.

Charles-Theodore Frère, *Campsite at Sunset*

VIEW TAKEN AT MINIEH, EGYPT

Charles-Theodore Frère (1814–1888)

Signed 'TH. FRERE' (lower left and on reverse)
Oil on panel
9 ¼ x 12 ¾ in. (23.5 x 32.5 cm.)
Painted in 1880

Provenance:
Sale: Berko London, December 2011, lot 402

View Taken at Minieh, Egypt, painted in 1880, exhibits the same delight in figurative vignettes and subtle storytelling as others of Frère's Orientalist works. There are the usual blue-robed *fellaheen* women with pottery jugs atop their heads, the camels with their tasseled saddles, the tall palm trees, calm *gamoosa* (water buffalo), and towering minarets; it is a virtual compendium of all the artist's best-loved tropes. In Frère's hands, however, even so much familiarity appears different and unique. The sparkle of the sun on the white turban of an Egyptian figure, the top of a mudbrick building, or on the tip of a *felucca*'s sail, and the glimmer of light that dances across the blue water of the Nile, make each work in Frère's oeuvre as fresh and animated as the next.

The town of Minieh is located on the western bank of the Nile River. It was a regular stop for travelers during the nineteenth century, en route to other locales. In 1869, Frère was in the company of the French Empress Eugénie, in honor of the opening of the Suez Canal on 17 November. As part of that expedition, the Empress was invited to tour Upper Egypt between 25 October and 12 November. Much of the journey was undertaken with her nieces and their governess aboard a *dahabiyah*, or sail boat pulled by tugs. Additional members of her party came in other boats. As they sailed down the Nile, the Empress made several ports of call. These included Minieh, Keneh, Edfu, and Aswan, and, on the return, Esneh, Luxor, Karnak, Thebes, Memphis, Saqqarah, and Gizeh. It is possible that this painting, made some years later, was inspired by this historic trip.

Dahabeeyahs on the Nile, c.1860

More so than his colleagues, Frère allowed his audiences to follow his journeys as they unfolded through precisely labeled sketches and watercolors. These intimate works were often worked up into finished paintings, completed in his studio even

years after his travels had ceased. The freshness that Frère is able to maintain even after so long a gap is remarkable, and is attributable in part to his painting style: brushstrokes are evenly and smoothly applied to his surface, but are enlivened by a rapid flurry of dots and daubs that bring points of light or the suggestion of movement – note here the dust kicked up by an ambling camel – to the scene. In this particular example, the use of panel is an important factor in Frère reaching his aesthetic goal. Paint applied to a smooth wooden surface took on the sparkling quality of a jewel, bringing his landscapes and charming genre scenes more vividly to life.

What is remarkable in Frère's compendium of geographic works is the sense of calm that they convey. Despite their superficial sparkle, serenity pervades each landscape that he paints. This is all the more striking when Egypt's precarious political situation is remembered in these years: At the time this picture was painted, the country had reverted back to a system of Dual Control, to the dismay of its former and present Khedive. (Isma'il, who had continued his predecessor Muhammad 'Ali's modernizing reforms and incurred massive debt along the way, had been replaced by his son Tewfik in 1879, attracting the attention of the British and French.) With Egypt's fiscal and administrative future in such a state of uncertainty and discontent, Frère's quiet scene takes on a much more poignant, even nostalgic, meaning.

Charles-Theodore Frère, *View Taken at Minieh, Egypt*

SUNSET BY THE PYRAMIDS, GIZA

Charles-Theodore Frère (1814–1888)

Signed 'TH. FRERE' (lower right)
Signed and inscribed on the reverse: 'Pyramides de Gizeh Soir au Caire (crepuscule) Th. Frere'
Oil on panel
8 ¾ x 14 ¾ in. (22.3 x 37.5 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Étude Tajan, Paris, 9 June 1995, lot 228

The transcription of a flat landscape as vast and uniform as the eye could see compelled Orientalist painters to revise the picturesque conventions they had learned in Europe, and seek new formal answers for their compositions. Often, they adopted a panoramic format in order to accommodate the unfamiliar vistas that confronted them. The best of these artists were energized by the process; the works of lesser painters dissolve into a monotonous expanse of sand and sky.

In the present painting, and in Frère's oeuvre overall, while horizontality prevails and the familiar progression from foreground to middle ground to distant horizon are to some degree retained, innovative adaptations abound as well. Most dramatic, perhaps, is Frère's palette: his landscapes are infused with a shimmering, golden glow. Frère's sensitivity to the properties of light and his attempt to translate them into paint, drew admiration from Claude Monet and Eugène Boudin and have led some scholars to locate the roots of Impressionism in France to Orientalist paintings. But, despite their heady atmospheric effects, never in Frère's art is that quality of intense realism – for which Orientalist painting was also renowned – entirely abandoned. Indeed, the affinity of Frère's paintings with contemporary photographs is remarkable, and the settings of the works can often be precisely identified as a result. Here, the artist depicts the road from Giza

A village near the pyramids *c.*1870

to Saqqara, about three kilometers east of the pyramids. The addition of the silhouetted figure of a Bedouin woman woman with a pottery jug atop her head, while a favorite trope among nineteenth-century artists, has an important formal purpose as well. Together with the Great Pyramids in the distance and the tall palm trees to the right, she introduces a dramatic vertical element to the composition, preventing it from falling trap to the monotony described above.

The subject of this work was a favorite of Frère's, and was repeated numerous times after his travels to Egypt in the 1850s. A larger version of this particular work was exhibited in New York in 1875, the property of one William Schaus.[1] Schaus (1821–1892) was well-known as an art dealer, having arrived as an agent and representative of Goupil & Cie. in 1848. In 1852, tensions within the firm led to Schaus's resignation and the opening of his own art gallery. Both Schaus's inventory and personal collection were filled with works that reflected the tastes of Gilded Age America, as well as his own predilection for French art and landscapes. Exotic scenes of distant geographies were especially popular, as they offered each individual viewer an opportunity to imaginatively escape their increasingly crowded and stressful urban surroundings. Posthumous sales of Schaus's collection were much anticipated, and frequently captured the attention of the *New York Times* (Cf. 29 February 1892). Frère's works were often included in these sales and found ready buyers, attesting to the enduring popularity of the landscapes that Schaus had so admired.

Charles-Theodore Frère, *Sunset by the Pyramids, Giza*

1 See *The Overland Monthly* 14 (June 1875), p. 578.

ON THE SHORE OF THE NILE

Charles-Theodore Frère (1814–1888)

Signed 'TH. FRÈRE' (lower left)
Oil on panel
9 ¾ x 16 in. (25 x 41 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Artcurial, Paris, 18 May 2016, lot 3

Frère's Orientalist landscapes may seem formulaic at first glance; vignettes are repeated and there is always a clear progression from foreground to middle to back. In *On the Shore of the Nile*, however, incidental details suggest the variety and the stories that Frère found within these patterns. The flock of birds that soars across the sky may be returning to the striped clay pigeon towers that are clustered on top of the building in the center of the composition, near a group of palms. Below, a bustling ferry crossing point is offered up for view. These were often areas where the Nile was narrower or the current not as strong, allowing local centers or market towns to develop around the ferry's point of call. People gather at the shoreline to get water, or simply to sit and wait. A boat is arriving, a donkey among the party and the crew. Women with their pottery jugs, set atop their heads, walk slowly back to town. The scene is set in Upper Egypt, but, beyond this, Frère does not burden his audience with facts; rather, he provides just enough evidence to encourage the imagination and enter in the scene.

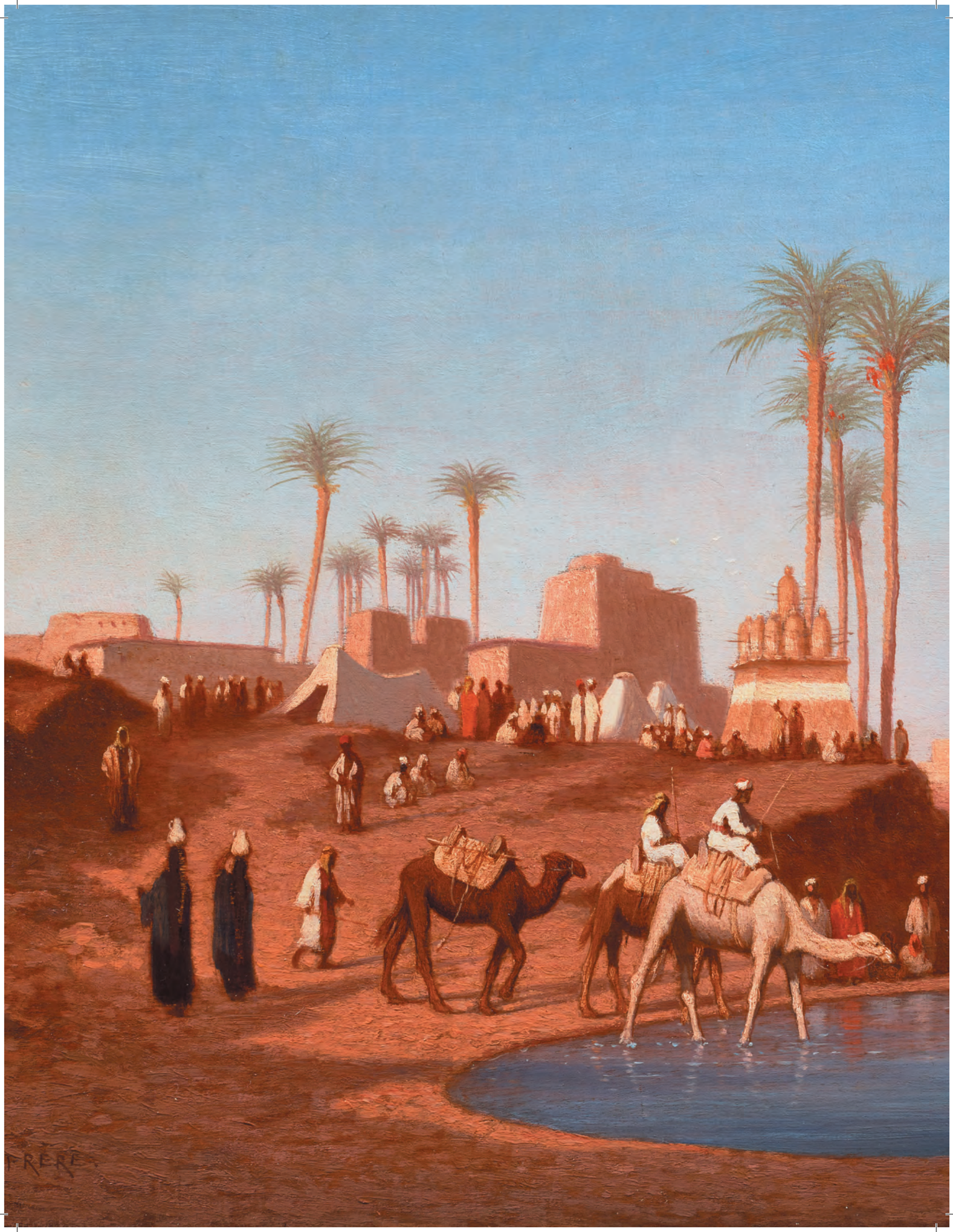
Charles-Théodore Frère in his Paris studio, *c.*1885

The appeal of small landscapes such as this grew dramatically in the nineteenth century, influencing artists to adapt their formats to satisfy demand. With cities expanding exponentially, and middle-class patrons establishing themselves as a formidable new force in the art world, space and price became important issues to consider. No longer was it feasible to offer only *grandes machines*; collectors wanted paintings they could hang comfortably in more intimate settings

within their smaller homes. So too, this new class of buyers may have found a favorite at the annual Paris Salon, but they certainly did not want to pay the dear price to own it for themselves. Repetitions, replicas, variations, versions, and copies – each now with a specific definition of its own – and works executed on a smaller scale, such as that presented here, became the order of the day.

For a prolific artist such as Frère, this climate provided him with every opportunity to thrive, as he expanded his list of patrons beyond the wealthy and elite. (Frère's works had already attracted the attention of Louis-Philippe and the King of Württemberg.) Soon, his paintings were included in numerous private collections throughout America, Britain, and Europe, and his name was as widely recognized as Delacroix and Gérôme. Today, the popularity of Frère's Orientalist paintings remains exceptionally high. His works can be found in numerous museum collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

Charles-Theodore Frère, *On the Shore of the Nile*


FRERE

LE SIMOUN

Eugène Fromentin (1820–1876)

Signed 'Eug F.' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
21 3/5 x 25 ¾ (55 x 65.5 cm.)

Provenance:
Hector Brame, Paris (by 1879);
Private Collection, California
Sale: Christie's, New York, 24 May 1989, lot 32;
Dr Edward T. Wilson, Maryland (purchased at the above sale);
Sale: Sotheby's, New York, 18 April 2008, lot 130);
Sale: Sotheby's, London, 24 April 2012, lot 109

Literature:
E. Fromentin, *Sahara et Sahel*, vol. II, 'Une Année dans le Sahel,' Paris, 1887, p. 350 (illustrated as an engraving by Paul le Rat)

As early as 1857, Eugène Fromentin began to paint dramatic scenes of Arab horsemen caught in the midst of the *simoun* (the hot, dry, sand-laden windstorms of the North African and Arabian deserts). Preliminary drawings for some of these subjects exist in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent, and in the collection of the Fromentin family. This work is one of several smaller versions of Fromentin's extraordinary painting of 1864, the *Coup de vent dans les plaines d'alfa (Windstorm on the Esparto Plains of the Sahara)*. In *Le Simoun*, however, Fromentin has exchanged an emphasis on the wind-whipped esparto grass for a more studied depiction of the Arab horses and horsemen themselves.

Silhouetted against an ominous sky, their *burnouses* billowing out of control, the men brace themselves against the *simoun* with well-practiced determination. The wild eyes of the two bay horses indicate their fear as they seek solace from whatever source they can. The gray Arab, with his powerful hindquarters and muscular, arched neck, appears more assured; his head is bowed to protect his eyes from the unforgiving winds, and his hooves are firmly planted. The earthward stare of both horse and rider seems also to ground them, and imparts on the pyramidal group a sense of reassuring stoicism. They will successfully brave this storm – and probably many more.

Such evocative scenes were the result of first-hand experiences processed, as Fromentin wrote, 'through memory,' and the visual expressions of a very particular aesthetic and personal political philosophy. Fromentin was one of the first major artists to spend extended periods of time in Algeria after the defeat of the Emir Abd al-Qadir at the hands of the French in the 1840s. (Abd al-Qadir was an Algerian leader

and Arab folk hero, remembered for his absolute resistance of foreign domination and his championing of the Islamic faith.) After a transformative trip to the region in 1846, Fromentin made his debut as an Orientalist painter with two landscapes in the 1847 Paris Salon. Three years later, and after a winter spent at the oasis of Biskra in 1847–48, Fromentin exhibited eleven Orientalist subjects, securing his reputation as one of the leading figures of the genre. In 1852–53 Fromentin was again in Algeria, this time with his new wife.

These cumulative experiences inspired not only numerous Orientalist paintings, which Fromentin would continue to execute throughout his career, but two illustrated travel books as well, *Un été dans le Sahara* (1857) and *Une année dans le Sahel* (1859). (Almost uniquely among Orientalist painters, Fromentin was recognized equally in his lifetime as a writer and a painter. In addition to his travel books, Fromentin published a novel, *Dominique* [1862], and a study of Dutch and Flemish art, still much admired today. The present work was engraved by Paul le Rat for the 1887 edition of *Une année dans le Sahel*.) In addition to his art, these texts have caused Fromentin to become the subject of numerous recent critical studies, which document his role as one of the earliest and most significant theorists of Orientalism.[1]

Rather than adopting the ethnographic approach of his colleagues – which resulted, he disparagingly commented, in images 'composed like inventories' – Fromentin sought the classical, idealized beauty beneath unfamiliar façades.[2] In the extraordinary union between Arab horse and horseman, for example, Fromentin saw a Greek centaur, the supreme example of the fusion of man and beast.[3] Fromentin's near-obsession with this subject during the late 1850s and 1860s, and his perfection of the genre, was, in some ways, his downfall as an artist: because these paintings outsold all else, Fromentin reluctantly gave up other subjects that interested him.

The cool tones of this particular work are indicative of Fromentin's other, major revelation – that the intense light of North Africa reduced all colors to gray. 'Gray, here the advent and triumph of gray,' Fromentin would write, 'Everything is gray …'[4] The tempered palette, rolling storm clouds, and slate-gray sky witnessed in many of Fromentin's mature compositions reflect his attempt to explore the subtleties of this monochromatic landscape, as well as his lifelong appreciation of Dutch painting and the later works of Camille Corot. So too, it is this suppression of harsh tones and this 'cool view' of subject matter that differentiates Fromentin's equestrian works from those frenzied, raucously colored compositions of his compatriots, Delacroix and Chassériau. Though less immediately arresting, Fromentin's works have their own unique power. The noted critic Théophile Gautier, in discussing one of Fromentin's contributions to the 1859 Salon, made this point most eloquently: 'One would think that the wind could not be painted, being a colourless and formless thing, yet it blows visibly through M. Fromentin's picture.'[5]

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1 See, for example, Roger Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics: Art, Colonialism, and French North Africa, 1880–1930*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 2003.

2 *Sahel, Oeuvres completes*, ed. Guy Sagnes, Paris, 1984, p. 322.

3 *Une Année dans le Sahel*, Paris, 1963 ed., p. 247.

4 *Lettres de jeunesse*, ed. Pierre Blanchon, Paris, 1909, p. 240.

5 Théophile Gautier, 'Salon de 1859,' *Le Moniteur*, 28 May 1859.

AFTER THE BATH

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME.' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
32 ½ x 26 ¼ in. (82.6 x 66.7 cm.)
Painted ca. 1879

Provenance:
Goupil & Cie, Paris;
Knoedler, New York (Knoedler Stock Book, p. 87, row 31, stock no. 1909, as *Le Bain*);
William Astor, New York;
William Henry Haussner and Frances Wilke Haussner, The Haussner's Restaurant Collection, Baltimore;
Sale: *The Haussner's Restaurant Collection*, Sotheby's, New York, 2 November 1999, lot 31;
Sale: Sotheby's, New York, 2 November 2010, lot 11

Literature:
Oeuvres de J. L. Gérôme, vol. 3, no. 3 (illustrated as a photograph)
E. Strahan [Earl Shinn], 'The Collection of Mr. William Astor,' in *The Art Treasures of America, being the Choicest Works of Art in the Public and Private Collections of North America*, 1879–80, reprint of the 1882 edition, New York, 1977, vol. 2, pp. 71–72, 76, 78 as *Moorish Bath*, p. 143 as *After the Bath* (illustrated as a photogravure between p. 68 and p. 69 as *After the Bath*)
C. Stewart Johnson, 'Famous Artists and their Work: VII – Jean-Léon Gérôme,' *Epoch* 7 (1892), p. 434
Munsey's Magazine 7 (1892), p. 434
J. Denison Champlin and C. Callahan, *Cyclopedia of Painters and Paintings*, New York, 1913, p. 109
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, pp. 248–49, no. 297 (illustrated in black and white)
B. van Hook, *Angels of Art: Women and Art in American Society, 1876–1914*, University Park, PA, 1996, p. 46
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie revisée et catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris, 2000, p. 128 (illustrated in color), pp. 302–03, no. 297 (illustrated in black and white as *Femmes nues. Scène de bain*)
S. R. Edidin, 'Gérôme's Orientalism,' in *Gérôme & Goupil, Art and Enterprise*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2000, p. 136 (illustrated as the woodburytype after the painting as *Odalisques Bathing*)
M. G. Morton, 'Gérôme in the Gilded Age,' *The Spectacular Art of Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2010, p. 189 (as *Moorish Bath*)

Gérôme's visits to the Turkish *hamams*, or baths, in Bursa and Istanbul inspired a series of paintings depicting women enjoying the daily rituals that took place at these historic sites. Some of the most luxurious of these baths date from the sixteenth century, and were built by the renowned

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *After the Bath*

Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan. Their art and architecture, as well as the imaginative vignettes that they compelled, captivated Gérôme, and drew him repeatedly inside their walls to paint. 'I was taken by the architecture,' Gérôme recalled, '… and they certainly offered a chance to study nudes. It wasn't just a question of going to see what was going on inside, and of replacing [men with women], I had to have a sketch of this interior; and since the temperature inside was rather high, I didn't hesitate to sketch in the simple apparel of a beauty just aroused from her sleep that is, in the buff. Sitting on my tripod, my paint box on my knees, my palette in my hand, I was a little grotesque, but you have to know how to adapt yourself as necessary.'[1]

Working in the baths on Men's Day (his presence on the days that women used the baths would have been forbidden), Gérôme created compositions that added fantasy to real life. In the present work, the careful delineation of every column, niche, and patterned tile is juxtaposed with the nude or semi-nude bodies of women that he never would have seen outside his studio in France. One of these women, seated on the right, gently twists her body into a sinuous curve that echoes the line of the *hookah*'s coiled pipe beside her. To the left is another woman, covered below the waist, who cradles her bent legs with outstretched arms and fingers intertwined. Their reflections are caught in the gentle ripples of clear blue water by their side; this is the dipping pool in which they have come to bathe.

Across the surface of the water are points of filtered sunlight, streaming in through small, round holes perforating the traditionally domed ceiling of the *hamam*. In the background, and softly illumined by these lights, a standing female figure leans against a massive column; its thick straight shaft provides a point of contrast to her contrapposto pose. At her feet, a fourth women lies, reclining on her side. She is propped up slightly, it appears, by an elbow or her robed arm upon the floor.

All four women are brunette, and three have deep brown eyes and thick dark brows as well. One of the women, the only who is fully nude, turns away so that her face is hidden. A small red carnation – a symbol of passion in European lore – is tucked into her swept-up hair. Other points of color are scattered on the floor of the bath, set off by the cool gray-white marble and a rumpled textile of emerald green. A red bell pepper, and others that are orange and yellow-green, form still lifes with other intensely colored fruit; they evoke the senses of taste, touch, and smell, as well as the promise of rare delicacies to eat. Bright color too is found across the middle of the composition, in a thick band of ceramic tiles. Their floral Iznik patterns of blue, white, and green are found in many of Gérôme's compositions, with each design offering a clue to the location of the scene, or, as here, an example of the integration of reality, autobiography, and a creative artist's mind.

From a vast repertory of contemporary photographs (including those purchased from the famed Abdullah Frères), illustrated books, souvenirs of travel, and sketches made on the spot, Gérôme created images that were both instantly recognizable and without comparison. Perhaps the best-known of these images

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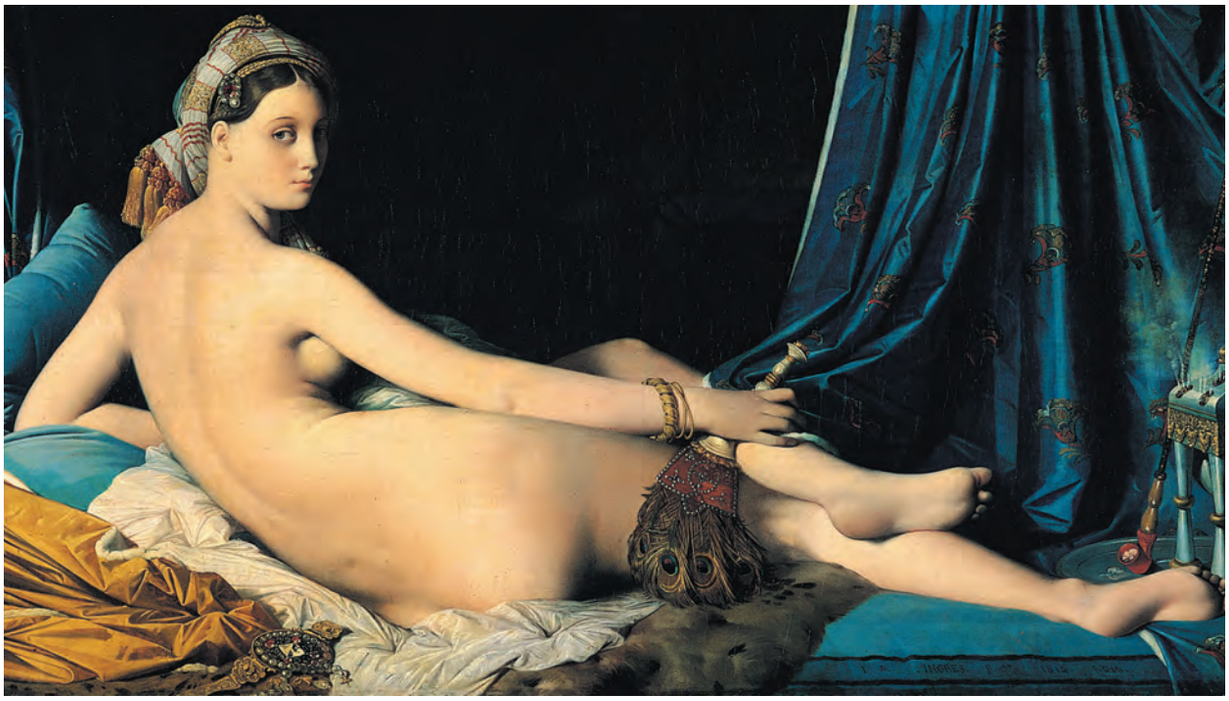
1 Related by Frédéric Masson, 'J. L. Gérôme. Notes et fragments des souvenirs inédits du maître,' *Les Arts*, 1902, p. 30.



Jean-Auguste-Dominque Ingres, *Grand Odalisque*, 1814

were of the bath, a small but distinctive subgenre in his oeuvre. Perceptions of this institution and the activities that took place within had been formed long ago in Britain and in Europe, notably through the writings of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in the mid-eighteenth century. Her colorful, first-hand accounts of fashionable women's daily life in Turkey, published in 1763, began to fill in the tantalizing blanks that had previously existed in the public's imagination, due to the gendered exclusivity and sacrosanct nature of several Muslim cultural institutions. Fueled by such pioneering documentation, artists began to depict *hamams* and rituals related to the bath with a growing confidence, establishing the subject as firmly and convincingly in the visual artistic record as in the literary and historical. Delacroix and Chassériau famously created images with this theme, but it was Ingres who dominated the popular imagination – until Gérôme came on the scene.

Surprisingly, given the immediate association of *hamam* paintings with the name of Jean-Léon Gérôme, only a fraction of the artist's paintings actually depicted this storied theme – and only well after his reputation had been made. In 1870, Gérôme arrived in London, a refugee of the Franco-Prussian War. Commissions came in quickly, including one by the prominent paint manufacturer and prolific collector Henry James Turner for a 'Moorish bath'. Escapist, erotic, and also highly decorative in its expansive display of blue-and-white tile, slick marble surfaces, and dramatic contrasts between darkness and white skin, this formula would be repeated by Gérôme in nearly every bath scene to follow.

Several of these paintings, including *After the Bath*, were purchased by wealthy collectors on the United States' East Coast. Gérôme's name had first appeared on American shores on 19 December 1855, in the New York-based art journal *The Crayon*. (The occasion was the exhibition of the artist's thirty-foot

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Moorish Bath*, 1870

wide, state-commissioned canvas *The Age of Augustus* [a. 1852–54, Musée de Picardie, Amiens] at Paris's Universal Exposition.) No more substantial mention was made of the artist, however, until October 1857, when an enthusiastic arts writer visited the annual Salon in Paris and found the 'finest pictures of the collection' to be by Gérôme, including *Sortie du bal masqué (The Duel after the Ball)* (1857, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum) and *La Prière chez un chef Arnaute (Prayer in the House of the Arnaut Chief)* (1857, whereabouts unknown), the first of the artist's Orientalist paintings to catch the American public's eye.[2] Not long after, the latter painting actually arrived in New York City, along with *Egyptian Recruits Crossing the Desert* (1857, private collection), which was also exhibited in the 1857 Salon.

2 Quoted in DeCourcy E. McIntosh, 'Goupil and the American Triumph of Jean-Léon Gérôme,' in *Gérôme & Goupil, Art and Enterprise*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2000, p. 34.

In 1848, the famed French art dealer and printmaker (and later father-in-law of Gérôme) Adolphe Goupil opened a branch of his Parisian gallery in New York, specializing in modern European works. Located across the street from Alexander Turney Stewart's famous (and America's first) department store, Goupil & Co. immediately attracted the most acquisitive members of New York's glitterati with its exhibitions, events, and, after 1854, a retail store on the ground floor. Earnings rose from 119,651 francs in 1848 and 188,601 francs in 1849 to 569,000 francs in 1854 – testament to the firm's outstanding marketing prowess.[3] By 1880, 53 paintings by Gérôme had been sold by Goupil & Co. to American clients, with 34 being Orientalist in subject; by the time of Gérôme's death in 1904, the firm counted 144 paintings as now being in American hands.[4]

Among the buyers of Gérôme's paintings was the wealthy industrialist William Astor of New York, who purchased the present painting from the dealer Michael Knoedler on 18 August 1879 for the relatively modest sum of 20,000 francs.[5] It was as part of Astor's renowned collection that Edward Strahan encountered the work a short time later, and included it in his epic *The Art Treasures of America, being the Choicest Works of Art in the Public and Private Collections of North America* as a photogravure. '[T]here is no living painter,' Strahan penned upon viewing *After the Bath*, 'and there are few living writers, whose mind can be called so interesting as the mind of Gérôme.'[6] A few decades later, however, Gérôme's oeuvre had become unfairly overlooked, overshadowed by the new caché of modern art. It was left to another pair of influential East Coast collectors, Henry and Frances Wilkie Haussner, to resurrect the reputation of this master, and to reintroduce this painting as a masterpiece of nineteenth-century and Orientalist art.

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3 See Alfred Mainguet, *Résumé de la défense de M. Mainguet*, Paris, 1855, p. 45 [on microfiche], Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; and Adolphe Goupil, 'Note soumise à MM. les membres du jury par Goupil & Cie,' in *Exposition universelle de 1855*, Paris, 1855, p. 2 [on microfiche], Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

4 McIntosh, p. 34.

5 Knoedler Stock Book, page 87, row 31, stock no. 1909 (as *Le Bain*). Knoedler, who handled the New York branch of Goupil & Cie from 1848 to 1857, when it became independent, had purchased the painting from Goupil in Paris. With enthusiasm for Gérôme's work continuing to grow, the 1870s saw a dramatic escalation in the prices of his paintings. In December 1871, *Consummatum est* (1867, Musée d'Orsay) was sold to Henry N. Smith of New York for $9000 (39,000 francs), a new American sales record. This record was eclipsed just a few months later when Darius Ogden Mills (1825–1910) of San Francisco and New York paid $13,500 (59,000 francs) for *Cleopatra Before Caesar* (1866, private collection). Eight months after that, James H. Stebbins of New York bought *Eminence Grise* (1873, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) directly from Goupil in Paris for $13,863 (60,000 francs). It was Alexander Turney Stewart, however, who set the bar the highest: in 1876, Stewart commissioned a pendant – ultimately unsuccessful, in critics' eyes – to *Pollice Verso* (1872, Phoenix Art Museum) called *Circus Maximus (The Chariot Race)* (1876, Art Institute of Chicago), paying the record price of $29,000 (125,000 francs) for the favor. This record stood for the remainder of Gérôme's life.

6 Edward Strahan (ed.), 'The Collection of Mr. William Astor,' in *The Art Treasures of America, being the Choicest Works of Art in the Public and Private Collections of North America*, 1879–80, reprint of the 1882 edition, New York, 1977, vol. 2, p. 72.

ARNAUT PLAYING A JOKE ON HIS DOG

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME.' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
23 ½ x 28 ¾ in. (60 x 73 cm.)
Painted in 1882

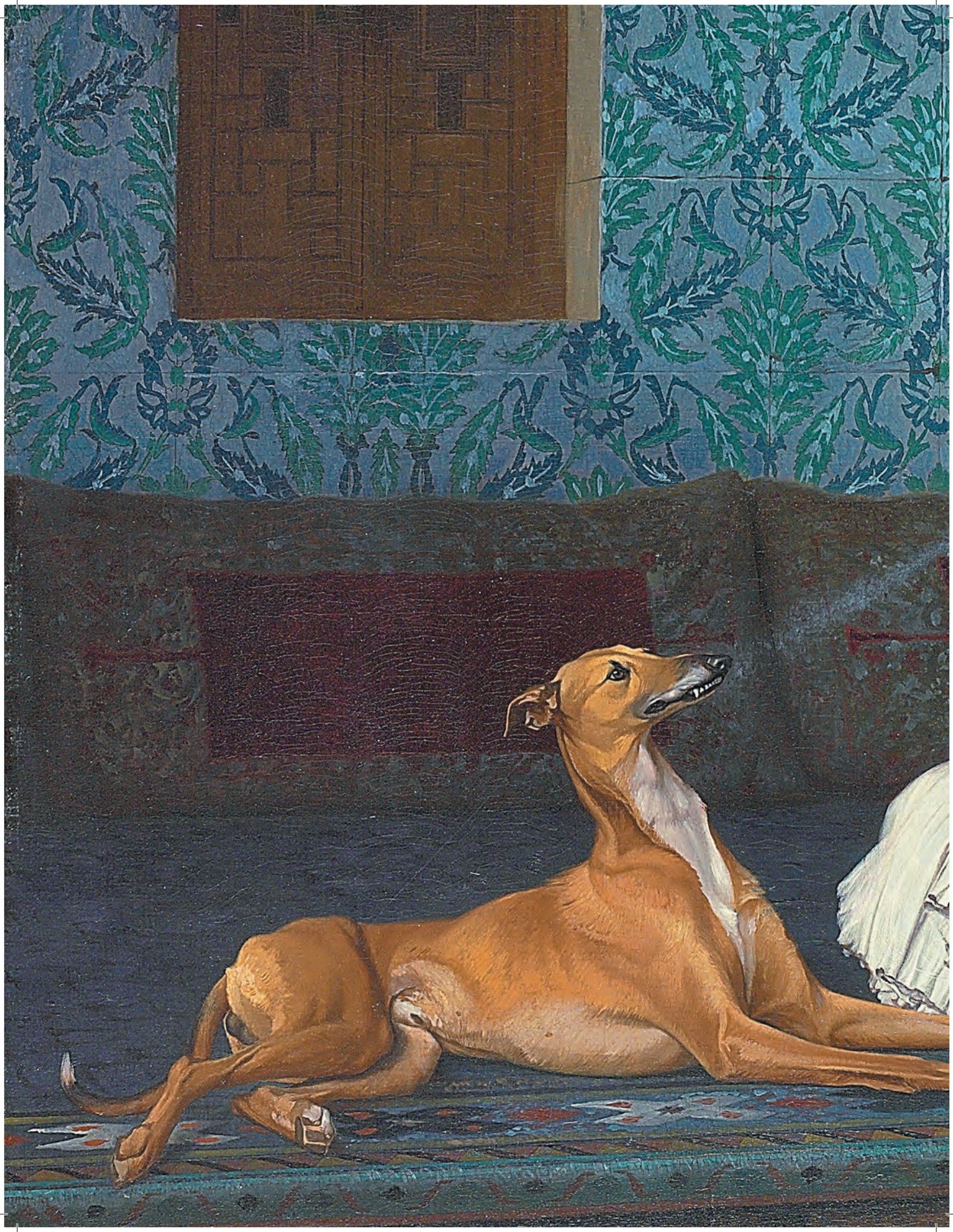
Provenance:
Acquired directly from the artist by Goupil & Cie, Paris (as *Arnaut fumant au nez d'un chien*);
William Schaus, New York, 1882 (Goupil Stock Book 10, p. 209, row 11, stock no. 16014) (as *Un levrier qui n'aime pas le Tabac*);
Acquired from the above by Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, American Minister to France;
By descent to his daughter Mrs. Lucius Manlius Sargent, Boston (born Marian Appleton Coolidge), from 1920;
By descent to her daughter Mrs. Francis Lee Higginson, Boston (born Hetty Appleton Sargent);
By descent to her daughter Mrs. Griselda H. Williams, Virginia (Mrs. J. Lawrence Basil Williams), from 1969;
Sale: Christie's, New York, 25 October 1996, lot 76 (as *Une Plaisanterie [Arnaute fumant au nez d'un chien]*);
Wendy Goldsmith, London;
Private Collection, London;
Sale: Christie's, London, 25 November 2009, lot 6 (as *Une plaisanterie (Arnaute fumant au nez d'un chien/Un lévrier qui n'aime pas le tabac*)

Literature:
Oeuvres de J. L. Gérôme, vol. 15, no. 5 (illustrated as a black and white photograph)
Possibly, *L'Art français*, 14 February 1891
F. F. Hering, *The Life and Work of Jean Léon Gérôme,* New York, 1892, p. 242
Le Figaro illustré, July 1901 (as *Plaisanterie*)
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, pp. 250–51, no. 307 (illustrated in black and white)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme: His Life, His Work*, Paris, 1997, p. 111 (illustrated in color)
G. M. Ackerman, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie révisée et catalogue raisonné mis à jour),* Paris, 2000, p. 110 (illustrated in color), pp. 304–05, no. 307 (illustrated in black and white)
S. Gilman, *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, London, 2004, p. 228 (as *Arnaut Blowing Smoke at his Dog* and whereabouts unknown)
K. Davies, *The Orientalists, Western Artists in Arabia, The Sahara, Persia & India*, New York, 2005, p. 142 (illustrated in color)
M. Brick, 'Les Animaux de Jean-Léon Gérôme,' in *Revue des Deux Mondes,* December 2012, p. 92

Considered the greatest and most knowledgeable Orientalist painter of the nineteenth century, Gérôme regularly created series of works that examined and perfected a single theme. Among the most memorable of these artistic investigations was his documentation of the colorful figure of the Arnaut, or Albanian soldier, engaging in an unexpectedly relaxed or noncombatant act. In the present work, painted at the height of Gérôme's long and prolific career, the artist demonstrates his unique ability to combine the fields of ethnography, costume study, and penetrating portraiture with an element of storytelling, and with irony and playful humor as well.

The distinctive costume of the soldier here, which consists of a *fustanelle*, or pleated skirt, embroidered jacket, and loosely arranged headdress, reappears in various permutations and on different mustachioed models throughout Gérôme's Middle Eastern oeuvre. It is part of the vast library of resources the artist had compiled by the time this work was executed in 1882, and which contemporary visitors to his Paris studio often mentioned with some awe. Professional and amateur photographs, preparatory sketches made on the spot,

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Arnaut Playing a Joke on his Dog*



A Male Model Dressed as an Arnaut Soldier, c.1855

and souvenirs of his frequent and wide-ranging travels, including architectural fragments, costumes, and decorative *objets*, created an environment which no one interested in Orientalism could dare to miss.

In the mid 1860s, the Arnaut skirt made its first appearance in Gérôme's art, as a simple pleated affair. It was later supplanted by this ample *fustanelle*, which was also likely purchased in Cairo. The precision of its ruffle, seemingly sculpted out of sunlight and shadow rather than merely painted with a brush, is indebted in part to Gérôme's talent at drawing from the model, and to the photographic collection he had amassed. The Musée d'Orsay houses several of the artist's personal photographs of a model in Arnaut costume, adopting various poses in the courtyard of a house.

The palette here is also a familiar one, repeated in his paintings of this and other themes. It is dominated on the one hand by salmon pinks and crimson reds and on the other by brilliant blues and whites and cool greens or aquamarines. Gérôme's shift between swathes of opaque color and a miniaturist's line, and between simple geometric planes and complicated patterns, creates a surface that is both immediately rewarding and demanding of more time. Glass-like in its slickness, smooth and highly polished, the

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *A Bashi-Bazouk Chieftain* (also *An Albanian Smoking*), *c.*1881–82

academic style of this painting had already become synonymous with the artist, and with nineteenth-century Orientalism more broadly by this time.

The compelling realism of Gérôme's paintings held a particular appeal for contemporary collectors in Europe and abroad. Indeed, the early provenance of this work, from France to America, is typical of many of Gérôme's best-known images. In 1859, Gérôme signed a contract with the French publisher and art dealer Adolphe Goupil, who was the first to handle the Arnaut painting here. Goupil's calculated marketing of Gérôme's works, through both the sale of originals and affordable, mass-produced reproductions, guaranteed their widespread distribution, and the growth of his international success. By 1863, the same year that the artist married into the Goupil family and just four years after formalizing his contract with the firm, Gérôme earned the distinction of being Goupil's most reproduced artist and, along with Meissonier, Cabanel, and Bouguereau, the most familiar to audiences by name.

Buyers of Gérôme's paintings in America tended to fit a certain mold. Businessmen, real estate moguls, railroad magnates, and industrialists, they formed a new group of art purchasers and patrons in the

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Study of a Whippet*

country, who were eager to prove the sophistication of their *nouveau riche* tastes. Gérôme's images of prayer, the marketplace, and soldiers with their arms – three of the most prevalent and popular of Gérôme's Orientalist themes – resonated strongly with this audience of stridently moral and intensely proud entrepreneurs. Americans' unflagging work ethic, moreover, seemed to be mirrored in the artist's diligent, labor-intensive *fini*, or style. Buyers could justify the higher and higher prices dealers were demanding as the years wore on, because they could actually see the artist's time and effort in every painted inch. The amount and accuracy of specific historical details in Gérôme's works held a certain appeal as well: reminiscent of the grand history paintings that these well-traveled art lovers had seen and admired in European museums, these were far easier to understand. Here were no lofty allegorical references or abstruse symbolic allusions, but rather a didactic representation of daily modern life – in an appealingly exotic locale. Finally, Gérôme's use of pure, rich color gave to his compositions a flashy, jewel-like brilliancy that caught the eye of the *nouveau riche* set in a way that other genres did not; as a bright and shiny object on their well-appointed wall, Gérôme's Orientalism seemed to have it all.

The appeal of Gérôme's Arnaut soldier series, however, was even more than this. It had a sense of subtle wit or amusing irony as well. Paul Lenoir, who accompanied Gérôme on two of his mentor's tours of

Egypt (in 1868 and 1881, during which time he died in Cairo), alluded to this in his journal, putting in words what Gérôme would also paint:

> Their [the Arnauts'] costumes artistically open at the breast, their arms "de luxe" as brilliant as inoffensive, their proud and disdainful attitudes, their least gestures, everything about them seems to have been most carefully studied. Nothing, however, is more natural than these interminable moustaches "à la grecque," which cut their visages in two like the two enormous horns of the buffalo, and which form the most appropriate ornament of these energetic faces, bronzed in the sun. The moustache, which has nothing Arab in its principle, is with the soldier of Cairo a sign of Albanese origin … It was an innovation in a land in which the beard is held in the highest esteem, and where the respect which is due to a man is measured by the length of this hirsute ornament. Soldier, en amateur, however, he acquits himself of his role with care; and he has become the indispensable furniture of the door of a mosque or of the entrance to a palace. He is like the "Swiss," [Swiss guards at the Vatican] the chasseur of our ancestors, but having instead of the halbert about ten or a dozen weapons, sabers and pistols, artistically intercrossed in the compartments of a vast girdle of red leather, which gives him the aspect of one of the show-windows of the Divisme on the boulevard Haussmann.[1]

In keeping with Lenoir's text, in several of Gérôme Arnaut paintings, weapons are hung on walls as decorative ornaments, often mimicking the postures of the subjects themselves, who are shown in moments of unprepared relaxation. In the present image, however, Gérôme walks a more complicated line between open mockery and good fun, while also adding an unexpected autobiographical gloss.

The importance and station of the figure portrayed is suggested by his rich surroundings and by the conspicuous display of guns and daggers at his chest; his indulgence in the *hookah*, however, undermines his commitment to the post. The man's companion on the cushioned *mastaba* or bench on which he sits is a *levrier*, or greyhound, native to the region. It is one of several of this breed in Gérôme's paintings, and may have been the artist's pet. Numerous preparatory sketches suggest Gérôme's fascination with the movements and contortions of this dog, some of which may be directly linked to later paintings, including to the image here. Rather than an accessory or an endearing sort of prop, Gérôme makes the greyhound the co-star of the scene. Seated on the *mastaba*, the dog raises its narrow muzzle toward the thinnest wisp of smoke, blown from the lips of his master by his side. Startled, transfixed, and with its curiosity peaked, the dog is connected to its owner by this means, their bond made manifest as Gérôme envisions them – humorously but poetically – as one.

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1 Quoted in 'Arnaut of Cairo,' in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Gérôme: A Collection of the Works of J. L. Gérôme in One Hundred Photogravures*, New York, 1881–83.

ARNAUT OF CAIRO

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed '*J. L. GEROME.*' (lower left)
Oil on panel
10 by 8 in. (25.5 by 20 cm.)

Provenance:
Possibly, Goupil & Cie, Paris;
Sale: Sotheby's, Parke Bernet, New York, 29 February 1984, lot 52 (as *Master of the Hounds*);
Mathaf Gallery, London;
Najd Collection;
Sale, Sotheby's, 11 June 2020, lot 103

Exhibited:
Possibly, London, Pall Mall Gallery, 1872
Possibly, Paris, *Exposition des Mirlitons*, 1873
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, December 2007, on loan

Literature:
Oeuvres de J. L. Gérôme, vol. 9, no. 4 (illustrated as a photograph)
E. Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Gérôme: A Collection of the Works of J. L. Gérôme in One Hundred Photogravures*, New York, 1881–83 (illustrated as a photogravure)
Possibly, *Catalogue de Paris*, 1883, p. 42 (as *Arnaut au Caire* and dated 1871; mentions photogravure by Goupil)
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, p. 95 (illustrated in color), pp. 230–31, no. 214 (illustrated in black and white) (as *Arnaut of Cairo [Cairene Soldier]* and dated 1870–71)
C. Juler, *Najd Collection of Orientalist Paintings*, London, 1991, pp. 135–36 (illustrated in color)
C. Williams, 'Jean-Léon Gérôme: A Case Study of an Orientalist Painter,' in *Fantasy or Ethnography? Irony and Collusion in Subaltern Representation*, eds. Sabra J. Webber and Margaret R. Lynd with K. Peterson, *Papers in Comparative Studies*, vol. 8, Columbus, OH, 1993–94, pp. 118–19 (illustrated in color as *Bashi-Bazouk and his Dogs*)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme: His Life, His Work*, Paris, 1997, p. 92 (illustrated in color)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie révisée et catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris: 2000, p. 100 (illustrated in color), pp. 278–79, no. 214 (illustrated in black and white as *Arnaute du Caire [avec deux chiens]* and dated 1867)
S. R. Edidin, 'Gérôme's Orientalism,' in *Gérôme & Goupil, Art and Enterprise*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2000, pp. 122–24, no. 78 (illustrated as an albumen silver print), catalogued p. 155 (and dated 1867)

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Arnaut of Cairo*

Gérôme's single-figure studies are among the most intimate, informative, and successful of his Orientalist works. The present painting, the *Arnaut of Cairo,* may be considered a model within his oeuvre. Its simple design and limited palette are the result of years of first-hand knowledge, pared down to the essentials of composition and technique. Meeting the gaze of the thinking figure here, built up from thin glazes of opaque hues, there is no mistaking Gérôme's art.

Gérôme's interest in recording Arnaut troops ('Arnaut' is the Turkish term for Albanian), may have been sparked even before his Middle Eastern travels had begun. The distinctive costumes of these soldiers had already been documented by Delacroix, whose work Gérôme would easily have known. By 1856, Gérôme was traveling to Egypt, sketching along the way. One of his first major works from this period, *La Prière chez un chef Arnaute (Prayer in the House of the Arnaut Chief)* (1857, whereabouts unknown), included several of these soldiers, and a possible precedent for the figure here. This painting was also the first of two to introduce Gérôme's name to American audiences. Though he had been mentioned in the New York-based art journal *The Crayon* two years before,[1] no more substantial mention was made of him until October

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Prayer in the House of the Arnaut Chief*, 1857

1 The brief notice appeared in 'Notes on the Universal Exposition of Fine Arts in Paris'.

1857, when an enthusiastic arts writer visited the annual Salon in Paris and found the 'finest pictures of the collection' to be by Gérôme. These included *Sortie du bal masqué (The Duel after the Ball)* (1857, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum) and *Prayer in the House of the Arnaut Chief*.[2] Not long after, the latter painting actually arrived in New York City, along with *Egyptian Recruits Crossing the Desert* (1857, private collection), a work also exhibited in the 1857 Salon, and featuring several Arnaut soldiers in the composition.

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Seated Arnaut*, 1857

The figure in *Arnaut of Cairo* has been isolated from any group. He strikes a confident, almost defiant pose, with two greyhounds at his side. In reality suffering from a loss in military and political power, this Arnaut soldier doesn't flinch. His weapons remain ready, his hand poised to strike. The positioning of the right hand, with the fingers crooked over the butt or barrel of a rifle, is a hallmark of the artist. The skirt he wears is typical of the Arnaut uniform, and may have been drawn from the artist's own collection. In addition to sketches created on the spot, Gérôme also began to collect the costumes he most admired. Among his first acquisitions were a pair of *fustanelles*, or Arnaut pleated skirts, first a rather simple one, and next a much fuller affair. Both appear in Gérôme's paintings over the course of his career, providing a subtle reminder of his ethnographic diligence and his personal connection to the East.

2 Quoted in DeCourcy E. McIntosh, 'Goupil and the American Triumph of Jean-Léon Gérôme,' *Gérôme & Goupil: Art and Enterprise*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2000, p. 34.

A BASHI-BAZOUK AND HIS DOG

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed `J. L. GEROME.' (center left)
Oil on panel
14 x 9 7/8 in. (35.6 x 25.1 cm.)
Painted in 1870

Provenance:
Goupil & Cie., Paris;
W. P. Wilstach, Elkins Park, Philadelphia;
Philadelphia Museum of Art (bequested from the above in 1893);
Samuel T. Freeman & Co., Philadelphia, 29–30 October 1954, lot 197;
Possibly, Renaissance Galleries;
Property of an Estate (and sold: Sotheby's, New York, 23 October 1990, lot 47);
Private Collection;
Sale: Sotheby's, New York, 24 April 2009, lot 8

Literature:
Oeuvres de J. L. Gérôme, vol. 9, no. 9 (illustrated as a black and white photograph)
E. Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Gérôme: A Collection of the Works of J. L. Gérôme in One Hundred Photogravures*, New York, 1881–83 (illustrated as a photogravure)
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, pp. 216–17, no. 156 (illustrated in black and white)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme: His Life, His Work, 1824–1904*, Paris, 1997, p. 65 (illustrated in color)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (Monographié révisée, Catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris, 2000, pp. 258–59, no. 156 (illustrated in black and white)
J. Parry, *Orientalist Lives*, Cairo, 2018, p. 140 (illustrated in color)

In the urban setting of Cairo, Gérôme took a particular interest in elaborate depictions of the Arnauts, descendants of the Albanian soldiers brought to Egypt by Pasha Muhammad 'Ali. Their most colorful division were the Ottoman irregular mercenaries known colloquially as bashi-bazouks (literally 'damaged head,' meaning leaderless or without discipline). These military subjects were the infamous remains of a fearsome force that Muhammad 'Ali had decimated years before in an effort to consolidate his power. Paul Lenoir, who accompanied Gérôme on two of his master's tours of Egypt, famously described these men in his journal of 1881, calling attention to their tamer, modern role:

> At this place we got our first idea of the irregular militia of which we had heard so much, but had only seen a few odd samples in the streets. / While Egypt is waiting to be conquered over again

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *A Bashi-Bazouk and his Dog*

by some one or other, these toy troops, these comic-opera sentinels, have no other occupation than that of stopping photographers who are desirous of honouring them with their confidence. Their artistically disordered costume, their arms, equally brilliant and harmless, their proud and disdainful attitudes, their least gestures, all seem to have been carefully studied. And yet, nothing is more natural than the interminable Greek moustaches which cut their faces in two, like two huge buffalo horns, and which form the most appropriate ornament to those fine faces, bronzed by the sun. The moustache, which has nothing Arab in it, is a sign of Albanian origin among the Cairene soldiery. The Arnauts, that Greek militia brought into Egypt by Mehemet Ali in order to oppose the encroaching power of the Mamelouks, inaugurated moustaches at Cairo, and took care to compose the foreign troops' uniforms of all the richest stuffs in the country to which they came as military occupants. This was an innovation in a country where the beard is highly esteemed, and where the respect due to a man is measured by the length of that appendage. The amateur soldier plays his part carefully, and becomes an indispensable piece of furniture at the door of a mosque, or the entrance of a palace. He is the 'Suisse,' the 'chasseur ' of our forefathers' time; for his halberd he has a number of arms, sabres, and pistols, artistically disposed in the various compartments of a vast girdle of red leather, which makes him look like a shop window for the display of guns and swords. His pipe, his tobacco, and his food, all have their places in this walking shop-front. It might fairly be asked by what feat of balancing he contrives to walk without being caught by the walls; but the street boy of London and Paris does not flourish in Cairo, and these fierce warriors are safe from the derision and the 'tripping-up trick' which would be the signal for their decadence in the destruction of their prestige. They are fully aware of their interesting and perilous position, and in order that they may not have to disarrange any of the arms of the museum which they carry on their stomachs, they carry immense flexible whips, made of hippopotamus hide, combining the suppleness of the horse-whip with the precision of the cane, and thus they keep their enemies and their admirers at a respectful distance.[1]

In the present work, elements of this description come vividly to life. Though the subject strikes a confrontational posture, his weapons are not drawn. The conspicuous display of guns and daggers becomes an opportunity for an exquisitely painted still life rather than a vicious show of force. The saddle, too, removed from its Arab steed and placed upon the grass-specked ground, reminds us only distantly of the furious pace, pounding hooves, and frenetic atmosphere of mounted battle. Even the nimble whippet is docile. And yet there is no mockery here. Unlike Lenoir, who took great pleasure in pointing out the comical nature of the modern *bashi-bazouk*, Gérôme invests his subject with dignity and grace. The man's pink sleeves and loosely tailored leggings suggest a lean, athletic build, and his black vest is richly, if subtly, embroidered. His firm stance, clenched jaw, and sober stare, moreover, are unapologetic and unflinching; though history may have changed the circumstances of this dramatic figure, here he is still the undisputed master of the scene.

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1 Paul Lenoir, *The Fayoum, or Artists in Egypt*, London, 1873, pp. 27–28

THE BLUE MOSQUE

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME.' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
28 ½ x 40 ¼ in. (72.4 x 102.2 cm.)
Painted in 1878

Provenance:
Boussod Valadon, Paris, 1878;
Knoedler's, New York, 1878 (Goupil Stock Book 9, p. 176, row 6, stock no. 12975) (as *La mosquée bleue*);
Possibly, Sheldon, New York or Philadelphia ca. 1903;
Wells Collection;
Their sale, American Art Association, New York, 12–13 November 1936, lot 47;
Eli Whitney Debevoise Collection, New York;
Galerie d'Orsay, Paris;
Private Collection, Europe;
Sale: Christie's, New York, 24 October 1990, lot 92;
Galerie d'Orsay, Paris, 1995;
Sale: Christie's, New York, 14 February 1996, lot 30 (as *La Mosquée Bleue*);
Private Collection, London;
Sale: Christie's, London, 14 June 2006, lot 26 (as *La Mosquée Bleue*)

Literature:
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, pp. 242–43, no. 268 (illustrated in black and white)
H. Lafont-Couturier, *Gérôme*, Paris, 1998, p. 26
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie révisée et catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris: 2000, pp. 294–95, no. 268 (illustrated in black and white)
K. Davies, *The Orientalists: Western Artists in Arabia, The Sahara, Persia & India*, New York: 2005, pp. 264, 266 (illustrated in color)
O. Nefedova, 'Orientalism in Art,' *Antiq.Info*, 48/49 (January–February 2007), p. 17 (illustrated in color)
J. Highet, 'Beyond Orientalism's Veil,' *Saudi Aramco World* 60.2 (March/April 2009), p. 18
O. Nefedova, *A Journey into the World of the Ottomans: The Art of Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737)*, Milan, 2009, pp. 22–23, 63 (illustrated in color)
I. Warraq, *Defending the West: A Critique of Edward Said's Orientalism*, New York, 2010, p. 301

Though many Orientalist paintings have been interpreted as a European artist's misunderstanding of the Middle East, the details of this image suggest another narrative. Here, in a work by the most recognized Orientalist painter of the nineteenth century, Jean-Léon Gérôme demonstrates both his encyclopedic knowledge of the region and his profound respect for some of its most distinctive cultural traditions.

Surprisingly, given his reputation today, Gérôme did not make his name with his Orientalist works. Rather, he began his career by painting portraits and anecdotal – yet archaeologically exact – scenes of ancient Greece and Rome, for which he achieved an almost unprecedented level of fame. (Indeed, in terms of productivity, financial success, length of career, and influence, no other painter shaped French art more authoritatively than Gérôme.) In 1855, Gérôme received a commission from the French Government for the Exposition Universelle. Gérôme chose an ambitious allegorical subject, *The Age of Augustus* (present location unknown), depicting the world at peace under the Roman Emperor. (This was meant as a symbolic representation of the glorious new reign of Emperor Napoleon III.) With the advance for the work (Gérôme was ultimately paid 20,000 francs), the artist traveled to Russia and the Balkans, searching for various ethnic models to include in his composition. The rest of the payment, made in 1856, would finance Gérôme's first trip to Egypt – a journey that would have a profound effect on his career.

From 1856 forward, Gérôme submitted Orientalist paintings to the Paris Salon, along with the society portraits and historical genre scenes audiences had come to expect. Impressively, given this breadth of subject, approximately one-third of Gérôme's finished paintings depict Orientalist themes. In his capacity as a professor for nearly forty years at the École des Beaux-Arts, Gérôme influenced many of his students to travel to the Middle East, and his new, 'documentary' style of painting would establish itself as the definitive model for Orientalist painting in the second half of the nineteenth century. Gérôme's own sketching expeditions to Egypt would continue through the 1860s and 1870s; other destinations included Turkey, Spain, Algiers, Syria, and Palestine.

Throughout his travels, Gérôme made hundreds of sketches and studies and amassed an impressive collection of photographs and local goods, which were later used toward the meticulously detailed, highly polished oil paintings executed at his Paris studio. As he himself wrote of these preparatory materials, 'I did not know beforehand what I was going to do with these studies, nor with all the others I brought back from travels. It is only later ideas come; there is an unconscious labor in the brain and, suddenly, they are born!'[1] Particular subjects and even specific objects reappear time and time again, becoming favorite motifs of the artist. Gérôme's predilection for blue and white tiles, for example, is evident in countless of his works, and in vastly different contexts. His fascination with Muslim figures at prayer is also well documented and, as a subject, forms a distinctive subgroup within his Orientalist oeuvre. But it is the particular union of patterns, themes, and images in this work, and the precision of the details, that differentiates it from so many of Gérôme's compositions. For, rather than offering us a gallery of favorite devices, here Gérôme

1 Quoted in Fanny Field Hering, *Gérôme, his Life and Works*, New York, 1892, p. 143.

provides an almost unerring representation of one of the most beautiful sites in Istanbul – Rüstem Pasha Mosque.[2]

Rüstem Pasha Mosque, Istanbul

Located in the midst of bustling markets in the Eminönü district of Istanbul, Rüstem Pasha mosque was designed by Sinan, master architect to Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, and the favorite of members of the upper echelons of the Ottoman court. Though he would work on, oversee and plan approximately 400 buildings by the time of his death in 1588, of which 100 alone are mosques, it would be at Rüstem Pasha Mosque that Sinan would develop his trademark dome, his greatest contribution to Ottoman architecture.

The commission for this mosque came from Rüstem Pasha himself, a general in the Ottoman army and the son-in-law of Süleyman. At the behest of the Sultan's wife Roxelana, Rüstem was made Grand Vizier. (Rüstem would later become famous for plotting with Roxelana to kill Süleyman's son and heir to the throne.) Rüstem accumulated a vast fortune during his career, consisting of property, cash, thousands of beautifully calligraphed volumes, and other luxuries. When it came time to solidify his wealth and create his own pious foundation, Rüstem Pasha chose a site at the foot of Süleyman's grand complex, in deference to the Sultan. (Though seemingly modest, this was actually a valuable piece of commercial land, which Rüstem had to go to great lengths to acquire.) Work on the mosque was ongoing at the time of Rüstem's death in 1561, and his wife had to petition her father the Sultan for the funds to complete the project. The mosque, finished one year later, comprises a rectangular prayer hall with a central dome (15.2 meters in diameter and 22.8 meters high), preceded by a porch with five domes and flanked by two-storied aisles. The dome rests on a high octagonal base, supported by the exterior walls and four massive piers. Four semi-domes fill the corner spaces.

Perhaps the most famous aspect of Rüstem Pasha Mosque, however, which still draws crowds today, is the extensive use of Iznik tiles. (These tiles were produced by potters in the city of Iznik, whose skills were, during the elaborate building campaigns of the mid-sixteenth century, increasingly in demand. Interestingly, Sinan had used these tiles only sparingly in the grander Süleymaniye Mosque, also of his design.) The tiles adorn the walls, piers, *mihrab* (sacred niche), and *minbar* (pulpit) of the mosque's interior, in a dizzying pattern of stylized and more relaxed, free-flowing floral and foliate designs. The patterns, which include both compositions spread over many tiles and crafted to fit a specific surface, and mass-produced modular

2 This painting has been misleadingly known as *The Blue Mosque* since at least 1935. This has led to the assumption that it represents either the famous 'Blue Mosque' of Sultan Ahmet, also located in Istanbul, or the Aqsunqur ('Blue') Mosque in Cairo, both of which Gérôme undoubtedly knew.

tiles cut to fit the wall on which they were installed, are executed on a white slip in black, purple, cobalt blue, turquoise, and the famous 'coral' red – a rare and difficult color to produce in tile work – under a transparent glaze. Some of the design motifs echo those found in contemporary textiles, the production of which had been spurred by Rüstem's astute fiscal policies.

In this oil painting, Gérôme takes great delight in recording the precise patterns of these tiles, focusing his attention on that part of the mosque in which they were most lavishly displayed. He shows the *qibla*, or the wall that faces Mecca, and toward which Muslims pray. At the far right of the composition is the *minbar*, the pulpit from which the sermon is delivered. The curtained doorway, steep stairs, and ornately carved, pointed canopy are characteristic Ottoman features. The scallop-pattern of the recessed *mihrab*, located, as always, to the left of the *minbar*, and here flanked by monumental candlesticks, is also typical. Above this niche is a line of what appears to be Arabic calligraphy, written left to right. Those familiar with the mosque and its decorations would have known that it is drawn from the third *Sura* (3:37), known as 'The House of Imran,' and one of several in the Qur'an devoted to the Virgin Mary. It reads: 'God said, Every Time Zakria [Zachariah] went into her mihrab [sanctuary]'.[3] In Gérôme's painting, however, these words have been substituted for a series of purely decorative arabesques.

An oil sketch by Gérôme, given by member of the artist's family to the Musée Georges-Garret Vesoul in France, depicts this section of the mosque in looser terms, and another oil repeats the subject as well. Both of these works record the script accurately, and with a fluid hand. Elsewhere in their compositions, however, artistic liberties have been taken. The leaded glass window near the *minbar*, for example, has been traded in one instance for stained glass, and certain tile patterns shift and change as well.[4] The people in the paintings shrink or grow in number and their gestures do not remain the same. In countless images of prayer, in fact, Gérôme manipulated his settings and his figures, becoming increasingly concerned with the visual impact of his paintings, rather than their historical or cultural accuracy.[5] (Indeed, and to show the extent to which the artist would go, in a letter to the dealer Knoedler, Gérôme once explained: '*Prayer in the Mosque* had been reserved by Monsieur Simon and I remember that he made me put a figure facing the spectator, by saying that since all the others were seen from the back or in profile, it would not sell. I did as he wanted because his reasons were commercially sound.'[6] As Gérôme well knew, such a thing would never have been witnessed in a mosque; all prayed toward Mecca, and therefore in the same direction.)[7] While of no matter to his

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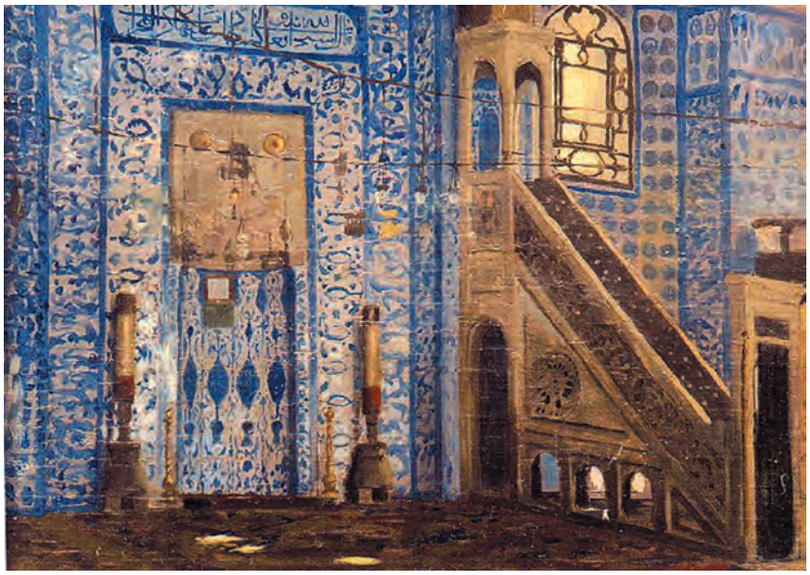
3 The Virgin Mary in Islam ('Maryam' in Arabic) is the mother of Jesus ('Isa'), who is considered by Muslims to be one of the prophets of Islam. Of the Qur'an's 114 *Suras*, she is among only eight people to have a *Sura* named after them (*Sura* 19), and is the only woman specifically named.

4 Though inaccurate in this particular location, stained glass was not entirely out of place: many of Istanbul's most famous mosques had colored glass windows, Rüstem Pasha among them. Mihrimah Sultan Mosque, also built by Sinan, is perhaps the most famous, featuring many stained-glass windows.

5 Of this tendency, the author Edmond About penned: 'Your example, my dear Gérôme, seduced me by reassuring me: no law prohibits a writer from traveling as a painter, which is to say from assembling in a purely imaginative subject a multitude of details taken from life and scrupulously true, though selected,' (quoted by Jean-Marie Carré, *Voyageurs et écrivains français en Egypte*, Cairo, 1932, vol. 2, p. 26).

6 Letter to Knoedler, 8 June 1903, Custodia foundation, Fritz Lugt collection, Netherlands Institute, Paris.

7 Though this would seem to be a rather obvious point, many artists made similar 'mistakes': Frederic Leighton's *Portions of the Interior of the Grand Mosque of Damascus* (1873–75, Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston) is a particularly noteworthy example.



Interior of Rustem Pasha Mosque, oil sketch

nineteenth-century clients, who purchased such paintings almost before the paint was dry, Gérôme's departures from reality have been the source of much modern art historical debate.

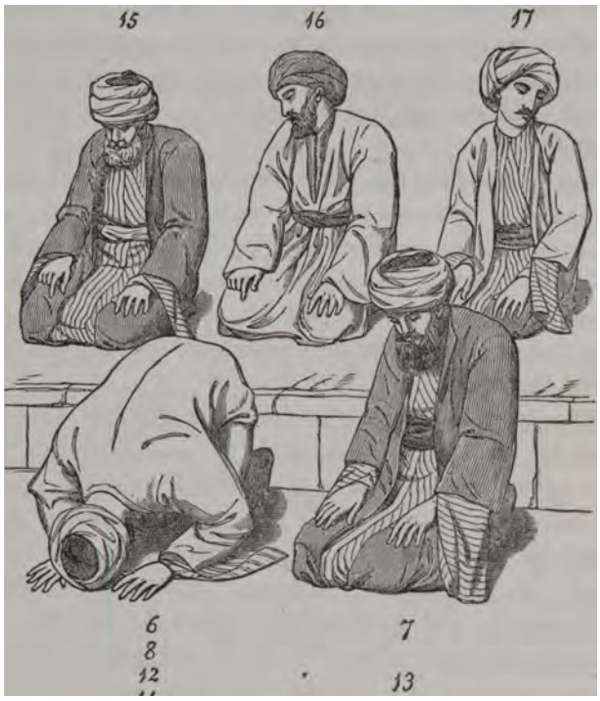
Each of these three images makes it clear that Gérôme visited Rüstem Pasha Mosque during the course of his foreign travels, but it is likely he used photographs as well. French artists were among the first to exploit the recording capacities of this new technology, and from as early as 1839, the monuments of the Middle East became a favorite focal point. Gérôme's own appreciation of photography is well documented: his first teacher, Paul Delaroche, was among those in attendance when Daguerre's new photographic process was introduced in August 1839, and, upon his first trip to Egypt in 1856–57, Gérôme was accompanied by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, the sculptor of the Statue of Liberty, who took along a camera and related apparatus. Gérôme's brother-in-law, Albert Goupil, was an amateur photographer himself, and accompanied the artist on his 1868 trip to Egypt. (Albert would go on to become one of the most important early French collectors of Islamic art.) Finally, in 1875, it is known that Gérôme purchased photographs from the Abdullah Frères, the most important photographic studio in Istanbul at the time.

Of course, what the camera could not record – and what Gérôme has here mastered – were the vibrant colors of the Middle East. Here, in addition to the blue and white tiles, Gérôme has recorded, in painstaking detail, each saturated hue of the woven carpet, the expertly-wrapped turbans, and the jewel-toned robes of the praying figures, which repeat in similar, if at times subtler, variations throughout the composition. Gérôme's adeptness at this formal game, and his skill at capturing the filtered effects of sunlight located outside the picture plane, are virtually unequalled in French Orientalism.

The colorful, decorously attired men in Gérôme's composition exhibit various stages of the daily Muslim prayers – indeed, as if drawn from the pages of an instructional manual, they adopt exactly those six postures of prayer which comprise the first *raka*, from the initial standing *Qiyam* to the last prostrate *Sajda*.[8] (Gérôme's tendency to quote from literary sources, such as, in this case, Edward William Lane's *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, published first in London in 1836, is well

8 In the center of the composition, one man raises his hands, palms facing the *qibla*, as if to recite '*Allah-o-Akbar*' ('God is Great'). This expressive gesture was part of the prayer ritual, and was usually made while standing, during *Qiyam*.

documented, and often resulted in his figures being called 'wooden' by contemporaries.) In order to show the full range of prayer positions, Gérôme voluntarily foregoes realism, ignoring the fact that, typically, the men should all be engaging in the same postures as they simultaneously pray. His purpose is didactic *and* encyclopedic; reality is further down the list.



Postures of Prayer (Part II) from Edward William Lane's *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, 1836

On either side of the composition are two figures whose costumes stand out among the crowd. On the left is a *bashi-bazouk* soldier, his notorious ferocity quieted for a while. On the right is a seated figure oft repeated in Gérôme's art. Mystic, madman, or one of the dire poor, his and the soldier's inclusion give to Gérôme's image one of the deeper meanings that art history has often missed: here, in this place of sanctuary, all are equal in the eyes of God.

In January 1862, Gérôme married Marie Goupil, the daughter of the influential art publisher and art dealer Adolphe Goupil. Goupil's firm, with branches in London, Brussels, and Berlin, and correspondent galleries in New York (later Knoedler's) and the Hague, was the foremost producer of fine but inexpensive photogravure prints of modern painters. Throughout the 1860s, Goupil would not only organize the worldwide distribution of prints of Gérôme's paintings and, eventually, his sculptures, he would also obtain patrons for the artist, on a global scale. 'Goupil is simply a geographical astonishment,' wrote one contemporary admirer, 'He has no more difficulty in placing a good picture on the Pacific coast than in the shadow of his own (Paris) gallery.'[9] By 1880, 53 paintings by Gérôme were in (some of the wealthiest) American hands, with 34 being Orientalist in subject. Paintings of prayer were particularly resonant, as they offered a familiar theme to American men and women, underneath their exotic guise. Such poignant images could even offer hope and comfort in these years of rapid industrial and commercial change: At a time when science and rationalism were King, the idea of pure and unquestioned faith was doubtless reassuring. Indeed, in looking again at this exquisite work by Gérôme, it is easy to imagine that the artist felt something of this too: effacing his own presence and his own, painterly touch, he takes care not to intrude upon this sacred scene.

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9 Quoted in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *The Art Treasures of America being the Choicest Works of Art in the Public and Private Collections of North America*, Philadelphia, 1879–80, vol. 2, p. 47. Further testimony to Goupil's excellent PR services comes from an American observer at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867: 'There was nothing from Gérôme that was unknown to Americans. The majority are known in photographic form, and several were lent by American owners,' (quoted in Albert Boime, 'Gérôme and the Bourgeois Artist's Burden,' *Arts Magazine*. 57 [January 1983], p. 65).

EGYPTIAN GIRL

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME.' (lower right)
Oil on canvas
18 x 15 in. (46.7 x 38.1 cm.)
Painted in 1877

Provenance:
Goupil & Cie, Paris, acquired directly from the artist, December 1877 (as *Juive Egyptienne*; Book 9, p. 138, row 8, stock no. 12380);
Knoedler, New York;
Horatio Victor Newcomb, Louisville, Kentucky and New York;
Sale: New York, 1903;
A. B. Meyer, New York;
His sale: American Art Association, New York, 1923, lot 48 (as *A Girl of Smyrna*);
Sale: Parke Bernet, New York, 1958, lot 252 (as *A Girl of Smyrna*);
Louis Lisman, Vermont;
His sale: Sotheby's Parke Bernet, New York, 15 June 1979, lot 410B (as *Wistful Arab Boy*);
National Museum of Fine Arts, Amman, Jordan;
Private Collection, Jordan;
Sale: Christie's, London, 1 July 2008, lot 92 (as *Jeune fille égyptienne: Egyptian girl*)

Literature:
Oeuvres de J. L. Gérôme, vol. 3, no. 8 (illustrated as a photograph)
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, p. 113 (illustrated in color), pp. 240–41, no. 262 (illustrated in black and white as *Young Egyptian Girl*)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme: His Life, His Work, 1824–1904*, Paris, 1997, p. 110 (illustrated in color as *Young Egyptian Girl*)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie révisée et catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris, 2000, p. 121 (illustrated in color), pp. 292–93, no. 262 (illustrated in black and white as *Jeune fille* égyptienne)
L. Thornton, *Les Orientalistes Peintres voyageurs*, Paris, 2001, p. 129 (illustrated in color)
J. Highet, 'Beyond Orientalism's Veil,' *Saudi Aramco World* 60.2 (March/April 2009), p. 22 (illustrated in color as *Jeune Fille Egyptienne*)

Related to a series of female portraits that Gérôme painted in the 1870s and 1880s, *Egyptian Girl* nevertheless remains one of the artist's most mysterious works. The sitter's nationality and religion have all been the source of sporadic debate from the time of its completion in 1877 until today, and comparisons to Ingres are often (correctly or incorrectly) made. The painting may have

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Egyptian Girl*

been inspired by Gérôme's recent trip to Istanbul in 1875, and his interest in recording the changing modes of women's fashion in the country at the time. Several garments were purchased by the artist on this journey and reappear in later works. However, the expensive green and gold satin *anteri* that is displayed here is not included in the inventories of Gérôme's collections, and it is not repeated again in his expansive oeuvre.

The young Egyptian of the title leans her forearms atop an inlaid wooden chest, and gazes out without a smile. The chest is decorated with mother-of-pearl in a simple pattern that does not compete with the details of her garments, or with her elaborate necklace of gold coins. (This accessory is one that reappears in other paintings by Gérôme.) The artist's skill at rendering fabrics is evident in his ability to suggest that a body exists beneath each perfect line and fold, and in the way the material catches the raking light. The *anteri's* vivid colors are set off by the brilliant orange-red cummerbund that the young woman wears, tied in a thick band around her waist. This striking contrast – Gérôme is choosing colors that are complementary, or opposite one another on a color wheel – is repeated elsewhere in the composition: the dark, plain green background further illuminates the young woman's dress and her porcelain skin is made brighter and more striking by the abundant curls of black hair that frame her narrow face. Around these waves of hair is a halo of sorts, which is also typical of Gérôme's technique – having painted the figure, he often blended the edges of the form into the wet background, merging the two into a compelling, glowing whole.

The model for this work may have been a Paris hire; she appears once more in a painting from 1877, known as *Young Girl* or, more interestingly, as *Young Armenian Jewess*. Her designation as a Jew is supported by the first recorded title of the present painting – *Juive Egyptienne* – and to some degree by history as well. Many Sephardi and Karaite Jews had emigrated to Egypt from Spain after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, along with Jewish peoples from other territories of the Ottoman Empire, Italy, and Greece. In Cairo's Darb Al-Barabra quarter, the Ashkenazi community increased exponentially in the last decades of the nineteenth century, bringing the city's Jewish population to an all-time high. Though it is not known which population the sitter here might have been a part of, her *anteri* is reminiscent of Sephardi dress.

Gérôme's portrait is far more than a commentary on current events, a costume study, or ethnographic exercise, however. The pensive pose of the young woman adds an element of mystery to the work, inviting the viewer to wonder what she is thinking as she poses for the artist on this day. Though many Orientalist painters had painted Arab philosophers, religious scholars, or other members of the literati lost in thought, hand to chin or pen raised mid-air, Gérôme's transposition of this quality to this female Orientalist portrait is remarkable, and worthy of our own moment of contemplation.

THE BLACK MAIDSERVANT

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME.' (center left)
Oil on canvas
13 3/8 x 11 in. (34.5 x 28 cm.)
Painted ca. 1877

Provenance:
Collection Donatis;
Sale: Gros & Delettrez, Paris, 15 December 2008, lot 66

Gérôme's talent for recording different ethnicities was recognized as something special by contemporary critics, who saw in his paintings both scientific value and a clear attempt to individualize even the humblest of subjects. Théophile Gautier congratulated the artist for his 'ethnographic veracity,' and believed that his works could provide information reliable enough for anthropologists and serious scholars alike. So too, Gautier continued, Gérôme was fulfilling that peculiarly nineteenth-century passion for precise and reliable information about humanity, and the individuals behind generalized categories or 'types': 'M. Gérôme satisfies one of the most demanding instincts of the age: the desire which people have to know more about each other than that which is revealed in imaginary portraits. He has everything which is needed in order to fulfill this important mission.'[1]

In the present work, Gérôme rejects the 'imaginary portraits' that Gautier appraises in favor of the sensitive portrayal of a Black woman, dressed in the clothes of an African maidservant. (It is unclear whether the woman is a model, posed at the artist's Paris studio, or a local woman he encountered while abroad.) The woman's armlet is Sudanese, and may be made of either ivory or horn. Often these accessories were carved with designs; the simple vertical marks on this particular piece are somewhat unusual, but emphasize the modesty of the subject and her station. The woman herself may be either Lower Nubian or Sudanese, an identity which links her, along with her distinctively wound cloth headgear, to other figures in Gérôme's art. Gérôme's paintings of Black attendants, often paired with fair-skinned Circassian women and set against the richly adorned blue-and-white tiles or smooth stone surfaces of a *hamam*, or harem bath, comprise a distinctive subgroup within his Orientalist oeuvre. In this work, however, the weathered face of the woman is subject enough.

The identity of this particular model has yet to be determined, but ongoing research has begun to yield tantalizing clues about Gérôme's Black and Arab models and their lives. It is possible that after one hundred and fifty years of anonymity, the name of this stoic *Maidservant* may one day be known.

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1 Théophile Gautier, 'Salon de 1857 IV,' *l'Artiste*, 5 July 1857, p. 246.

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Black Maidservant*

THE MUEZZIN

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME.' (lower right)
Oil on panel
16 x 11 ½ in. (40.5 x 29.5 cm.)
Painted in 1865

Provenance:
Goupil & Cie., Paris (as *Muetzine en prière réduction*);
Gambart, London (Goupil Stock Book 2, p. 168, row 8, stock no. 1613) (as *Muetzine en prière reduction*);
Sale: Christie's, London, 16 May 1896;
Arthur Tooth & Sons (purchased at the above sale);
Sale: Christie's, London, 3 November 1977, lot 110 (as *The Call to Prayer*);
Sale: Sotheby's, London, 2 June 2010, lot 102 (as *Le Muezzin*)

Literature:
M. Verrier, ed., *The Orientalists*, London, 1979, no. 48 (illustrated in color as *The Call to Prayer*)
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, pp. 218–19, no. 164 (illustrated in black and white)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie révisée et catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris: 2000, pp. 260–61, no. 164 (illustrated in black and white)

In the 1860s, Gérôme began a series of paintings depicting Muslim men at prayer. These would become a signature theme of the artist, and among his most popular Orientalist works. The present painting, *The Muezzin*, holds a special place within this important group. One of a handful that were set outside, it demonstrates the seamless transition that Gérôme was able to achieve from ethnographic document to a subjective contemplation of religion in the Middle East.

Gérôme's path to Orientalism began in 1856, when he traveled to Egypt for the first time. (Earlier in his career, he had made his name with light-hearted Néo-Grec genre scenes and archaeologically exacting images of the classical past.) In Cairo, he accumulated a virtual library of souvenirs, costumes, and local crafts, as well as photographs, sketches, and drawings, which served as inspiration for his studio works. Subsequent trips to the region made during the 1860s and 1870s expanded his repertoire of subjects, confirming his talents as an ethnographer and his reputation as a privileged witness to all aspects of Middle Eastern life.

In this work, Gérôme depicts the afternoon call to prayer, made from the top of a minaret in Cairo by a *muezzin*. This person, chosen to lead the call (*al-adan*) to the five daily prayers (*as-salat*) and the Friday

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Muezzin*

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Evening Prayer*

service from one of the mosque's minarets, faces the *qiblah* (or the direction of the Ka'bah in Mecca) while he recites the call.[1] In the background, the distinctive skyline of the city is visible, with the dome of the Mosque of Sultan Hasan helping to identify the geography of the site. (Such panoramic vistas recur elsewhere in the artist's oeuvre, notably in *Napoleon at Cairo* and *Prayer on the Housetops*, the latter of which may be considered a variation on this painting's theme.)

Despite this gloss of realism, Gérôme's image knowingly plays with truth. One of the minarets on the left should be many miles from this scene, and the rooftop wind scoops are useless in their positions here. (To catch the prevailing winds that sweep through Cairo, they should be facing north.) Several of the details in the composition, moreover, inspire a strong sense of dejà vu. They reappear in others of Gérôme's works, in different contexts and guises. The *muezzin*'s mustard yellow *galabeeyah* here, for example, appears in numerous prayer paintings, each time worn by a different man.

Artistic liberties such as these did not diminish the overall popularity of Gérôme's Middle Eastern scenes, nor jeopardize their worth. Numerous reproductions and copies of this work were made during the course of the artist's career – a testament to its success. (A larger painted version, with more detail in the background, for example, is now at the Joslyn Museum of Art.) Indeed, in the nineteenth century, making versions of a favorite or highly coveted subject was the standard practice of many artists, and held a specific societal value. Those without the resources to purchase a popular Salon painting could, by these means, enjoy similar works in their own homes, particularly through the production of a reduction, or smaller version of the piece. For those who wished for a grander addition to their well-hung walls, a *répétition* was the answer to their needs. This was understood to be a later version of a painting, of

1 The institution of the *muezzin* has existed since the time of Muhammad. The first *muezzin* was Bilal ibn Ribah, who walked the streets to call the believers to come to prayer. After minarets became common, the office of *muezzin* in cities was sometimes given to a blind person, who could not look down into the inner courtyards of citizens' houses and thereby violate their privacy.

roughly the same size. Owing to a few compositional differences – a requisite of this type – the *répétition* was considered to be an original and costly work of art. As Patricia Mainardi explains: 'The correct term for an artist's later version of his own theme … was … *répétition*, the same word used in performance for a rehearsal. In performance, we never assume that opening night is qualitatively better than later presentations – first performances are, in fact, usually weaker than subsequent ones, which gain in depth from greater experience and familiarity with the material.'[2]

The techniques that Gérôme employs throughout this composition exhibit the trademarks of his style. The application of paint around the beard of the *muezzin* is particularly noteworthy, as it offers a glimpse into the artist's working method. Here, Gérôme simultaneously applies fresh paint to both the figure and the ground, allowing him to balance the painting's overall tones and avoid the hard-edged outlines of others' academic style. The consequent appearance of this painted passage and across the entire surface of the work, as a seamless, luminous sheet of glass, became identified closely with the artist, and with nineteenth-century Orientalism as a whole.

Scenes of Middle Eastern calls to prayer such as this were enormously popular in the nineteenth century, particularly among a new group of American and British art purchasers and patrons. In addition to reflecting familiar moral principles and a model of piety to which they could aspire, these subjects could also offer hope and comfort at a time of rapid change. As the corruptive influences of capitalism were beginning to be recognized and the complexities of modern life were starting to take their toll, the idea of a pure and unquestioned faith was doubtless reassuring. In this context, Gérôme's *Muezzin* cannot be interpreted as merely a window into a distant and exotic world. It is a solemn sermon delivered to the West, reminding it of God's greatness, and cautioning it not to lose its way.

Mosque of Sultan Hasan, Cairo

2 Patricia Mainardi, 'The 19th-century art trade: copies, variations, replicas,' *The Van Gogh Museum Journal* 2000, pp. 63–64.

NAPOLEON AND HIS GENERAL STAFF IN EGYPT

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Signed 'J. L. GEROME' (lower left)
Oil on panel
22 ¾ x 34 ½ in. (58.4 x 88.2 cm.)
Painted in 1867

Provenance:
Sold by Adolphe Goupil, Paris to Henry Probasco, Cincinnati, 1867 (Goupil Stock Book 3, p. 151, row 2, stock no. 2925, as *Le Général Bonaparte traversant le désert*);
Possibly, Adolphe Goupil through Knoedler's, New York to Robert L. Kennedy, 1870 (Goupil Stock Book 5, p. 110, row 6, stock no. 5275, as *Le Général Bonaparte en Egypte*);
Possibly, Ainslie Galleries, New York, 1928;
Possibly, Private Collection, Chicago, thence by descent;
Sale: Christie's, New York, 10 February 1997, lot 22;
Private Collection;
Sale: Tajan, Paris, 24 November 2005, lot 268 (as *Le Général Bonaparte et son état-major en Égypte*);
Sale: Andrew Clayton-Payne, London, 2010

Exhibitions:
Possibly, Brooklyn, Brooklyn Art Association, December 1872, lent by Robert L. Kennedy
Possibly, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, September 1873, lent by Robert L. Kennedy

Literature:
E. Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Gérôme: A Collection of the Works of J. L. Gérôme in One Hundred Photogravures*, New York, 1881–83 (illustrated as a photogravure)
F. Masson, 'J. L. Gérôme et son oeuvre,' *Les Lettres et les Arts*, 1887, pp. 191–92
F. F. Hering, *Gérôme. The Life and Works of Jean-Léon Gérôme*, New York, 1892, pp. 208–09
H. Roujon, ed., *Les Peintres Illustres : Gérôme*, Paris, 1912, no. 63 (pub. in English as Albert Keim, *Gérôme* [Masters in Color], New York, 1912)
G. M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme (with a catalogue raisonné)*, New York, 1986, p. 222, no. 172 (illustrated in black and white and described as 'Lost')
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme: His Life, His Work, 1824–1904*, Paris, 1997, p. 85 (illustrated in color)
L. Thornton, *Du Maroc aux Indes. Voyages en Orient*, Paris, 1998, p. 8 (illustrated in color)
G. M. Ackerman, *Jean-Léon Gérôme (monographie révisée, catalogue raisonné mis à jour)*, Paris, 2000, p. 70 (illustrated in color), pp. 264–65, no. 172 (illustrated in black and white as *Le Général Bonaparte et son état-major en* Égypte)
R. Bigorne, 'The Taste for Modern History,' in *Gérôme & Goupil, Art and Enterprise*, exhibition catalogue,

Paris, 2000, p. 145 (illustrated as a photogravure), catalogued p. 157
K. Davies, *The Orientalists: Western Artists in Arabia, the Sahara, Persia & India,* New York, 2005, p. 222 (detail, illustrated in color), pp. 228–29 (illustrated in color p. 229)
F. Quinn, *The Sum of All Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought*, Oxford and New York, 2008, p. 95 (illustrated in black and white)
L. des Cars, D. de Font-Relaux, and E. Papet, eds., *The Spectacular Art of Jean-Leon Gérôme (1824–1904)*, exhibition catalogue, Milan, 2010, p. 156 (illustrated in color)
L. des Cars, *Gérôme: De la peinture a l'image*, Paris, 2010, n.p. (illustrated in color)
I. Warraq, *Defending the West: A Critique of Edward Said's Orientalism*, New York, 2010, p. 543
-----. 'Linda Nochlin and the Imaginary Orient,' June 2010, *New English Review*, n.p.

> The simoon blows upon the army on its march in the desert; perched upon a white camel, whose neck is stretched out desperately under the hot breath of the wind, the General appears *de face*, his meager, yellow countenance framed by long black hair. The coat, buttoned up, makes a somber spot accentuated by the white leather breeches and the yellow-topped boots. The body erect, the great hat posed as if in battle array, he moves on, correct in his severe uniform, while behind him, succumbing to the heat and the burning sand which blinds them, the officers of his staff, whose dromedaries vainly seek for some tuft of moist herbage, abandon themselves to weary postures. Near the General, a Turk on foot, and several Arab horsemen in their striking costumes; in the background, the army slowly defiling. Never has any one more truly rendered the golden mist raised by the khamsinn: never has any one thus perfectly expressed the frightful lassitude which takes possession of the best trained men save those who have compelled the body to be the docile slave of the mind. What is remarkable in this picture is that the thought one reads upon this emaciated face is evidently far from the desert. It has left the body and. while the eyes fixedly regard the horizon, it goes on crossing rivers, climbing mountains, traversing seas. Bonaparte is no longer on the road to Syria – he is on the way to India! He hesitates between these two halves of the world which he holds in his hands; he ponders upon the fate of Alexander and Caesar; he asks himself if Asia, of which he holds the key, is worth this Europe from whence he comes; and. unconscious of suffering, his dream embraces the universe! It is a bit of history that the author of the *Age of Augustus* has painted for us here, plainly showing, as in many other celebrated pictures, the philosophical power of his mind.[1]

In the 1860s, Gérôme began an ambitious series of four historical paintings featuring Napoleon Bonaparte in Egypt. Interest in Napoleonic subject matter had peaked in recent years due to the upcoming centenary of Napoleon's birth (this would be in 1869), and the declaration of the Second Empire in 1852 under Napoleon's nephew, Louis-Napoleon, which had inspired a nostalgic look at the past. The romanticizing in the popular imagination of Napoleon's Egyptian campaign of 1798–99, and its actual political and

1 Frédéric Masson, 'J. L. Gérôme et son oeuvre,' *Les Lettres et les Arts*, 1887, translated by and quoted in Fanny Field Hering, *Gérôme, his Life and Works*, New York, 1892, pp. 208–09.


J.L. GEROME.

cultural significance, made it an obvious choice for artists, working both independently and for the new regime. This was especially true for Gérôme, who was both an accomplished history painter and the leading Orientalist artist of the day.

Napoleon's arrival in Egypt was history-making from the start. Having decided that Europe had nothing left to offer in terms of celebrity and power, Napoleon was determined to establish French control over the country, disrupt access to India, and halt British colonial expansion in the Middle East. With an impressive army of 40,000 French soldiers and the newly formed Scientific and Artistic Commission, 150-strong, by their side, Napoleon took on Egypt with a comprehensiveness that had never been seen in modern military campaigns. The official multi-volume publication of the Commission, the *Description de l'Égypte*, was distributed in Paris between 1809 and 1828 and would become the single most influential resource for artists, architects, and designers in the early to mid-nineteenth century, with its hundreds of meticulous illustrations of all aspects of ancient and modern Egypt, executed under the direction of artists Vivant Denon and Pascal Coste.

In his first days in Egypt, Napoleon seemed destined for success. Having taken Alexandria, he was again victorious at the Battle of the Pyramids in Cairo. By the following year, however, in February 1799, Ottoman forces arrived to challenge the French and loosen their stronghold on the region. Napoleon countered with 13,000 troops in Syria under Generals Reynier, Kléber, and Bon, with cavalry and infantry divisions under General Murat and Brigade Chief Bessières, and a camel corps under Dammartin. Combat engineers rounded out the army, and were led by General Caffarelli, who, like Bon, would soon die in battle. Napoleon's seventeen-year old son Eugène Beauharnais was also in Syria with the troops.

The battles were horrific. After suffering massive losses in Arish, Gaza, Haifa, and Jaffa, Napoleon found himself without provisions and confronted by the plague. Contending too with a streak of bad weather, he was outmaneuvered at the port of Acre. Though he fought on for nearly three months at that site, he was ultimately forced to retreat. Four thousand men lost their lives at Acre, with thousands more injured. The most heavily wounded were poisoned on Napoleon's orders to hasten the exit of the troops and the remainder – approximately 1200 at the start of the retreat – trudged through the deserts of Syria in May 1799, en route to Egypt. The survivors reached their destination in late July, only to have a battle erupt in Aboukir. This time, however, Napoleon was able to gain the upper hand. By late August, again sensing the hopelessness of his cause, Napoleon abandoned Egypt, leaving his troops under Kléber's command. The French surrendered and, on 25 June 1802, Egypt returned to Ottoman rule. The once-fêted campaign, contemporaries and historians would conclude, was a resounding failure.

Gérôme's painting is a record of these events. More specifically, it documents Napoleon's retreating troops as they struggle through the desert and enter Egypt. Members of Napoleon's staff are included in the caravan of camels, their faces barely identifiable through the windswept sands. Napoleon himself is in the lead, his sober expression telling the tale of his defeat. Edward Strahan (pseud. Earl Shinn), writing of the painting in 1881, summed up the circumstances he saw portrayed: '[Napoleon] … mounted on his ungainly beast of burden in this burning and dreary march … with his discontented and defeated

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Study for 'The General Bonaparte in Egypt with his General Staff'*, 1867

army around … experiences, for the first time, the bitterness of disappointed ambition.'[2] Only the attentive dragoman walking on the left seems to hold any admiration for the Emperor on this fateful day.

The triangular shape of Napoleon's distinctive hat – a talisman of sorts for Gérôme, who acquired a similar one for his costume collection and memorialized it in paint – is mirrored in the shape of the group of men on the right. Though they are packed tightly together, they look away from one another, lost in their own thoughts. The camels they ride are rendered with the skill that had already earned Gérôme a reputation as an animal painter, and their colorful trappings – which poignantly play upon the colors of the French flag – are recorded with a miniaturists' eye for detail.

To the left of this group are a pair of Arab horsemen, traversing the rocky terrain. This pair would be repeated in another composition of the artist's a few years later, *Riders Across the Desert* (private collection). The setting for both works is likely drawn from sketches Gérôme made on the spot, many during his first trip to Egypt in 1856, and from photographs purchased or taken by members of his entourage, including the sculptor (and creator of American's Statue of Liberty) Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi.

Gérôme's painting was never exhibited at the annual Salon in Paris, but still managed to achieve immediate and remarkable fame. It was publicized first by the dealer and printmaker (and Gérôme's father-in-law) Adolphe Goupil as a photograph in 1868–69. (Goupil himself was a well-known supporter of Napoleon, and likely took a personal interest in Gérôme's series.) In 1872, Czar Alexander III purchased an oil sketch of the painting; this has been at the Hermitage in Leningrad since 1918. Additional studies, including several for the figure of Napoleon, are in museum and private collections around the world.

2 See E. Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Gérôme: A Collection of the Works of J. L. Gérôme in One Hundred Photogravures*, New York, 1881–83.

THE SWORD DANCE AT A PACHA'S

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)

Print
9 3/16 x 11 in. (23.3 x 28 cm.)
Published in 1881 by George Barrie, Philadelphia

By the mid-1850s, reproductions of Gérôme's paintings were beginning to appear in print-shop windows throughout Europe, Britain, and in major cities up and down America's East Coast. The publication and widespread distribution of these graphic images, calculated to introduce an international art-buying public to a wide variety of Gérôme's works at different (and relatively modest) prices, as well as to promote paintings offered for sale, was indebted to one of the nineteenth-century art world's most transformative and entrepreneurial figures, the art dealer Adolphe Goupil. (The painted version of the present work, for example, was published by Goupil as a photogravure [1878–1909], a part of the firm's 'Photographic Gallery' [1875–1904], and as a diaphanograph with optional hand-colored borders [1875–1876, 1884–1893]; these sold for 6 francs, 10 francs, and 20 or 25 francs, respectively.) By 1863, the same year that the artist married into the Goupil family and just four years after formalizing his contract with the firm, Gérôme earned the distinction of being Goupil's most reproduced artist and, along with Meissonier, Cabanel, and Bouguereau, the most familiar to his clientele by name.

Amongst the most popular of the prints produced by Goupil were Gérôme's Orientalist paintings, including those of the *ghawazee*, or Egyptian dancing girls. Gérôme had executed a series of paintings depicting these famous performers, engaged in the *raqs sharqi* (Oriental dance) or woman's local dance (*raqs baladi*), by the mid-1870s; the best known of these was *Le Danse de l'almée* (1863, Dayton Art Institute), exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1864. Though it caused some degree of scandal (which only served to fan the popularity of the work), the subject of the Eastern dancer was a familiar one to most: by the middle of the nineteenth century, an account of the Middle East – whether in print or in paint – was considered woefully incomplete without reference to an evening of dance.

Gérôme himself had witnessed the famous *raqs baladi* while in the Fayoum in Egypt in 1868, just two years after a ban against such performances had been lifted. Not surprisingly, given his ethnographic interests and compulsion for technical perfection, Gérôme's depictions of the event were nearly flawless in every detail. Postures, costumes, and accessories, many of which were acquired from the dancers themselves and would find their way into the artist's famously Orientalized studio in Paris, correctly reflected the idiosyncrasies of the art. (Later audiences would have recognized Gérôme's care in this regard, having themselves witnessed a corps of Middle Eastern dancing girls at the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris.) Such realism aside, the women in these works were often favorite models of the artist's, hired in Paris and posed according to sketches and notations the artist had made on site. This interplay between

truth and fiction, Egypt and the studio, would in fact become a signature of the artist, and a modern art historical point of contention.

In the present work, Gérôme provides a glimpse of one of the most dramatic forms of *raqs baladi*: the *raqs al sayf*, or sword dance. A *ghawazee*, left hand on hip, balances a long sword atop her head and her body on the tips of her toes. Contrary to the weighty, grounded nature of the traditional *raqs sharqi* and other *raqs baladi* dances, Gérôme's lithe performer appears to defy gravity. Her distinctive comportment aligns her, unexpectedly yet persuasively, with yet another group of Gérôme's Orientalist compositions: The swirling drapery of a whirling dervish (ca. 1889, private collection), the energetic maneuvers of a *bashi-bazouk* (1878, whereabouts unknown), and the acrobatic leaps of two weapon-wielding men in a Cairene interior (*La Danse Pyrrhique*, 1885, private collection), all provide fascinating points of comparison with this lyrical work, and suggest a previously unrecognized teleology in Gérôme's expansive *oeuvre*.

The woman holds a second sword in her right hand, its curved blade echoing the lines of her lower body and providing an ironic gloss in its juxtaposition of femininity and weaponry. Over her loose, Turkish-style pantaloons, gathered at the ankle and worn below the waist, she has wrapped and tied a decoratively striped shawl. Its placement around her hips would have emphasized the pelvic movements of the dance she performs. A bolero-style satin waistcoat, tightly fitting to reveal the contours of her upper body, is accented by a necklace of large round coins similar to those on her forehead. The woman's torso and arms are enveloped in an undergarment of transparent muslin, concealing but revealing the figure underneath.

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Sword Dance at a Pacha's*

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Dance of the Almeh*, 1863

The visibility of her midriff indicates that this is a private performance, meant only for inside the home. The dancer's face is also covered with transparent gauze, this time from a veil that cascades and swirls behind her.

The dancer's animated display of acrobatic skill – a feat meant to honor a guest through the incorporation of a valuable possession into the dance itself – stands in sharp contrast to the more sedate left-hand side of the composition, where the Pasha of the title presides. He, smoking a *narghileh*, sits cross-legged on a *mastabah*, or bench, quietly observing the event before him. His *mashrabiyyah* chair is positioned under a carved arch and is surrounded by his guests and four Arnaut soldiers, two on each side. A spellbound monkey, the pet of this elite household, completes this figurative group. (The addition of this exotic animal may have been biographical in part: Gérôme himself had a monkey named Jacques, who frequented his studio and dined with him in formal attire.)

Opposite the Pasha a group of *almehs*, or learned women, has gathered. They sing, play music, and clap along with the seated musicians at their side. The musicians play a variety of traditional Arabic instruments, including a *rababah*, a *nay*, and a tambourine. One singer stands, unable to contain his enthusiasm. He leans forward to more emphatically beat his *darbukah*, or drum. Numerous sketches for these and others of the figures in the composition exist; many are repeated in other works and would become favorite motifs of the artist (for example, Gérôme's series of paintings depicting Arnaut soldiers in their distinctive skirts).

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Pyrrhic Dance*

The size and architecture of the house, with its intricate woodwork, high ceilings, fine carpets, and substantial chandeliers, reveal the wealth and status of the owner, as do the marbled and tiled walls and carefully displayed *objets*. Like many nineteenth-century artists, Gérôme was probably given entrée into some of Cairo's finest Mamluk homes, where he could make numerous architectural sketches for use toward these and other paintings. Many of his compositions feature similar interiors to those of his colleagues, and may indicate Gérôme's familiarity with their exhibited paintings, or, perhaps, a shared network of local houses visited and sketched on-site. The setting of the present work, for example, as well as the composition as a whole, bears a strong resemblance to the paintings of another leading Orientalist, the British artist John Frederick Lewis. Lewis's works were well known in France, across Europe and America, and to Gérôme as well, due to their appearance at international expositions and to the circulation of engravings, lithographs, and other reproductions after Lewis's enormously popular art.

A nearly identical albumen silver print published by Goupil & Cie. as part of their 'Photographic Gallery' in 1875 (no. 1545), and measuring 22.1 x 36.5 cm., is in the collection of the Musée Goupil in Bordeaux.

IN FRONT OF A MOORISH CAFÉ

Hippolyte Lazerges (1817–1887)

Signed, dated and inscribed/located: 'hip'te Lazerges alger 1882' (lower left)
Oil on panel
25 ½ x 18 1/3 in. (65 x 46.7 cm.)
Painted in 1882

Provenance:
Sale: Campo & Campo, Antwerp, 29 November 2011, lot 154 (as *Conversation entre deux hommes orientaux*);
Galerie Ary Jan, Paris, 2013

Hippolyte Lazerges' biography is a tale of two cities, both of which were profoundly influential for the artist. In Paris in the 1830s, he studied under the sculptor David d'Angers and the painter and engraver François Bouchot. In 1840, he submitted his first painting to the Paris Salon and, in 1861, his first Orientalist paintings were exhibited to great acclaim. Lazerges won medals in 1843 and 1848, and received the *Légion d'honneur* in 1867. Among his favorite subjects were pairs of conversing figures, as here, and images of women standing at the doorways or arched entrances to whitewashed North African buildings.

The lure of Algeria, the setting for many of these works, would be felt throughout Lazerges' life, influencing his subject matter and the decision of where he would spend his last days. (He died in Mustapha, a suburb of Algiers.) This work, painted very late in the artist's career, demonstrates his prowess as an Orientalist painter and the reasons for his contemporary fame. Lazerges' artistic training is evident in the portrayal of the two figures in the scene; the thin, fine brushstrokes that describe the patterns of their clothing and trace their silhouettes recall the work of an engraver, while the contrapposto posture of one figure and the other's solid form are wholly statuesque.

Lazerges' attention to detail, as well as the ease with which he paints, suggests his familiarity with Algeria, and the people he encountered. Behind the open door in this engaging work a group of figures is just visible, adding interest to the scene. The central standing figure, with his neatly wrapped turban and cornflower blue vest, smokes a cigarette as he looks down at his friend. This seated man, a bearded Algerian, holds a small ceramic tea or coffee cup. His legs are tucked up under him and his forearm rests upon his knee. Their conversation has halted for the moment, seemingly for Lazerges to stop and look and paint.

Hippolyte Lazerges, *In Front of a Moorish Café*

FIRST DRIFT OF KHAMASIN, CAIRO

Léon Adolphe Legendre (19th c.)

Signed and dated 'Léon.Legendre 1912' (lower left)
Watercolor on paper
20 ½ x 14 ½ in. (52 x 36.7 cm.)
Painted in 1912

Provenance:
Sale: Étude Tajan, Paris, 13 March 1995, lot 99

Though the attempt to render atmospheric effects is most often associated with the Impressionists, Orientalist artists were captivated by the vagaries of weather too. In *First Drift of Khamasin, Cairo*, Léon Adolphe Legendre depicts the beginning of a dust storm (*khamsin*) as it sweeps through a bustling market place. The hot, dusty winds of this event were regular occurrences in Cairo from February through April, and could have a catastrophic effect. (These storms were most likely to occur over the course of a fifty-day period in spring; the word *khamasin* means 'fifty' in Arabic.) Here, the winds swirl but they are not yet strong enough to disrupt the activities of the market, which is being held in the historic Gamaliyya district of Cairo.

Legendre's depictions of Cairo and Alexandria were exhibited at the Paris Salon from 1874 until the early 1900s, suggesting that he may have travelled to Egypt just before and perhaps during those years. Several of these works depict the desert and *dahabeeyahs*, or sailboats, along the Nile, in panoramic vistas. The insertion of humanity into each of Legendre's compositions – people at work or congregating casually on the scene – indicates his larger project as an artist: his paintings forego the unchanging nature of the landscape in favor of illustrating the vibrancy of the modern Middle East.

Legendre's interest in climate, and in the activity in the lands in which he travelled, may explain his use of watercolor here and elsewhere in his oeuvre. This would have been the most effective medium for a nineteenth-century artist intent on capturing the transitory effects of sun, wind, and desert sand – and the most transportable as well. At a moment's notice, Legendre could sketch the sites he saw, indicating figures and their movements on the spot.

And yet Legendre's use of watercolor is somewhat unexpected in the context of his training. His teachers Jean-Léon Gérôme and Adolphe Yvon gained recognition for their intensely realistic paintings, featuring polished surfaces and tight detail. Their ethnographic studies were a far cry from the fleeting atmosphere that Legendre was concerned to render, and their studio creations provide a sharp contrast with vibrant images such as this.

Léon Adolphe Legendre, *First Drift of Khamasin, Cairo*

HUNTER LYING IN WAIT

Jacques Majorelle (1886–1962)

Signed and inscribed: 'j. majorelle' and 'marrakech' (lower right)
Mixed technique, gouache, highlights in gold powder on paper
22 4/5 x 30 in. (58 x 76 cm.)
Painted ca. 1948

Provenance:
Private Collection, France;
Didier Aaron Ltd., 2019

The son of a noted furniture designer, Jacques Majorelle brought to his Orientalist paintings a sense of design and color rivalled only by Matisse. In the present work, the leaves of the brilliant green plant are rendered as if they are an exploded firework, set against a darkened ground. Crouching beside this vegetation – possibly a pineapple plant, native to the Ivory Coast – is an African hunter, intent upon his unseen prey. The brilliant blue of his clothing contrasts with his black skin; it creates an abstract shape on the canvas, broken by stylized shadows, simplified folds, and a geometric print. The Orientalism of Majorelle could not be made more explicit: it is bold, graphic, and nearly photographic in effect. It is also emotive and intimate, and one of the most instantly recognizable personal styles within the modern genre.

Majorelle's experience of North Africa and the Middle East began in 1910, when he travelled to Egypt. In 1917, he was in Morocco, hoping to recover his health. A short stay in Casablanca was followed by a visit to Marrakech, where Majorelle found his inspiration in its colors and its light. From that city, the artist travelled to other North African locales; but it was Marrakech that always called him back. Its streets and its inhabitants featured in the art that he created and its energy infused those works with life. In 1919, Majorelle married. Four years later, he began planting what would later become the celebrated Jardins Majorelle and commissioned the architect Paul Sinoir to design a Cubist villa on the grounds. It would later be painted in Majorelle Blue, the color he developed to mimic the vivid hues of Moroccan tiles. In 1947, the garden was opened to the public for a fee, but by the 1950s it was in disrepair. The property was rediscovered by the designers Yves-Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé, who determined to restore the house and garden. They also became collectors of Majorelle's art. In 1962, Majorelle returned to France after a car accident; he died in Paris shortly after.

In the years just prior to *Hunter Lying in Wait*, Majorelle had expanded his travels to include the African coast. Between 1945 and 1952 Majorelle visited Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Niger, Senegal, and Sudan. In 1948, the year that the present work was painted, the artist exhibited works in Casablanca inspired by his expeditions. The juxtaposition of the Black hunter and the lush vegetation here is a reference to these

travels; it is also, however, a remembrance of Morocco and the artist's oeuvre. In 1930, Majorelle began a series of female nudes which featured women posing in his jardin. Their decorative quality is reminiscent of this gouache and gold-sprinkled paper work.

Orientalism's heyday had come and gone by the time Majorelle had settled on the genre. His experimentations with different media and deliberate emphasis on the two-dimensionality of his works, inspired by an effort to revive this storied field, brought new life to representations of Africa and the Middle East, and a distinctive modern edge. The success of Majorelle's project has only grown in recent years, allowing him to take his rightful place in the canon of twentieth-century Orientalist art.

Jacques Majorelle, *Hunter Lying in Wait*

SOUQ EL KHÉMIS

Jacques Majorelle (1886–1962)

Signed and inscribed 'J. Majorelle Marrakech' (lower left)
Mixed media heightened with gold and silver on black paper
33 ¾ x 39 3/8 in. (86 x 100 cm.)

Provenance:
Acquired from the studio of the artist, Marrakesh;
Private Collection, France;
Sale: Christie's, London, 25 November 2009, lot 22

Literature:
F. Marcilhac, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Jacques Majorelle*, Paris: 1995, p. 193 (illustrated in color)

Exhibited:
Paris, Institut du Monde Arabe; Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Jacques Majorelle – Rétrospective*, 1999–2000, illustrated on the cover and pp. 114–15

'I worked the other day in these souqs that voluptuously capture the eye ..., where the fertility and the happiness of life radiate, amidst an indifferent crowd busy with trade, buzzing like a beehive .... Is the one who sells glistening wools and silks that sparkle with the sun's rays more beautiful than this other one with his crimson leathers ...? No. They are magnificent gods, sublime magicians in front of whom only ecstasy is allowed,'
– Jacques Majorelle, letter to Étienne Cournault, 27 November 1917.

Influenced by his father, a well-known furniture designer, and trained in architectural studies at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Nancy, it was not until he attended classes at the Académie Julian in Paris in 1903 that Majorelle committed himself to painting. By 1908, he was exhibiting paintings in Paris that demonstrated his skills as a portraitist and draughtsman. By 1909, however, after traveling to Italy and Spain, Majorelle was painting almost exclusively *en plein air*, and had changed his philosophy and artistic intent. Now, he sought to capture the effects of sunlight on surfaces and document a more authentic way of life, far removed from the glittering glass and steel and electric energy of France. In 1910, Majorelle travelled to Egypt and, in 1917, to Morocco – a country his doctor had prescribed for his ailing health. At the invitation of family friend General Hubert Lyautey, Majorelle arrived in Marrakesh on 20 September of that year. He knew immediately that he had found the light and lifestyle he had been seeking, and that his art would change again as a result.

In Marrakesh, Majorelle embarked on several new ventures, painting all the while. An exhibition of his works was held in 1918 in Casablanca; in 1919, the year of his marriage to Andrée Longueville, his

paintings from Egypt and Morocco were exhibited at the Chamber of Commerce in Nancy. (Majorelle's wife would later manage workshops that the artist opened in Marrakesh in order to promote local crafts.) Decorative commissions, including the hall and ceiling of a restaurant in the Mamounia Hotel, revived his interest in architecture and the applied and decorative arts, and encouraged him to find ways to integrate them into his paintings. In 1930, Majorelle began a series of Black female nudes enhanced with gold and silver powders, in a technique akin to medieval manuscript illumination; he also exhibited twenty works in Casablanca and at the gallery La Renaissance in Paris in that year. Majorelle's spacious studio in Marrakesh allowed him to create much larger paintings as well, including the famous *Les Allamates*, which was exhibited at the the Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris, held on the capital's eastern fringes in the Bois de Vincennes in 1931. In 1932, Majorelle built the Villa Bou Saf-Saf, the second of his Marrakesh homes, and began work on the elaborate gardens that would become known worldwide as the Jardin Majorelle. (The famed fashion designer Yves Saint-Laurent and his partner Pierre Bergé rediscovered and purchased the garden in 1980; it is now open to the public under the management of the Fondation Jardin Majorelle.)

Jacques Majorelle, *Souq El Khémis*

While his projects in Marrakesh expanded, Majorelle narrowed the focus of his art. Pictures of the *kasbahs*, or fortresses, of the High Atlas Mountains and the *souks*, or markets, of Marrakesh, dominated his oeuvre after the 1920s. On 2 August 1921, Majorelle had obtained authorization from the Pasha to travel through the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco – a privilege typically denied to foreign civilians during the protectorate. Ninety-seven works were inspired by this expedition and were exhibited at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris in January 1922. Majorelle's only book, *Carnet de route d'un peintre dans l'Atlas et l'Anti-Atlas*, was published in that year as well.

The present work, the *Souq El Khémis*, or Thursday market, is one of the finest and largest examples of Majorelle's souk pictures. The composition of this work is simple: a pair of heavily veiled women contemplate a flat-weave striped Bedouin carpet at the weekly market in Marrakesh. (Located in the northeast corner of the Medina, by the Bab El Khemis, this popular *souk* still runs today.) To the left and in the background, figures sit or stand. Enveloped in heavy woollen *burnouses*, some merge into the barren ground while others are rendered as statuesque figures along a high horizon line. The colors of Majorelle's painting are dark and earthen, with bold shadows interspersed. The brilliant red of the carpets is all the more remarkable against these muted tones. Gold and silver highlights sparkle too, catching the bright sunlight of the region. Their metallic hues, often applied onto black paper, as here, are more than merely decorative; they are integral to his technical progression and to the experience that Majorelle wished his audience to have: 'Originally,' wrote one critic in 1929, 'this new process found itself in the use of gold and silver, giving his first works a decorative look sometimes similar to that of precious Persian art ... After much perseverance and study, Majorelle finally achieved his goal. He released the metals from the decorative quality that they inevitably gave to the work and succeeded in giving them, overall, the same effect as colours, which was a genuine miracle.'[1]

The setting of this work was one Majorelle depicted throughout his career, and through which the trajectory of his mature stylistic evolution can be traced. From rapid-fire brushstrokes with an impressionistic gloss to a drastic simplification of line and color, and from a brilliant palette to the thick, black contours visible here, Majorelle's art is an endless education in how one country and one artist can yield more than a thousand extraordinary results.

1 Robert Boutet, 'The Atlas Kasbahs painted by Majorelle,' in *La Vigie Marocaine*, April 1929.

THE FUNERARY COMPLEX OF SULTAN AL-ASHRAF QAYTBAY

Louis-Claude Mouchot (1830–1891)

Signed and dated 'L. Mouchot 66' (lower right)
Oil on panel
23 ¼ x 19 in. (59 x 48.2 cm.)
Painted in 1866

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 12 June 1995, lot 220

Mouchot's love of Cairo – the city in which he lived for nearly three years – is evident in the paintings that his residence inspired. For more than two decades after his return, the artist sent works to the Paris Salon based on the drawings and watercolors he had made from life. These paintings add atmosphere and humanity to scenes that had become almost commonplace by the 1860s, and that might otherwise be considered a simple architectural sketch.

In the present work, Mouchot offers one of Orientalism's most popular perspectival views – the façade and eastern side of the fifteenth-century funerary complex of Sultan al-Ashraf Qaytbay, located in the Northern Cemetery of Cairo. The picturesque *ablaq*, or horizontal striped courses of colored stone, and the distinctive carved and patterned dome had been depicted by numerous artists by 1866, the year that Mouchot created his own version of the scene. Pascal Coste, David Roberts, and Prisse d'Avennes were just some of the artists whose topographical images had become familiar to British and European audiences, largely through the widespread dissemination of enormously popular prints after the original oils. The compositions of these works were remarkably alike, due in part to the simple formula they followed: figures and/or animals in the foreground provide a sense of scale for the precisely rendered architecture in the back; a long straight street leads the eye deep into the picture plane, until it meets a minaret.

In Mouchot's hands, however, the pattern has been changed in some respects. The intricate carving of the dome – a focus for the others – is almost absent in this work, and there are palm trees on the right. Mouchot's male and female figures, moreover, are closer to the viewer and obscure some of the details of the mosque as they walk by. Rather than an architectural portrait, then, objective and complete, Mouchot's view of Cairo is more intimate and unstructured in execution and design. The impressionistic brushstrokes and atmospheric haze suggest the presence of the artist, and there is a sense of immediacy that other paintings lack. This is Mouchon's own idea of the city and its buildings, impressive and alive.

Louis-Claude Mouchot, *The Funerary Complex Of Sultan Al-Ashraf Qaytbay*

COFFEE SHOP IN ALGIERS

Henri-Félix Emmanuel Philippoteaux (1815–1884)

Signed and dated 'H. F Philippoteaux 1845' (lower left)
Oil on canvas
19 x 25 ¼ in. (48.2 x 64 cm.)
Painted in 1845

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 12 June 1995, lot 238

Exhibited:
Possibly, Paris Salon, 1846

Best known for the detailed battle scenes he exhibited at the Paris Salon from 1833, Philippoteaux quickly earned a reputation as one of Léon Coignet's finest students and a fitting successor to Horace Vernet. In 1846, having been awarded several medals for his art, Philippoteaux received the *Légion d'honneur*. Such public recognition earned him the attention of King Louis-Philippe, and a commission for several murals at Versailles. In 1840, the King appointed Philippoteaux the official painter of the Algerian campaign. (Led by the Duke of Orleans and the Duke of Aumale, French troops sought to quell the regional uprisings inspired by the Emir Abd-el-Kader, who was looking to end France's decade-long rule in Algeria.) Philoppoteaux was to act as a journalist of sorts, following the French army and recording what he witnessed of the battles. The sketchbook he filled during this period, now in the Musée Condé in Chantilly, supplied him with the foundations for the monumental canvases he would produce, and the inspiration for much of his later art. (In addition to large-scale works, Philippoteaux produced panoramas and cycloramas as well.) The present work, *Coffee Shop in Algiers*, is one of a handful of non-military subjects painted by Philippoteaux.

Based on the drawings he made while quartering with the French army in Algiers in April 1840, Philippoteaux has here exchanged the battlefield for a scene of local daily life. On the right, in the foreground, a group of Arab men play a game to pass the time. Behind them, a man serves a steaming cup of coffee to one of the other patrons of the open-air café in which they sit. In the middle of the composition there is a woman and a scampering child held tightly by the hand. Atop her head is a flat basket filled with citrus fruits, their bright orange rinds dappled by the sun. The daylight that causes this transitory effect has been filtered through a roof of leafy hanging vines; they span the space between the café's columned patio on the right and a raised arcade with horseshoe arches on the left. One of the arches shelters a trio of white robed men. They smoke and talk and enjoy their elevated perch. In the distance, the white city of Algiers is silhouetted against a partly clouded light blue sky. Philippoteaux's agile artistry – an ethnographer at one moment, he is a storyteller in the next – is all the more impressive when

the purpose of his journey is recalled. His position as a journalist of wars and power struggles seems far away from this scene of peace and ease. In this land of contrasts and contradictions, Philippoteaux has caught them all.

The subject of the coffee shop was a common one in Orientalist painting, being favored by such prominent artists as John Frederick Lewis and Jean-Léon Gérôme. In addition to its social role as a site of communal gathering and entertainment and its associations with intellectual conversation, gossip, and debate, coffee shops also provided a physical example of the evolution of the coffee trade. First cultivated and traded on the Arabian Peninsula, coffee was being grown in the Yemeni district by the fifteenth century and, by the nineteenth century, Cairo had grown to prominence as a major distributor of Yemenite beans. Coffee shops were soon to follow. Algeria, the setting of Philippoteaux's picture, was also important in the history of coffee in North Africa – in 1840, occupying French troops were trapped in a fortress by Algerian troops and were reportedly forced to drink cold coffee, or *mazagran* – which ironically became all the rage in Europe after their release.

Henri-Félix Emmanuel Philippoteaux, *Coffee Chop in Algiers*

THE FALCONERS

Henri-Emilien Rousseau (1875–1933)

Signed and dated 'Henri Rousseau 22' (lower left)
Inscribed on the reverse 'Chasseurs au Faucon'
Oil on canvas
28 ¾ x 23 ½ in. (73 x 59.8 cm.)
Painted in 1922

Provenance:
Mr. Chapon (acquired directly from the artist);
Private Collection, France;
Sale: Christie's, Paris, 17 December 2008, lot 30

Though the life of Bedouin horsemen attracted a number of Orientalist painters, few could claim as much familiarity with the subject as Henri-Emilien Rousseau. The son of a noted member of the Ottoman public works administration, Rousseau spent his childhood in Egypt. Perhaps it was this background, together with an avid interest in art, that led him to the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and to the studio of Jean-Léon Gérôme. Though Gérôme's style did not have a lasting impact on the younger artist, his passion for Orientalist subject matter encouraged Rousseau to return to North Africa several times after 1901. Rousseau's most intensive periods of study in that region came between 1920 and 1932, precisely the time that this work was painted. The influence of Rousseau's other great mentor, Eugène Fromentin, is strongly felt in these vigorously painted canvases, but their approach was very different: Committed to the realistic portrayal of Bedouin life, rather than a romanticized vision of it, Rousseau spent long periods in the Rif and Atlas Mountains, befriending *Caids*, or local tribal chiefs, and learning the ways of their nomadic existence. Here, it is the Bedouin's skill at falconry that has attracted Rousseau's brush. The bird's spread wings, the swirling clouds, and the flared nostrils of the prancing horses as they snort, all converge to create an image that seems as dynamic as the falcon as he sets off to fly.

In 1927, Rousseau exhibited 87 of his Moroccan works at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris. The exhibition was a resounding success, and a second, this time at the Exposition Universelle, was held in 1931. It is a testament to the brilliance of this artist that his popularity endured, for by this time in Europe, Orientalism had largely seen its day.

The key to Rousseau's success, at least in part, was his ability to render traditional Orientalist subjects in a progressive and modern way. The artist's use of impasto, or thickly applied paint, creates a sense of energy and vibrancy in his works, and adds dimension to his canvases. Rather than the sweeping swathes of an artist such as Fromentin, moreover, Rousseau's brushstrokes are applied in short bursts of circular

and swirling daubs and loaded lines, which nevertheless cohere to create precise records of his scenes. The result is a painting that is at once impressionistic and ethnographically exact, as if a photograph has been painted over by an artist with a dynamic and loaded brush.

Henri-Emilien Rousseau, *The Falconers*

STREET IN AN ARAB VILLAGE

Henri-Emilien Rousseau (1875–1933)

Signed and dated 'Henri Rousseau 22' (lower left)
Oil on canvas
24 x 32 in. (61 x 81.3 cm.)
Painted in 1922

Provenance:
Mr Fontane du Chatelut (acquired directly from the artist);
Mathaf Gallery, London;
Private Collection, France;
Sale: Christie's, New York, 22 October 2008, lot 31 (as *Le renseignement: rue du village Arabe*)

After his studies at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Rousseau travelled to North Africa in 1901. It was a homecoming of sorts for the artist, having lived several years in Cairo as a child. This time it was Tunisia and Algeria, however, that Rousseau visited and explored. In 1920, he was in Morocco, compiling sketches for future works. Many of these were exhibited in Paris, attracting attention and acclaim; indeed, though his name is not often remembered in Orientalism's canon, Rousseau enjoyed unflagging contemporary fame.

In *Street in an Arab Village*, Rousseau presents an image that is at once iconic and historically precise. Nationalist insurgencies were escalating throughout Morocco and Algeria, and European troops were increasing their numbers in these countries to quell the rising tide. The power of the *Caids*, or local tribal chiefs, was being challenged by the foreign administrators who also sought to hold influence over villages and towns. Adding to the tension was the increasing poverty in the region, due to the repossession of valuable farmland by European settlers intent on making money off the land. The horsemen in this work may be Spahis, soliciting information from the local villagers to relate to nearby troops.

The Spahis were recruited from the indigenous populations of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco to perform policing or garrison duties on behalf of the French. They saw extensive service during the French conquest of Algeria in 1830, and remained a conspicuous presence in French military forces until the end of the Algerian war in 1862. Their uniforms typically consisted of red and blue 'tenue orientale' with white *burnous*, but this remained somewhat inconsistent over the decades.

These topical references do not diminish the enduring power of the scene. Rousseau's four horsemen sit astride their mounts like classical statuary, with all the weight and gravity of white carved stone. The man they address, stoic in his brown *burnous* and with a child at his side, is equally monumental, in demeanor

if not size. The whitewashed walls of the village provide a neutral backdrop for this group that merges with the sky. The swirling brushstrokes that comprise them add a transient effect; this is countered by the palette that binds the details of the composition firmly to the barren earth.

The presence of French artists in North Africa in the nineteenth century was fraught with political complexities. In 1830, France had solidified its presence in the region with the invasion of Algeria, a country they occupied until 1962. Orientalist images have consequently been interpreted as the visual expression of imperialism, with biases that were either consciously or unconsciously imparted into art. The danger of such sweeping generalizations, however, is the loss of individual artists and their works, and the misunderstanding of what information Orientalist paintings might actually reveal. In the case of Rousseau's *Street in an Arab Village*, for example, we see an artist's endeavor to unite a vigorous and innovative new technique and a sensitive portrayal of Arab daily life, in a single, conceptually progressive work.

Henri-Emilien Rousseau, *Street in an Arab Village*

AN EGYPTIAN GIRL PREPARING FOR A BATH

Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger (1814–1893)

Signed and dated 'H. Schlesinger 1869' (lower center)
Oil on canvas
42 ¼ x 35 ½ in. (117.5 x 90 cm.)
Painted in 1869

Provenance:
Sale: Davison Sons, Newcastle, 9 December 1891;
Private Collection, Canada;
Sale: Sotheby's, London, 27 June 2007, lot 164

Henri Schlesinger, born in Frankfurt and later naturalized as a French citizen, remains best known for his portraits and genre subjects. He studied at the Viennese Academy and exhibited to great acclaim at the Paris Salon throughout the 1840s. Schlesinger was a leading member of the Société des Artistes Français and received the prestigious *Légion d'honneur* from the French government.

The sensual appeal of the present work – heightened by the allusion to bathing in the title and the woman's languorous gaze – aligns it with imagined images of the harem, rather than with Orientalism's more ethnographic works of art. The crumbling columns in the background evoke classical architecture, rather than pharaonic ruins, and the toga-like dress of the woman has little relation to local costume, ancient or more recent. The popularity of such fantastical scenes was at its height in France in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, precisely when Schlesinger would have produced this striking work.

There are layers to Schlesinger's painting, however, that this simple interpretation does not address. In the same year that it was completed, celebrations surrounding the opening of the Suez Canal were taking place in Egypt. (The Canal had been built to facilitate shipping between Europe and Asia by eliminating the need to circumnavigate Africa.) Though the connection may be merely one of dates, the possibility of an allegorical meaning in Schlesinger's work is strong: the Egyptian woman's "unveiling" is occurring at the same time as the opening of the Canal, suggesting that they may be seen as one.

The bold frontal view of the woman, her body pressed close to the picture plane, is also notable in a broader context, this time art historical. Throughout the 1860s, Pre-Raphaelite imagery was circulating in Britain and Europe, which Schlesinger may have known through prints or one of the international exhibitions that were increasingly common in Paris at the time. The works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Holman Hunt are far different from this painting, but the affinity between Schlesinger's strong Egyptian woman and the female protagonists of these artists is more than merely graphic; in looking at these images, a shared philosophy about women's latent power is spoken loud and clear.

Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger, *An Egyptian Girl Preparing For A Bath*

PORTRAIT OF A MAN

José Silbert (1862–1935)

Signed 'JOSÉ SILBERT.' (upper right)
Oil on canvas
12 ¾ x 9 ¾ in. (32.4 x 24.7 cm.)

Provenance:
Anonymous sale, Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 10 June 1997, lot 101

Despite strong connections to France – he was born in Aix-en-Provence, studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and made his home in Marseilles – José Silbert traveled frequently throughout his life. Excursions to Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain resulted in a vast array of portrait and landscape paintings, inspired by the peoples and places he encountered. Many of these were exhibited between 1908 and 1933 at the annual Paris Salon.

The present work depicts a man from the Maghreb, a region of northwest Africa principally comprising Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. In its attention to physiognomy and detail – note especially the careful rendering of the wrinkles around the man's eyes and the twisted, coarse hairs of his salt-and-pepper beard – it exhibits the profound sincerity of this artist, and his concern to individualize even the humblest of figurative subjects. The over-the-shoulder glance of the sitter, however, complicates such a simple interpretation of intent: it positions Silbert's painting in the grand tradition of European Baroque portraiture, connoting both the artist's ambitions and the emphatic confidence of the Maghrebi man.

The dramatic posture of this bust-length figure is accentuated by his distinctive clothing: the man wears a simple woollen *burnous*, or one-piece hooded robe, muted in color and casually arranged, and a conical, bright crimson felt cap, adorned with a black tassel. The triangular shape of this striking accessory accentuates the sharp angularity of his narrow face and beard, creating a strong diagonal across the surface of the canvas.

In addition to acting as examples of Silbert's ethnographic precision – a hallmark of his style - these articles of clothing may be subtle allusions to the political realities of the time. By the end of the nineteenth century, the red fez had become the recognized headgear of a 'modernized' Arab world and the *burnous* had become associated with the distinctive uniform of the Spahis, indigenous cavalry soldiers recruited by occupying French forces. In this colonial context, the sober, almost indignant, expression of the Maghrebi man takes on a new and poignant meaning, and Silbert's own nationality becomes all the more important to unraveling the many layers of his art.

José Silbert, *Portrait of a Man*

THE SPINNER OF SOUTHERN ALGERIA

Jules Taupin (1863–1932)

Signed 'J. Taupin' (upper left)
Oil on canvas
18 x 15 in. (45.7 x 38 cm.)

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 12 June 1995, lot 231

Exhibited:
Paris, Gallery Gary-Roche, *Les Orientalistes*, November–December 1992, no. 15

Though less well known than his Orientalist colleague Étienne Dinet, Jules Taupin also focused on the Berber women of Bou Saâda in Algiers. In the present work, *The Spinner of Southern Algeria*, a young Arab woman holds the tools of her trade and looks outward with an open smile. Her ornate jewellery and the clasp on her shawl are precisely painted and her tattoos and makeup are recorded with an ethnographer's care. Far from dry or scientific, however, Taupin merges this exactitude with brilliant color and an instinctive understanding of abstract form: Passages of bright red cross the canvas and lead the eye from top to bottom, while swathes of cream and beige bring the focus back to center. The vigor of this paint, and the dynamic mode of looking that it compels, serves to activate the subject, rendering her a vital and emotive human being, as well as a powerful graphic image in Taupin's oeuvre.

The women of Algeria, and Bou Saâda in particular, were renowned for their weaving, and were a favorite subject among painters in the nineteenth century. (Taupin himself would create additional works with this theme.) Among the best-known of these artists was the American Frederick Arthur Bridgman, who immortalized the North African weaver in images and in text. In his 1890 memoir, *Winters in Algeria*, Bridgman wrote the following, highly descriptive account:

> [O]ur guide took us to an interesting interior to see women weaving carpets, ornaments *haïks*, blankets, and horse-coverings. This manufacture was one of the principal industries of the locality, for I doubt whether the wheat and date crops were abundant enough to promote much commercial enterprise. All these villages seemed to consume their own scanty produce. The woven articles, however, were beautifully made, and sold at good prices. At an upright loom were seated two women working in the most primitive manner possible; while one of them unwound the skeins of wool and prepared them for convenience, the other woman passed the end of the thread through the upright strings of the woof, which were spread apart by a long and movable bamboo. She did not pass it with a shuttle, which goes like lightning in our modern inventions, but with her fingers; and when she had passed the thread several times, leaving it loose instead of pulling it through

> tightly, a large iron comb was used to pack it down. This loose placing of the thread accounts for the thickness and irregularity which we notice in all Eastern rugs; whereas the machine-made imitations of Oriental carpets look thin, papery, and poor in substance (p. 253).

These words provide a context for this subject and a better understanding of one facet of the kaleidoscopic world Taupin encountered in Algiers, and in which *The Spinner of Southern Algeria* exuberantly lived.

Jules Taupin, *The Spinner of Southern Algeria*

THE BASHI-BAZOUK

Emile Vernet-Lecomte (1821–1900)

Signed and dated 'Emile Lecomte 1862' (lower left)
Oil on canvas
18 x 15 in. (45.7 x 38 cm.)
Painted in 1862

Provenance:
Sale: Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 25 June 1996, lot 89

The son of the military painter Hippolyte Lecomte and the nephew of the famous painter Horace Vernet, Emile Vernet-Lecomte began his artistic training at an early age. In 1843, he began showing his paintings at the Paris Salon. The subjects of these works included society portraits, religious paintings, and paintings of North Africa and the Middle East. Vernet-Lecomte was particularly well known for his colorful portraits of Syrian, Egyptian, and Berber women, which were painted with an ethnographer's eye for detail. In 1861, Vernet-Lecomte was sent on an expedition to Damascus, as part of France's efforts to protect the Maronites. His experiences during this trip inspired his 1863 Salon submission, *Expédition de Syrie*, as well as the *The Bashi-Bazouk*.

The present painting depicts a seated *bashi-bazouk* soldier, admiring what appears to be the spoils of his latest raid. Though the moment is one of quiet, and the violence of the day has passed, dead figures in the background act as a reminder of the bloody battle that has been waged.

The soldier's eclectic attire identifies him as a member of that notorious group of renegade Ottoman mercenaries, the *bashi-bazouks* (literally, their name means 'headless' or 'without rule'), a favorite subject in nineteenth-century literature and art, and his sash bristles with weaponry encrusted in semi-precious stones. His face is similarly remarkable, featuring a long thick moustache and an aquiline nose. It is, in fact, the same countenance that appears in many of Jean-Léon Gérôme's works, in various poses and contexts.

The sharing of a model that this coincidence suggests begins to trace a connection between Gérôme and Vernet-Lecomte that is more complicated than it once seemed. Gérôme's enduring interest in the figure of the *bashi-bazouk* was often assumed to have influenced his students and colleagues, including Vernet-Lecomte. However, the date of this work is far earlier than his mentor's celebrated images, raising questions about the influence of Vernet-Lecomte on Gérôme, and encouraging a reevaluation of the importance of his art.

Emile Vernet-Lecomte, *The Bashi-Bazouk*

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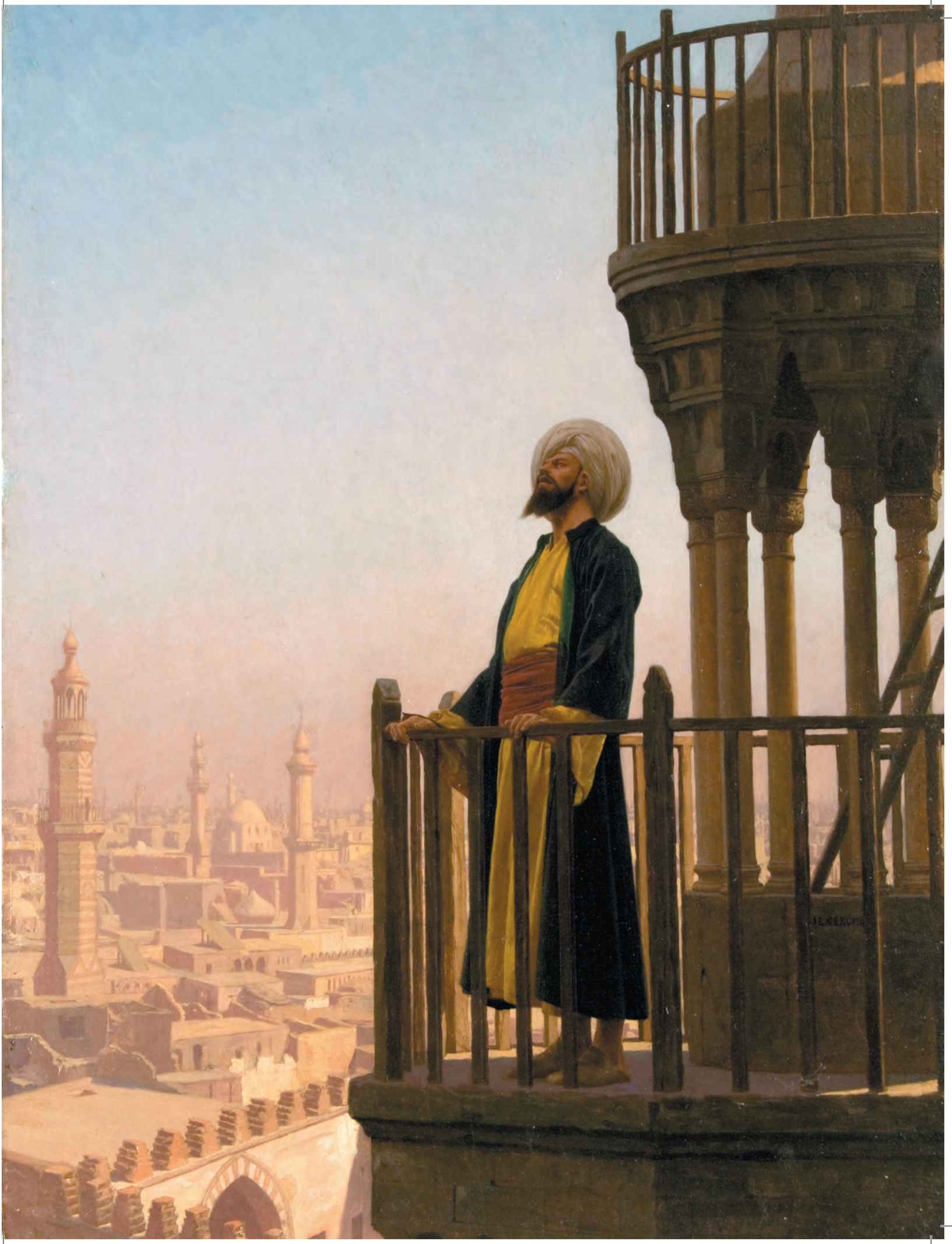
Opposite: Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Muezzin*




A. Clément
1872

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Emily M. Weeks received her Ph.D. from the Department of the History of Art at Yale University in December 2004. Currently she is an independent art historian and consultant for museums, academic institutions, auction houses, and private collectors in America, Britain, Europe, and the Middle East. She also serves as Principal Lecturer in the Histories of Art at the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts in Old Lyme, Connecticut. Dr. Weeks's areas of expertise include Orientalism and nineteenth-century British and European visual culture; she is also the acknowledged expert on the artist Jean-Léon Gérôme and the leading authority on Ludwig Deutsch. Dr. Weeks has lectured widely on these topics and artists, both in the United States and internationally, and has acted as a consultant and guest lecturer for universities, museums, and other academic and commercial venues, as well as for the BBC. Dr. Weeks has organized and contributed to a number of critically acclaimed exhibitions, including *The Lure of the East: British Orientalist Painting, 1830–1925* (2008–2009; organized by Tate Britain). Her extensive list of publications includes contributions to scholarly anthologies, academic and popular journals, books on Orientalist art, numerous exhibition and auction catalogues, book and exhibition reviews, and content for museum and institutional websites. Dr. Weeks's first book, *Cultures Crossed: John Frederick Lewis (1804–1876) and the Art of Orientalism*, was published by Yale University Press in 2014. Books on Orientalist picture frames, the relationship between amateur photography and Orientalist art, the influence of artist's tools and materials on their craft, a critical catalogue featuring Ludwig Deutsch's Egyptian and Orientalist works, and a revised print and digital catalogue raisonné for Jean-Léon Gérôme are in progress.

Opposite: Félix Auguste Clément, *The Water Carrier*

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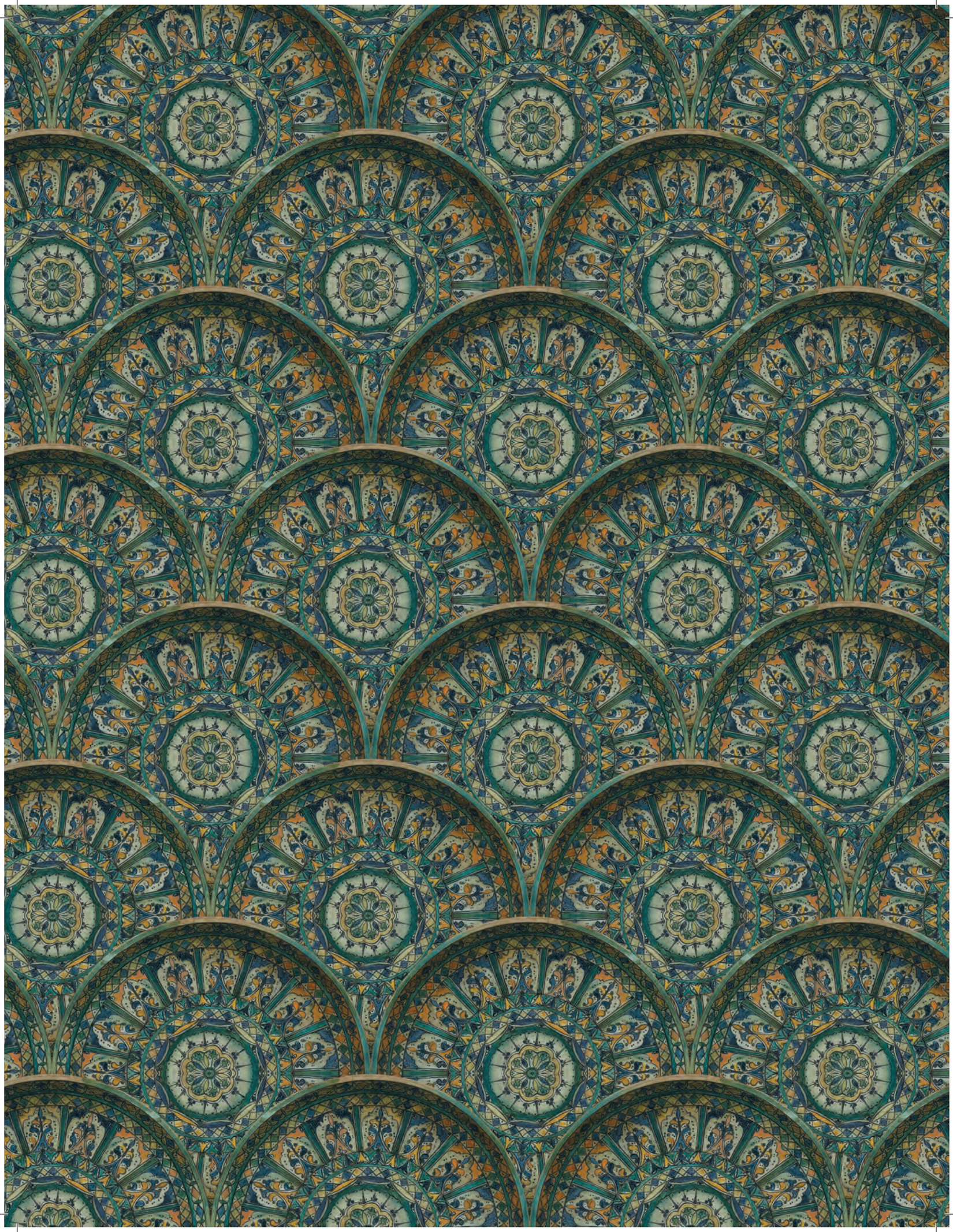
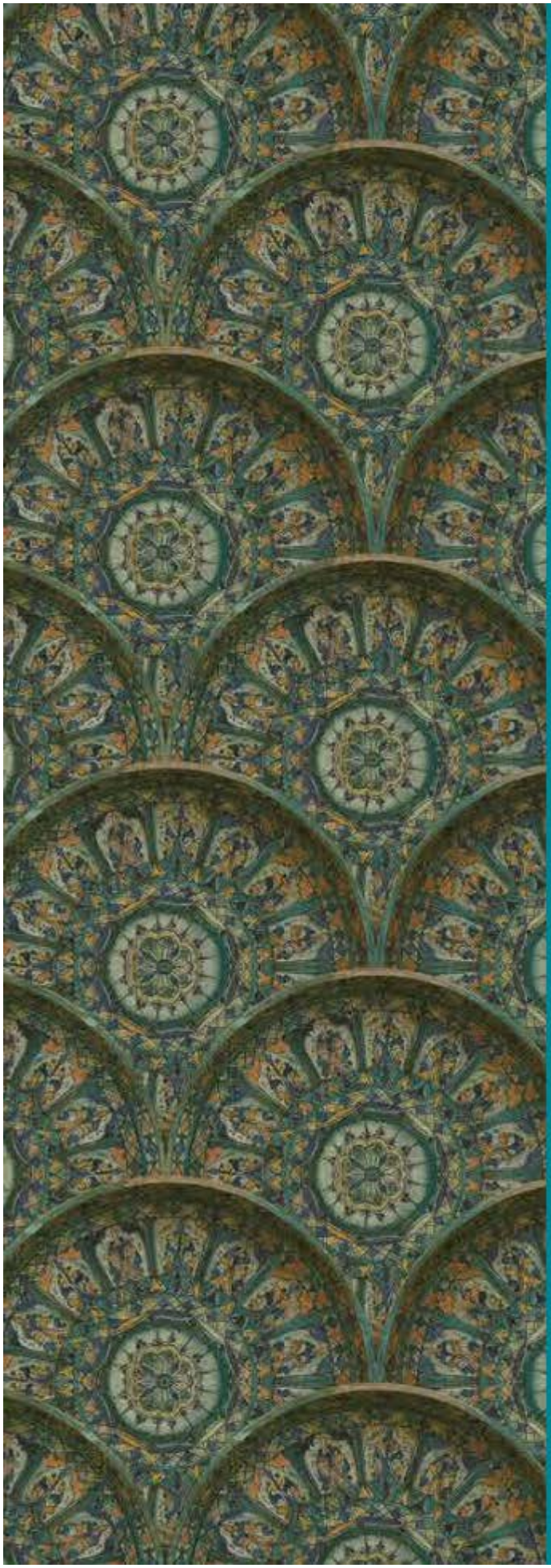
Opposite: Jean-Léon Gérome, *Arnaut of Cairo*


J.L. GEROME.





Mr. Shafik Gabr is a renowned leader in international business, innovation, investment and one of the world's premier collectors of Orientalist art, and an accomplished philanthropist.

During his career, Gabr established over 25 companies plus three investment holding companies including ARTOC Group for Investment and Development which, established in 1971, is a multidisciplined investment holding company with businesses in infrastructure, automotive, engineering, construction and real estate, over the past three years focusing on investment in technology and artificial intelligence.

Gabr is the Chairman and a founding member of Egypt's International Economic Forum, member of the International Business Council of the World Economic Forum, Board Member of Stanhope Capital, International Chairman of the Sadat Congressional Gold Medal Committee and Member of the Parliamentary Intelligence Security Forum. Gabr is Member of the Metropolitan Museum's International Council and serves on the Advisory Board of the Center for Financial Stability, Advisory Board of The Middle East Institute and the Global Advisory Council of the Mayo Clinic. Gabr was a founder of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt in 1982, serving as its first Egyptian President from 1995 until 1997.

Among Mr Gabr's numerous awards are the Foreign Policy Association's award for Corporate Responsibility (2009), the Meridian Global Citizen Award (2014), the Middle East Institute's Visionary Award (2014), the American University in Cairo's Global Impact Award (2015), the College of Mount Saint Vincent's Saint Vincent de Paul Award (2016), the Drew University's Peacebuilder Award (2016), and the Policy Direction and Leadership Award from the London Center for Policy Research (2017).

Through the Shafik Gabr Social Development Foundation, Mr. Gabr is helping to improve education and health throughout his native Egypt. In 2012 Mr. Gabr established in the US the Shafik Gabr Foundation which launched in November 2012 the East-West: The Art of Dialogue initiative (see www. eastwestdialogue. org) promoting exchanges between the US and Egypt with the purpose of cultural dialogue and building bridges of understanding.

Mr. Gabr holds a BA in Economics and Management from the American University in Cairo and an MA in Economics from the University of London.

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