



Attributed To Frédérique O'connell - Presumed Portrait Of Anne Juliette Ducos



1 300 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 27 cm

Height : 32 cm

Description

Attributed to Frédérique O'CONNELL
(Potsdam, 1822 - Neuilly-sur-Marne, 1885)
Presumed portrait of Anne Juliette Ducos
1853.

Oil on canvas.

H: 32 ; W: 27 cm.

Exhibition: Probably Salon des Artistes Vivants,
Paris, 1853, no. 889: "Étude de femme".

Shortly before the 1853 Salon, a journalist from
La Revue des Beaux-Arts visited O'Connell's
studio and asked about the paintings she intended
for the forthcoming exhibition:

"The last exhibitions in Brussels and Paris were,
for Mrs. O'Connell, favorable opportunities to
perform; today this lady has taken her place

Dealer

Galerie Magdeleine

Paintings

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12 rue des Beaux-Arts

Paris 75006

among the masters [...]. A respectable number of full-length and bust portraits are on display, waiting only for the time to leave the Avenue Frochot for the definitive Exhibition venue. Among these portraits, treated with the energy and great style of the masters of the 16th and 17th centuries, stand out those of M. le comte de Persigny, M. de Romieu and M. Arsène Houssaye, as well as those of Mme Ducos, wife of the Minister of the Navy, and Mlle Rachel, tragically dressed in black velvet"[1].

At the Salon of 1853, O'Connell finally exhibited the portraits of Mlle Rachel and M. Romieu, as well as a Study of a Woman that seems to relate to the Portrait of Madame Ducos (1819-1898) cited in the *Revue des Beaux- Arts* article. The portrait's small format and particularly rapid, candid execution could potentially have prompted the artist to choose the title *Étude*. It may also have been intended to anonymize the sitter, as Madame Ducos's husband, Théodore Ducos, was a politician who served as Minister of Marine and Colonies from 1851. This is not the first time O'Connell has chosen to exhibit a portrait under the title of *Étude*. His *Étude de femme d'après nature* exhibited at the Salon d'Anvers in 1849 turned out to be the Portrait d'Amélie Turlot.

It is also interesting to note that the portraits of Mesdames Turlot and Ducos were conceived and executed according to the same scheme, i.e. as faux-ovals whose corners are painted while marking a separation from the central representation. The ebullient pictorial style used in the portrait of Madame Ducos was noted by the critics: "His *Étude de Femme* is, on the contrary, despite the abuse of chalky tones and the phantasmagoria of light, a happy and striking effigy[2]".

This highly personal style, characterized by the grainy treatment of the flesh and the firm touches of material forming the costume, remains a leitmotif in O'Connell's work. The portrait of

Madame Ducos reveals numerous details echoing earlier works by the artist. For example, the white lace on Madame Ducos's bust can also be seen in the portrait of Peter the Great; the graphic accents on her veil are equally visible in the self-portrait of 1851; and the ethereal background can be compared with both this self-portrait and the portrait of Catherine II of Russia.

Illustrations

Portrait of Amélie Turlot; Antwerp, Salon de 1849; oil on canvas; H: 64, L: 54 cm; Brussels, Musée royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (Inv. 3731).

Portrait of Rachel; Salon de 1853; oil on canvas; H: 88, L: 66 cm; Paris, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire du Judaïsme.

Portrait of Catherine II of Russia; Salon, 1851; oil on canvas; H: 92.5, L: 73.5 cm; Berlin, Alte Nationalgalerie (Inv. A I 305).

Portrait of Peter the Great; Salon, 1851; oil on canvas; H: 73, L: 58.5 cm; private collection.

Self-portrait; Salon, 1851; oil on canvas; H: 88, W: 65 cm; private collection.

[1] Georges Guénot, "Quelques mots sur le prochain Salon de Paris" in *Revue des Beaux-Arts*, 23e année, T. IV, Paris, 1853, p. 31.

[2] *Revue de Paris*, July 1, 1853, Paris, Bureaux de la Revue de Paris, 1853, p. 94.