

Press Kit

Madrid, May 27, 2024,

An Edgar Degas pastel reappears



Edgar Degas (1834-1917)

Éloge du Maquillage

Pastel on card (48 x 62,5 cm)

Signed on bottom right : Degas

Presented for the first time to the public since the beginning of the 1950s, this pastel piece belonging to a private Catalan collection is included in Michel Schulman's digital catalogue of the artist's works (<https://www.degas-catalogue.com/fr/>). It is one of the rare works by Degas preserved in Spain. Three are at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, and one at the Montserrat Museum. The others are located in private collections; their attribution to Degas nevertheless needs to be studied.

Acquisition by a Spanish painter, a contemporary of Degas



Julián Bastinos, *UN RECUERDO - DESFILE DE TIPOS EXTRANJEROS DE LA EXPOSICION DE 1878* (Paris, 1878). La Academia, Año III, Tomo V.

Julián Bastinos (1852-1918) was the son of an important Barcelona publisher. He was born an artist: at nine years old, he is said to have escaped from the house at night to draw the moonlight in the city's Plaça Reial. Having taken lessons from the painter Ramón Puiggari in 1872, he left Catalonia for Paris, where he entered the workshop of the brothers Samuel and Daniel Urrabieta Virginie. The latter is a renowned illustrator. Integrated into Parisian artistic life, Julián Bastinos worked with his brother Antonio in the family publishing house and provided numerous illustrations for the works he published. He also became a porcelain decorator and collaborated with the Manufacture de Sèvres

Edgar Degas frequented the colony of Spanish artists – we know, for example, that he served as a mentor to a painter from Bilbao, Adolfo Guiard – and he knew well the man of letters Champfleury, who was appointed curator of the collections of the Sèvres Manufacture in 1872. He would run it from 1887, placing orders in particular with Bastinos for Parisian luxury factories. It is, therefore, not surprising that the latter, as proven by a letter, was able to be in contact with Degas and acquire one of his pastel pieces. During the last decade of the century, Julián Bastinos lived between Barcelona and Paris. Tensions with his older brother appeared within the family publishing house and Julián left the position he held there in Barcelona to settle in Egypt at the beginning of the 20th century. He worked at the International Court in Cairo until his death in 1918.

The extraordinary adventures of the pastel in the 20th century

Bastinos then took the pastel with him to Egypt, as evidenced by the label on the framing in Alexandria, which appears on the back.



The framer's label

On September 13, 1940, the work was acquired by Juan Llonch Salas, president of Sabadell Bank and president of the Academy of Fine Arts of Sabadell (Barcelona). The pastel remained in this family by inheritance for several decades before its acquisition by its current owner.

Another label on the back indicates that it was shown to the public for a week around the Christmas holidays in 1952 as part of a group exhibition bringing together works by Fortuny, Picasso, Degas, Van Gogh and notably Renoir. It was the last public appearance of the pastel piece until today.

Comparisons, analysis, and expertise

At the request of its owner, Michel Schulman, author of Edgar Degas's digital catalogue, appraised the 'Éloge du Maquillage' pastel.

'Éloge du Maquillage' is a brothel scene, an important theme in the work of Degas, who drew many of his nude representations from these places with which he was familiar. He produced pastels but also monotypes, most of which were found in his studio upon his death in 1917. However, the Museum of Fine Arts of Canada (Ottawa) keeps a monotype, 'Le Client sérieux', where we see a young making propositions to a client of the brothel. Obviously, Degas took two characters from this monotype to create 'Éloge du Maquillage.'



Edgar Degas
Le Client sérieux



Éloge du Maquillage



Le Client sérieux (détail)
Monotype sur papier vélin -21 x 15,9 cm
Ottawa, Museum of Fine Arts of Canada

In the pastel, he further characterizes the protagonists' faces, dresses them, and shows the main character powdering herself in front of the mirror with the scrolled border that appears in the monotype.

If the two young women sport red hair, a colour frequently found in the artist's work, the profile of the one on the right strongly resembles that of the café-concert singer Thérésa that Degas represented in 'La Chanson du chien.'



Edgar Degas
Au café-concert ou La Chanson du chien (détail)
Pastel et gouache sur monotype sur papier
Vers 1876-1877
Perenchio Foundation, Los Angeles

In addition to the palette, other elements place 'Éloge du Maquillage' in Degas' body of work: the features, the treatment of the hand and the signature, studied by Michel Schulman, are among them.

Technical and pigment analyses carried out in Madrid in July 2023 confirm the work's dating and signature were in the second half of the 19th century.

This information is taken from the article 'Éloge du Maquillage' in Degas' digital catalogue online:
<https://www.degas-catalogue.com/fr/>

Éloge du Maquillage



Image available for the press

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