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**JOURNAL** 55

VOLUME 55 | 2020

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# Contents

## ARTICLES

Buddhism and Silk: Reassessing a Painted Banner from  
Medieval Central Asia in The Met

MICHELLE C. WANG, XIN WEN, SUSAN WHITFIELD, 8

Joris Hoefnagel's Insects

MARJORIE SHELLEY, 26

John Haberle's *A Bachelor's Drawer*:  
Censorship, Geologic Time, and Truth

AMY WERBEL, 43

"The Toughest, Meanest Art I Was Making":  
Edward Ruscha's Books

DOUG EKLUND, 60

An Ode to James Van Der Zee: Lorna Simpson's *9 Props*

EMILIE BOONE, 76

## RESEARCH NOTES

Domesticated Partners: A New Analysis of a Sumerian Vessel

BAILEY E. BARNARD, 91

Radiance and the Power of Erasure in an Obsidian Lamaštu Amulet

MIRIAM SAID, 100

Ernst Herzfeld, Joseph Upton, and the Artaxerxes *Phialai*

HENRY P. COLBURN, 112

New Insights into an Old Collection: Ptolemaic Pottery  
from Hibis (Kharga Oasis)

JAMES C. R. GILL, 118

*A Bat and Two Ears* and Jusepe de Ribera's Triumphant Virtue

VIVIANA FARINA, 125

Carmontelle's Telltale Marks and Materials

MARGOT BERNSTEIN, 135

The Met's German Keyed Guitar

DANIEL WHEELDON, 145

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Founded in 1968, the *Metropolitan Museum Journal* is a blind, peer-reviewed scholarly journal published annually that features original research on the history, interpretation, conservation, and scientific examination of works of art in the Museum's collection. Its range encompasses the diversity of artistic practice from antiquity to the present day. The *Journal* encourages contributions offering critical and innovative approaches that will further our understanding of works of art.

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### ABBREVIATIONS

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
MMAB *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*  
MMJ *Metropolitan Museum Journal*

*Height precedes width and then depth in dimensions cited.*

METROPOLITAN  
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**JOURNAL** 55



# Carmontelle's Telltale Marks and Materials

**MARGOT BERNSTEIN**

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Drawings and Prints boasts three exemplary portraits by the French amateur draftsman Louis Carrogis, called Carmontelle (1717–1806), one of which depicts Jean-Pierre de Bougainville (1722–1763) (fig. 1). Bougainville joined the ranks of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in 1745 and was appointed *secrétaire perpétuel* in 1754, the same year that he was elected to the Académie Française, with the support of Madame de Pompadour.<sup>1</sup> A brimming bookcase, a lectern on which an open book is propped, and a *bureau plat* topped with an inkstand and a feather pen signal the sitter's erudition.

Carmontelle drew at least 750 likenesses on paper about the time of his 1759–85 tenure at the Orléans

fig. 1 Louis Carrogis, called Carmontelle (French, 1717–1806). *Jean-Pierre de Bougainville*, ca. 1760. Red and black chalk, watercolor, and graphite on laid paper, 11<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in. (30 × 19 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 2004 (2004.475.6)

court, where his talents as a *lecteur* to young Louis-Philippe-Joseph d'Orléans (then the Duc de Chartres), as an author of proverbs and plays, and a coordinator of entertainments rendered him an invaluable fixture.<sup>2</sup> Like the Bougainville portrait, Carmontelle's compositions are, with few exceptions, full-length and in profile. Most of these works are traditionally described as having been included in the artist's posthumous sale, but the short pamphlet that accompanied the sale notes that the drawings were actually withheld in the hope that they could be added to the Bibliothèque Impériale's robust and already renowned collection of 25,000 to 35,000 engraved portraits.<sup>3</sup> When this transfer proved unsuccessful, Carmontelle's friend Richard

de Lédans borrowed funds to buy the portraits and attempted to find the entire group an alternative home. When this plan also failed, Lédans began to sell off the works as friends and relatives of the sitters came to claim them. In 1807, after dispensing with numerous sheets, Lédans made a manuscript list of the portraits still in his possession.<sup>4</sup>

When Lédans died in 1816, Pierre de La Mésangère bought the remaining portraits.<sup>5</sup> He also acquired Lédans's 1807 manuscript list and used it to inscribe sitters' names on the portraits' paper mounts.<sup>6</sup> La Mésangère's handwriting was later authenticated by François-Anatole Gruyer, a former curator at the Musée Condé at the Château de Chantilly, which still houses nearly five hundred Carmontelle sheets. In his 1902 book, *Chantilly: Les portraits de Carmontelle*, Gruyer enthusiastically affirmed that "with the help of Lédans's manuscript, [La Mésangère] handwrote the names of the people represented at the bottom of these portraits. We are assured of this through comparison of these inscriptions with diverse autograph documents by La Mésangère."<sup>7</sup> Gruyer's pride in La Mésangère's previous ownership of most of the Musée Condé's Carmontelle drawings can be attributed to the high esteem in which the latter was held.<sup>8</sup> Clear visual parallels between the single-figure, full-length fashion plates that illustrate the *Journal des dames et des modes* (the publication for which La Mésangère is perhaps best known) and Carmontelle's portraits help to explain La Mésangère's interest in, and purchase of, Carmontelle's drawings of eighteenth-century society's celebrities and elites.

Significantly, an inscription on the verso of the Metropolitan Museum's Bougainville portrait matches the handwriting in Lédans's entry for this sitter in his 1807 manuscript—a fact that has heretofore gone unnoticed.<sup>9</sup> Thanks to this new discovery, the inscription may now be used to affirm the drawing's authenticity and its early provenance. In addition, the inscription on the bottom part of the green border that surrounds the Bougainville portrait accords precisely with La Mésangère's inscriptions on the mounts found on hundreds of Carmontelle sheets at the Musée Condé, thus securing the Met portrait's provenance at least through Lédans's death in 1816.

The techniques used in the Bougainville portrait are also consistent with those routinely employed by Carmontelle. In fact, all the authentic portraits by Carmontelle at the Musée Condé share certain artistic practices.<sup>10</sup> Executed in red and black chalk, graphite, and watercolor on laid paper, Carmontelle's portrait of Bougainville is typical of the artist's 1760s work.





fig. 2 Carmontelle. *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon*, ca. 1764–70 or later. Red, black, and white chalk and watercolor on laid paper, 12¼ × 7½ in. (31 × 19 cm). Musée Condé, Château de Chantilly (CAR 231)

fig. 3 After Carmontelle. *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon*, late 18th–early 19th century. Pencil(?), black and red chalk, and watercolor with white chalk(?) highlights on wove paper, 12¾ × 8⅞ in. (31 × 21.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.580)

By that time, he no longer worked exclusively in *trois-crayons* (a technique using three colored chalks) and had begun to incorporate watercolor. At first, the artist carefully applied color within his preliminary chalk outlines. By the 1780s, however, Carmontelle used watercolor freely and abundantly, so much so that his chalk lines became increasingly overpowered (and often overpainted).<sup>11</sup>

Without fail, Carmontelle began his portraits with red chalk (also known as “sanguine” because it resembles *sang*—French for “blood”), which he used to convey the color of Caucasian flesh.<sup>12</sup> Appropriately, the contours of sitters’ faces, arms, and hands are executed exclusively in this medium. Carmontelle also routinely outlined the objects and architectural elements that were part of his initial conception of a composition in red chalk before going over these preliminary contours with black chalk or watercolor (depending upon the

color of the object in question). Horizontally oriented red chalk lines, now barely visible beneath the gilded molding on the rightmost corner of Bougainville’s *bureau plat*, indicate an early, discarded idea for that part of the drawing, while the desk, outlined in black chalk, seems to be something of an afterthought.

Carmontelle consistently used materials well suited to describing the physical qualities of objects he portrayed, and his application varied to accord with the play of light on different surfaces. The artist’s meticulous rendering of characteristic details in his surroundings demonstrates an Enlightenment respect for empirical knowledge. To describe objects made of brown wood, for example, Carmontelle invariably used red chalk outlines. Bougainville’s armchair and lectern, which have red chalk outlines that remain visible, demonstrate this practice. The artist took a similar approach when drawing the contours of the likely

fig. 4 Carmontelle. *Madame de Boufflers and Thérèse*, ca. 1768. Red, black, and white chalk and watercolor on laid paper, 11¼ × 6⅞ in. (30 × 17.5 cm). Musée Condé, Château de Chantilly (CAR 221)

fig. 5 After Carmontelle. *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse*, late 18th–early 19th century. Pencil(?), black and red chalk, and watercolor with white chalk(?) highlights on wove paper, 12 × 8 in. (30.5 × 20.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.579)

limestone buildings that are often found in the backgrounds of his portraits. The quoined edges of the structure at right in Carmontelle's portrait of Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon (Musée Condé, Chantilly; fig. 2) is a case in point.<sup>13</sup> Carmontelle also systematically used red chalk outlines to describe gilding, with the chalk's tonality echoing both the surface glow of gold and hints of red bole beneath. The gilded picture and mirror frames and the firedogs in the Bougainville portrait are fine examples. Indeed, Carmontelle's attentiveness to the color and reflectivity of materials ranging from gold to wood to flesh to stone is as much a hallmark of his portraits as is the profile format for which he is perhaps best known.

Stéphanie-Félicité du Crest de Saint-Aubin, comtesse de Genlis, an intimate friend of the Orléans family who also knew Carmontelle, wrote that the artist retained all his original portraits, but occasionally made

replica copies for sitters who requested them.<sup>14</sup> This practice would seem to explain how the Metropolitan Museum's versions (both part of the Robert Lehman Collection) of *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon* (fig. 3) and *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse* (fig. 5) came to be made. Both of these sheets replicate drawings with La Mésangère-inscribed mounts at the Musée Condé in Chantilly (figs. 2, 4). But Madame de Genlis's brief account of Carmontelle's autograph replicas does not account for the unsettling differences between the Robert Lehman Collection and Musée Condé sheets, particularly given the consistent choice of materials and established practices evident in Carmontelle's autograph copies in the Musée Condé and a handful of other collections.<sup>15</sup> A standard for comparing original versions and copies made by the artist is offered by *Le Comte de Scey, Colonel du Régiment du Roi-dragon* (Musée Condé, Chantilly; fig. 6) and an autograph replica previously



fig. 6 Carmontelle. *Le Comte de Scey, Colonel du Régiment du Roi-dragon*, ca. 1759. Red and black chalk and watercolor on laid paper, 10½ × 6 in. (26.5 × 15.5 cm). Musée Condé, Château de Chantilly (CAR 194)

fig. 7 Carmontelle. *Le Comte de Scey, Colonel du Régiment du Roi-dragon* (previously referred to as *A Standing Gentleman with a Dog*), ca. 1759 or later. Red and black chalk and watercolor with white heightening on laid paper, 11¼ × 7¼ in. (28.5 × 18 cm). Private collection. Identified here as an autograph replica of fig. 6.

unrecognized as such (fig. 7).<sup>16</sup> The materials and handling in these two drawings are essentially the same.

The most striking difference between the versions of *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse* in the Musée Condé and the Robert Lehman Collection is the color of the upholstery on the chair that supports the sitter at left. In the Chantilly drawing (fig. 4), it is rendered in two shades of blue, whereas the drawing in the Robert Lehman Collection (fig. 5) uses two shades of pink. This discrepancy is not in itself unusual, since Carmontelle routinely changed fabric colors and patterns on clothing and upholstery, as well as background details in his autograph replicas (figs. 6, 7). Carmontelle could have adopted this practice in the Robert Lehman Collection version to reflect changing fashions or seasonal adjustments that people of means made to their upholstery.<sup>17</sup> More plausibly, he may have made these changes to express the individuality of his autograph replicas.

Other differences between the Musée Condé and Robert Lehman Collection *Boufflers and Thérèse* sheets are more difficult to rationalize. Recall that Carmontelle consistently used red chalk to outline sitters' faces as a means of conveying the color of flesh. This technique is seen in the faces of Boufflers and Thérèse in the Musée Condé drawing (figs. 8, 10), but the contours of Boufflers's face in the Robert Lehman Collection version (fig. 9) are considerably thicker and broken. Uncharacteristically, light gray lines have been added where red chalk is absent (on Boufflers's nose, for example). Additionally, the curve of Boufflers's chin in the Robert Lehman Collection version (fig. 9) has been described with red chalk applied over strokes of gray (visible to the left of the red) that were applied clumsily.<sup>18</sup> It is as if the artist recognized that the chin drawn in gray was the wrong shape and then corrected it in red. Also striking are diagonal red lines across



*fig. 8* Detail of Carmontelle. *Madame de Boufflers and Thérèse*, ca. 1768 (fig. 4), showing the delicate red chalk contours of Madame de Boufflers's face and a lack of heavy red chalk lines like those that traverse the same sitter's cheek (and are unsuccessful in expressing volumetric form) in fig. 9.



8

*fig. 9* Detail of After Carmontelle. *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse*, late 18th–early 19th century (fig. 5), showing gray lines along the contours of Boufflers's face, red water-based media applied under the sitter's chin, around and in her ear, and above her upper eyelid, and red chalk lines that traverse her cheek and flatten her face's volumetric form.



9

*fig. 10* Detail of Carmontelle. *Madame de Boufflers and Thérèse*, ca. 1768 (fig. 4), showing the characteristically delicate red chalk contours of Thérèse's face and chest, as well as reserved paper used to convey passages of flesh.



10



11

*fig. 11* Detail of After Carmontelle. *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse*, late 18th–early 19th century (fig. 5), showing gray lines along the contours of Thérèse's face and chest, a lack of red chalk underdrawing in Thérèse's hair ornament, and heavy white heightening on her face, neck, and chest, as well as in her hair.

the right cheek (fig. 9) that ignore the natural contours of the face; these are unusual for Carmontelle, whose lines are normally more sensitive to the curves of facial features.

The most atypical aspects of Boufflers's face on the Robert Lehman Collection sheet (fig. 9), however, are the touches of red watercolor (or red chalk wash) applied under the sitter's chin, around and in her ear, and above her upper eyelid. The same material appears on the right nostril and the contour that demarcates the front of the right cheek. Carmontelle certainly varied his red chalk technique when drawing faces, using both light, continuous lines and broken ones, sometimes leaving areas in reserve to represent highlights, and at other times applying more pressure, or breaking an initial outline or strengthening it with a second application. But the liberal use of red, water-based media (and the heavy-handed manipulation of red chalk) evident in the Robert Lehman Collection version of Boufflers's portrait (fig. 9) has no parallel in Carmontelle's oeuvre.

Similar issues are evident in the Robert Lehman Collection's young Thérèse (fig. 11). The contours of the

girl's face, neck, and exposed upper chest were first outlined in gray, with red chalk lines later used to fill in missing areas and to suggest the play of light and shadow across the subject's face. During this process, the draftsman's hand seems to have strayed, as the red outline of the upper chest deviates noticeably from the gray underdrawing. It is also possible that the artist used red and black chalk (or graphite) to imitate thin red chalk lines in the Musée Condé version (fig. 10) that describe shadows cast across the girl's pale skin by her light-colored dress. Furthermore, red chalk underdrawing visible in Thérèse's hair in the Musée Condé version (fig. 10) is completely absent from the corresponding passage in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing (fig. 11). Additional problems in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing include a heavy-handed application of white chalk or gouache on Thérèse's face, neck, and chest, suggesting the artist's reluctance to use reserved paper to describe skin. Also troubling is the clunky description of a hair ornament that sits atop Thérèse's head in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing (fig. 11), but is delicately woven into her hair on the Musée Condé sheet (fig. 10). Cumulatively, these deviations raise serious questions.

Comparison of the background elements in the Boufflers and Thérèse drawings in the Robert Lehman Collection and the Musée Condé illustrates that the trees in the Robert Lehman Collection version (fig. 5) are summarily drawn with uniform black chalk hatching that fails to describe the effects of light and shadow on leaves and branches that are far more delicately articulated in the Musée Condé version (fig. 4). The shadow falling across the upper part of Boufflers's skirt in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing (fig. 5) likewise lacks subtlety, whereas the corresponding element in the Musée Condé portrait is described with graded black chalk shading that accurately expresses the appearance of light falling on rippled fabric (fig. 4). The black chalk hatching that traverses Boufflers's white scarf and cuffs in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing (figs. 5, 9) is similarly inept and does not convey any sense of the fabric's material quality. Furthermore, red chalk underdrawing evident in these passages on the Musée Condé sheet (figs. 4, 8) is absent in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing—a clear deviation from Carmontelle's normal practice. In fact, black chalk hatching of the kind just described in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing is altogether missing, both from the Musée Condé sheet (fig. 4) and from all of Carmontelle's authentic portraits and autograph replicas (for example, figs. 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7).

fig. 12 Detail of Carmontelle. *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon*, ca. 1764–70 or later (fig. 2), showing delicate red chalk contour lines, as well as a pink hair ribbon that traverses the sitter's tower of hair and appears again both above and below her topmost curl.



fig. 13 Detail of After Carmontelle. *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon*, late 18th–early 19th century (fig. 3), showing heavy white heightening and a gray hair ribbon that only replicates part of the same (pink) feature in fig. 12.

Physiognomic differences compound the issues raised by technical disparities. A cursory comparison of the Musée Condé and Robert Lehman Collection sheets reveals striking differences in the handling of facial features. Delicate contour lines in the Musée Condé portrait convey individuals' distinctive bone structure, a quality lacking in the Robert Lehman Collection version. Indeed, close inspection reveals two purported pairs of sitters who look instead like four unique individuals. Renowned in his own time for his ability to capture a likeness with astonishing accuracy, Carmontelle is unlikely to have executed the Metropolitan Museum's awkward copy of the Chantilly original.<sup>19</sup>

The Robert Lehman Collection portrait of Madame de Coëtlogon (fig. 3) exhibits similar weaknesses. The Musée Condé version (fig. 2) is an outstanding example of Carmontelle's late style, with thin red chalk lines used to establish the contours of the sitter's face, and small, carefully articulated black chalk marks applied to describe leaves on the trees and bushes close to the foreground. Carmontelle also added a substantial amount of watercolor with controlled confidence. The Robert Lehman Collection version of *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon* (fig. 3), by contrast, includes black chalk hatching that traverses various surfaces, irrespective of objects' positions and degrees of illumination. These somewhat haphazardly drawn marks match those described above in the Robert Lehman Collection version of *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse* (fig. 5). And like the faces in the latter, the contours of Madame de Coëtlogon's profile in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing were first executed in black chalk or graphite, then selectively (and heavily-handedly) retraced with red chalk. In fact, the consistent artistic techniques used in both Robert Lehman Collection drawings suggest that these two sheets were made by the same artist—but not by Carmontelle. The significant stylistic differences between the Musée

Condé sheets, which bear witness to Carmontelle's signature light touch, and the Robert Lehman Collection drawings, where heavy lines and weighty forms predominate, likewise signal a discrepancy in authorship.

Madame de Coëtlogon's accessories support this conclusion. In the Musée Condé version (fig. 12), the ribbon tied around the sitter's tower of hair is painted with pink watercolor. It reappears just above a large curl near the top of her hair, then falls behind and below this curl in response to the pull of gravity. In the Robert Lehman Collection version (fig. 13), the ribbon is reduced to a single band, which is outlined with two horizontal black lines that blend into those used to describe strands of hair. The abbreviated treatment of the ribbon in the Robert Lehman Collection drawing indicates either a misunderstanding of, or an inability to accurately copy, the original. This tiny, telling detail underscores the disparity between the Musée Condé and Robert Lehman Collection versions, and points to the hand of a copyist who could not match Carmontelle's ability to respond to and represent the material world. Physiognomic differences in the faces of the two versions (figs. 12, 13) and the heavy-handed application of chalk and watercolor in the Robert Lehman Collection Coëtlogon portrait confirm that only the Musée Condé sheet can safely be ascribed to Carmontelle.

Pieces of paper affixed to works in the Robert Lehman Collection here identified as likely copies after Carmontelle further help to distinguish these *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse* and *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon* drawings from the Musée Condé's authentic versions (and, for that matter, from the Metropolitan Museum's authentic portrait of Jean-Pierre de Bougainville). Examining the Robert Lehman Collection drawings and paper mounts with a fiberoptic light sheet reveals a single set of laid lines, which extends beyond each drawing's edges to include its borders. These laid lines—the tightly packed, linear indentations that are parallel to one another and result from pressing paper against the metal wires of a mold during the paper-making process—suggest that the larger sheets to which both drawings are affixed are made of laid paper. The lack of any additional or overlapping laid lines, either parallel or perpendicular, indicates that the drawings themselves were executed on wove paper, which has no lines, was developed in the mid-eighteenth century, and only became widely available in the early nineteenth century.<sup>20</sup> Authentic Carmontelle portraits, including hundreds at Chantilly and fifteen at the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, are made on laid paper.<sup>21</sup> The discrepancy in the Robert Lehman

Collection drawings can thus be taken as further evidence that they were made by an artist working at a later moment, when wove paper was easier to obtain.<sup>22</sup> Because the provenance of the Robert Lehman Collection drawings can be traced back only as far as 1953, when Robert Lehman purchased them, it is difficult to say more of their author.<sup>23</sup>

Just as inauthentic copies after Carmontelle drawings have been accepted as Carmontelle originals, so, too, have all the handwritten names that appear on the paper borders surrounding Carmontelle's portraits been attributed to Pierre de La Mésangère. But a revealing comparison may be made between the genuine La Mésangère inscription on the bottom of the Bougainville portrait's border (fig. 1) and the authentic inscriptions on the mounts attached to the Musée Condé versions of *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon* and *Madame de Boufflers and Thérèse* (figs. 2, 4), with the inscriptions on the borders surrounding the Robert Lehman Collection drawings (figs. 3, 5). In the latter, the forward-slanted handwriting is an obvious sign that something is amiss. As for individual letters, the shapes of the capital "M" and lowercase "d" are similar on the two Robert Lehman Collection mounts (figs. 3, 5), but different from the same letters on the comparable Musée Condé mounts (figs. 2, 4). Additionally, the crossbar of the lower case "t" in the word *et* on the mount of the Musée Condé *Madame de Boufflers and Thérèse* (fig. 4) extends well beyond this letter, suggesting authorial confidence. On the corresponding Robert Lehman Collection mount, the "t" of *et* has a short crossbar (fig. 5), is less exuberant, and displays a carefulness that accords with the writing on the mount of the Robert Lehman Collection *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon* (fig. 3). Furthermore, the capital letter "C" that begins Madame de Coëtlogon's name on the Musée Condé mount (fig. 2) is typical of La Mésangère's cursive; the "C" on the Robert Lehman Collection Coëtlogon sheet (fig. 3), however, is more rounded and lacks a loop seen in the Musée Condé Coëtlogon inscription, as well as on many other La Mésangère-inscribed mounts in Chantilly. The Robert Lehman Collection mounts' inscriptions diverge enough from the inscriptions on the Musée Condé mounts to suggest that two different people wrote them. They are similar enough, though, to suggest that the author of the

inscriptions on the mounts surrounding the Robert Lehman Collection drawings deliberately imitated La Mésangère's handwriting, as well as his tendency to place titles in the center of a lower border.

The discoveries outlined here have enabled the present author to identify additional inauthentic Carmontelle portraits in public and private collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.<sup>24</sup> In fact, the majority of purported autograph replicas of Carmontelle portraits in international collections are not authentic. Most of these problematic works display technical issues that are consistent with those found in the Robert Lehman Collection drawings, together with suspicious inscriptions attributable to the same hand as the one responsible for the inscriptions on the mounts surrounding the Robert Lehman Collection drawings. We do not know who created the deceptive mounts inscribed with handwriting that mimics La Mésangère's own and affixed them to drawings based on Carmontelle originals. Whoever the nineteenth-century (or later) author of these false inscriptions was, he or she evidently recognized and capitalized on the authority and authenticity that a La Mésangère inscription guaranteed, and presumably banked on continued prioritization of Carmontelle's subjects and familiar, full-length format over his materials and techniques. Whether the maker of these inscribed mounts is also the rather inept artist who drew and colored the Carmontelle portrait copies on wove paper also remains a mystery. What is clear is the fact that the combination successfully deceived many seasoned connoisseurs.

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## NOTES

- 1 Stein 2005, p. 236. Two other chalk, graphite, and watercolor portraits in the Metropolitan Museum are firmly attributed to Carmontelle: *Woman Playing the Violin, Seen from the Front* (2019.138.2) and *Woman Playing the Violin, Seen from the Back* (2019.138.3).
- 2 The number 750 may be an approximation; it originates in Carmontelle sale 1807, pp. [2–3] (unpaginated). My use of the word “likenesses” is deliberate, as there is some confusion as to what the word *portrait* means in the context of Carmontelle’s oeuvre. In eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century French documents surrounding Carmontelle’s portraits, the term *portrait* seems to refer to a person whom Carmontelle depicted (as opposed to a drawing, which can include depictions of more than one person). See Whiteley 2000, pp. 653–54. For a general overview of Carmontelle’s life and work, see Chatel de Brancion 2003.
- 3 Carmontelle sale 1807, pp. [2–3] (unpaginated).
- 4 Lédans 1807, pp. 2r, 2v, and 3. In the context of Lédans’s manuscript, the word *portrait* refers to each person whom Carmontelle depicted. For instance, a single sheet that includes depictions of three people is assigned three Lédans numbers.
- 5 On the unresolved discrepancy between the number of *portraits* in Lédans’s 1816 posthumous sale (152 mentioned under lot 531) and La Mésangère’s 1831 posthumous sale (520 mentioned under lot 304), see Stein 2005, p. 236n2, and Whiteley 2000, pp. 653–54.
- 6 François-Anatole Gruyer (1902, p. ix) presumed that the Lédans manuscript was sold to La Mésangère as part of Lédans’s posthumous sale, but the 1807 manuscript is not explicitly mentioned along with Carmontelle’s portraits in Lédans’s sale catalogue. Annotations in La Mésangère’s hand in Lédans’s manuscript list, however, indicate that Lédans’s 1807 manuscript was definitely in the former’s possession at some point in time. See Lédans sale 1816, p. 77, lot 531, and Lédans 1807, pp. 2r and 2v.
- 7 Gruyer 1902, p. ix: “Ce fut lui aussi qui, en s’aidant du manuscrit de Lédans, écrivit de sa main au bas de ces portraits les noms des personnages représentés. Nous nous en sommes assuré en comparant ces inscriptions à divers autographes de La Mésangère.” Contrary to Gruyer’s statement, most, but not all, of La Mésangère’s inscriptions appear on the bottom part of the paper borders that surround the Musée Condé’s Carmontelle portraits; some instead appear on the mounts’ versos.
- 8 See Baudelaire 1976, p. 684, and Parke 1986, p. 248.
- 9 Lédans 1807, p. 19v. Jean-Pierre de Bougainville is listed as no. 171.
- 10 Most, but not all, of the portraits at the Musée Condé are authentic Carmontelle drawings. For the Musée Condé drawings for which the attributions to Carmontelle are erroneous, see Bernstein 2020, pp. 299–311 and 406–12.
- 11 According to Gruyer (1902, p. ix), the dates on the paper frames surrounding many of Carmontelle’s portraits are estimations that La Mésangère assigned to the sheets, using sitters’ clothing and hairstyles, as well as Lédans’s 1807 manuscript (which only sometimes gives dates for Carmontelle’s portraits) as his guides. As such, they should be regarded with some caution. This explains why the dates provided for figs. 1, 4, and 6 are preceded by “ca.,” even though La Mésangère inscribed a year on each of these drawings’ mounts.
- 12 Carmontelle also used red chalk outlines when describing the faces of individuals from the African diaspora, the latter of whom he drew very infrequently. These red chalk lines are often barely perceptible under the black chalk lines and shading that Carmontelle also used to convey dark skin. This is true of the four Carmontelle portraits of individuals from the African diaspora that I have examined in person; three are at the Musée Condé in Chantilly and one is in the collection of the Musée Carnavalet in Paris. I am aware of two additional Carmontelle portraits that feature Black subjects, but neither has, to my knowledge, been reproduced in color, nor have I been able to examine either of these drawings in person as yet.
- 13 This Musée Condé sheet exhibits a La Mésangère inscription, making its provenance as secure as that of the Metropolitan Museum’s Bougainville drawing. Whether this portrait actually depicts a woman whose name was Coëtlogon, however, is less certain, as Lédans crossed out “Coëtlogon” in his manuscript and replaced it with another name, which is also crossed out and replaced with yet another name (this one written in graphite in another hand). See Lédans 1807, p. 45r, no. 492.
- 14 Genlis 1825, p. vi, and Clark 2017, p. 181. Stéphanie-Félicité du Crest de Saint-Aubin, comtesse de Genlis (1746–1830), was a lady-in-waiting and secretary to the duchesse de Chartres, as well as a governess to the duc and duchesse de Chartres’s children. She was also the duc de Chartres’s mistress in the early 1770s.
- 15 The terms “autograph replicas” and “autograph copies” refer to Carmontelle’s own copies of his portraits; these are drawings that, like the originals on which they are based, are in Carmontelle’s own hand.
- 16 *L’Élegance intemporelle, Paris, Rive-Gauche*, sale cat., Sotheby’s, Paris, September 14, 2017, lot 14, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2017/elegance-intemporelle-pf1751/lot.14.html>. Digital superimposition of high-resolution photographs of these drawings, as well as close visual examination of each, reveals how little these sheets deviate from one another in terms of handling. For more on this and other rare autograph replicas by Carmontelle, see Bernstein 2020, pp. 212–41.
- 17 Hellman 2007, p. 132.
- 18 For another instance in which underdrawing is used as evidence of a copyist’s hand, see Stein 2009, pp. 124–25, and Shelley 2009, pp. 131–33.
- 19 On May 1, 1763, Baron Melchior Grimm wrote, “Every day, I find that I recognize people in the street who I have only ever seen in his [Carmontelle’s] volumes.” See Grimm 1829, p. 225: “Il m’arrive tous les jours de reconnaître dans le monde des gens que je n’ai jamais vus que dans ses [Carmontelle’s] recueils.”
- 20 Balston 1998, pp. 2–3, 175, and 178. I am grateful to Marjorie Shelley, Sherman Fairchild Conservator in Charge of Works on Paper at the Met, for placing the Robert Lehman Collection drawings on a fiberoptic light sheet and pointing out the single set of laid lines that became visible. These lines confirmed that the Robert Lehman Collection drawings were executed on wove paper, while their mounts are made of paper with laid lines. Placement of the Bougainville portrait on the same fiberoptic light sheet, by contrast, revealed two distinct, overlapping sets of lines, indicating that this portrait was executed on laid paper.
- 21 Two possible exceptions to this general rule were sold at Sotheby’s, Paris, in September 2017, but technical examination of the paper on which these two drawings in Carmontelle’s hand were executed would have to be undertaken before the type of paper used in these two highly unusual instances can be confirmed. See *L’Élegance intemporelle*, sale cat., Sotheby’s, Paris,

- Rive-Gauche, September 14, 2017, lots 77, 78 (<https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2017/elegance-intemporelle-pf1751/lot.77.html>; and, . . . /lot.78.html).
- 22 Beginning about 1783, Carmontelle used wove paper to make moving landscape transparencies. His selection of this type of paper for his transparencies (to which the passage of light is integral) was probably prompted by its lack of distracting laid lines. See Chatel de Brancion 2008, pp. 23–25. One could argue that Carmontelle could just as easily have used wove paper to make his autograph replicas, years after having created the original portraits (on laid paper) on which these replicas were based, when wove paper was both more widely available and among the materials that Carmontelle used to make his moving landscape transparencies. But the stylistic and technical disparities discernible in the Musée Condé and Robert Lehman Collection drawings, taken with the regularity with which Carmontelle used laid paper for his portraits and genuine autograph replicas, confirm the Robert Lehman Collection drawings' inauthenticity beyond reasonable doubt.
- 23 The Metropolitan Museum's Robert Lehman Collection object files for *Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers and Thérèse* (fig. 5; 1975.1.579) and *Madame la Marquise de Coëtlogon* (fig. 3; 1975.1.580) do not contain documentation pertaining to these portraits' pre-1953 provenance.
- 24 *The Contesse* [sic] *de Cossé in a Salon* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1956.58) and *Madame La Duchesse de Mortemart* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1992.87.5) are inauthentic copies after genuine Carmontelle portraits in the Musée Condé. The drawings themselves and the handwritten inscriptions on their paper mounts appear to have been undertaken by the same individual(s) responsible for the Robert Lehman Collection sheets. The larger group of purported Carmontelle pictures to which the four inauthentic portraits discussed here belong is addressed in Bernstein 2020, pp. 312–50.

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Marjorie Shelley

John Haberle's *A Bachelor's Drawer*:  
Censorship, Geologic Time, and Truth  
Amy Werbel

8228  
"The Toughest, Meanest Art I Was  
Making": Edward Ruscha's Books  
Doug Eklund

An Ode to James Van Der Zee:  
Lorna Simpson's *9 Props*  
Emilie Boone

RESEARCH NOTES

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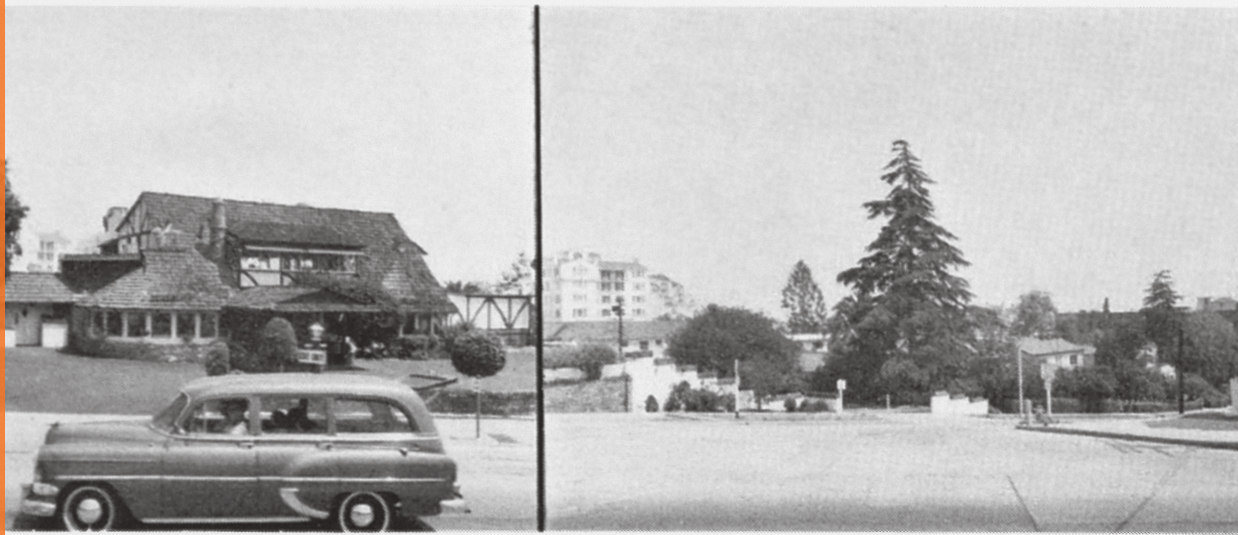
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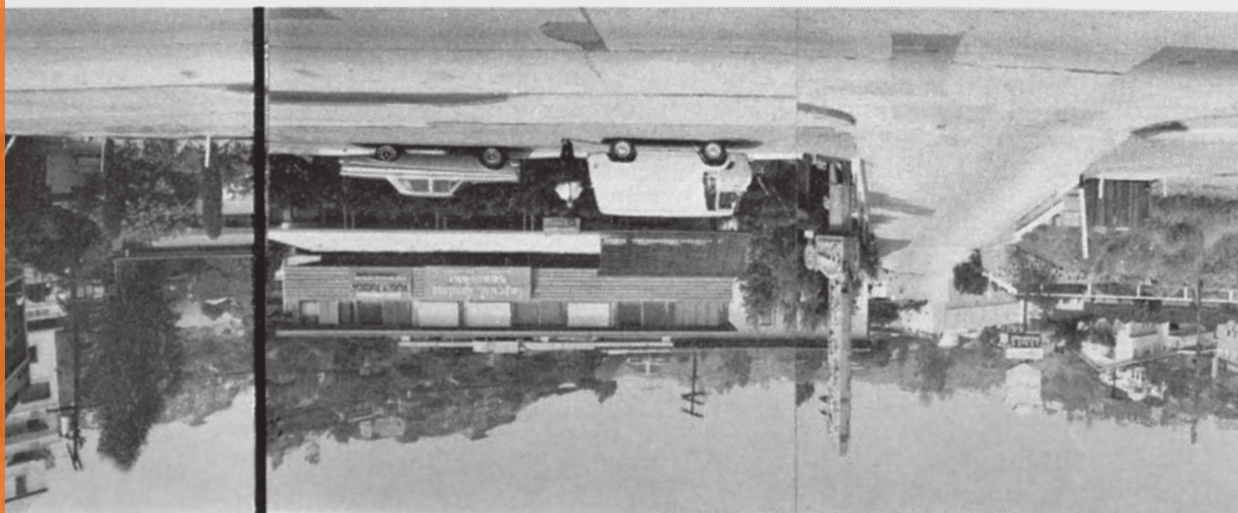
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