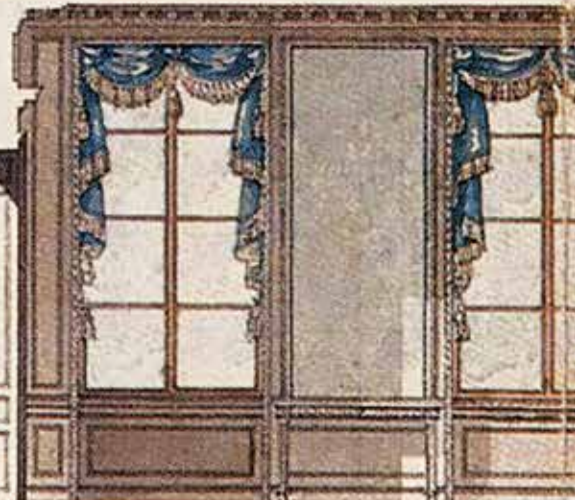
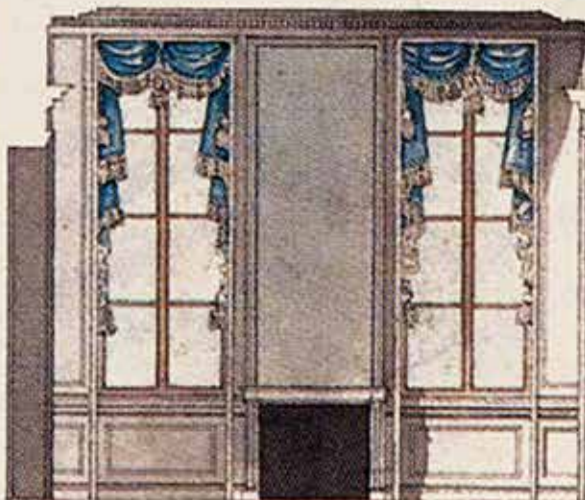
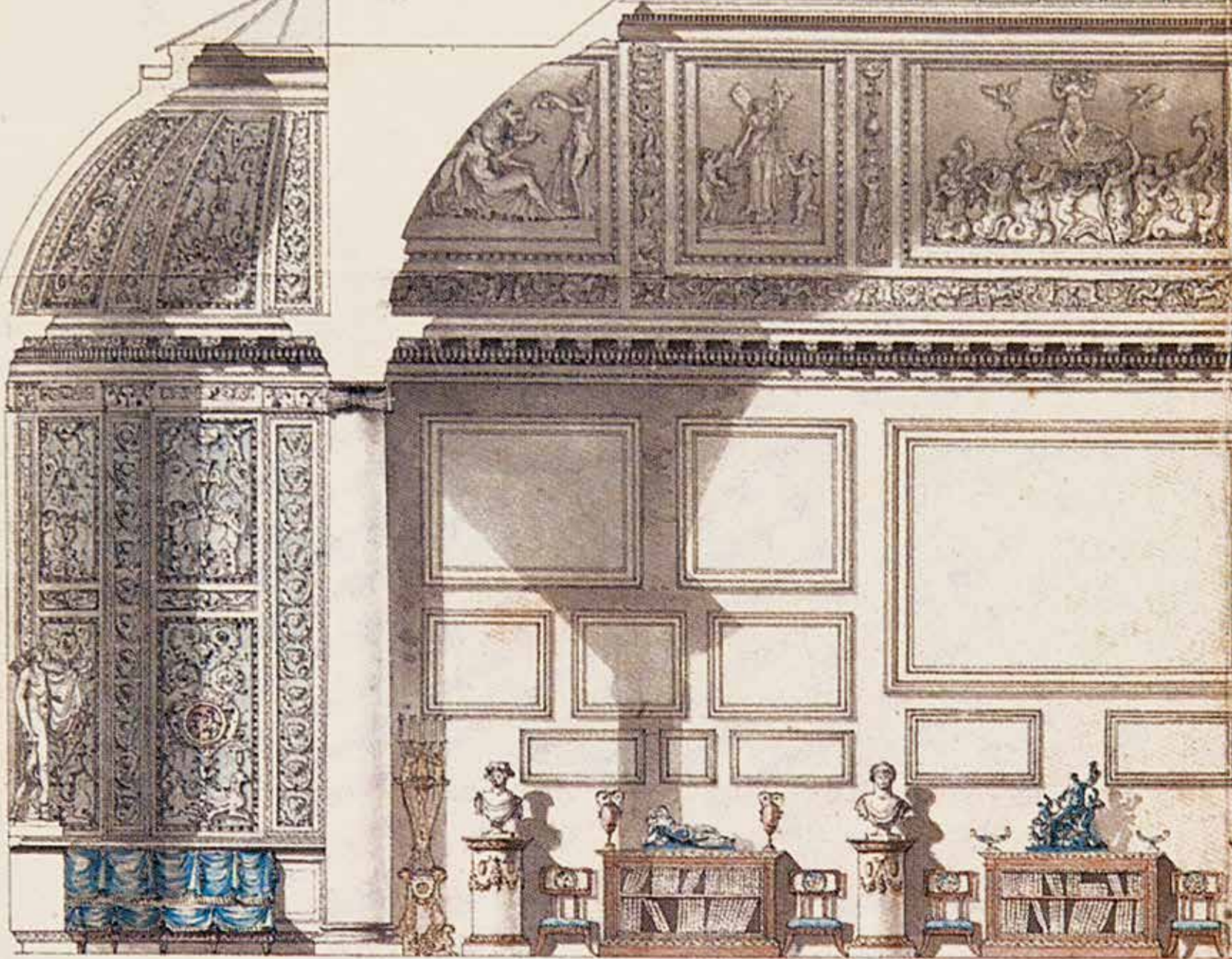


VIGÉE LE BRUN





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Private collection

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United Kingdom

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Private collection

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Boston, Museum of Fine Arts
Columbus, The Columbus Museum of Art
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Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts
New Orleans, New Orleans Museum of Art
New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
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Phoenix, Phoenix Art Museum
Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art
Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Saint Louis, Saint Louis Art Museum
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Private collections

Directors' Foreword

It has taken too long for Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun to be given a full-scale international retrospective. After all, her pictures belong undeniably to the canon of portraiture. The principal propagandist of Marie Antoinette in art, Vigée Le Brun also immortalized many of the actors in the Bourbon court before the French Revolution, notably its female protagonists. We cannot help but shudder at the complete absence of disquiet in these flattering depictions of aristocratic elegance and simplicity. Indeed, she would go on to paint portraits with equal verve in Saint Petersburg for a regime that was similarly doomed.

Vigée Le Brun was an international celebrity who charmed her way through more European capitals than any of her male counterparts, while commanding the highest fees. And in later life, her compelling memoirs rekindled interest in her career among the Romantic poets and novelists.

We are proud of our participation in this exhibition, and our congratulations go to the curators, Joseph Baillio, Katharine Baetjer, and Paul Lang. Their admiration for the artist elevates these pages.

For the loan of the portrait of Marie Antoinette and her children—which has never before traveled farther than Paris—we are grateful to the Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon and its director, Béatrix Saule.

At the Metropolitan Museum, we offer our deepest thanks to the Gail and Parker Gilbert Fund, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, the Diane W. and James E. Burke Fund, Bank of America, the Chapman Family Trust, and Ambassador and Mrs. Felix G. Rohatyn for their support of this project and dedication to the Met's work. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the generous donors who have paid tribute to the late Parker Gilbert with gifts to support this exhibition in his memory. Our appreciation goes to The Georges Lurcy Charitable and Educational Trust for its support of the exhibition's education programs and to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, whose commitment to the Museum's publications program has made possible this beautiful book.

At the National Gallery of Canada, we express our gratitude, as always, to the Government of Canada for its unwavering support of our work.

Thomas P. Campbell, Director and CEO The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York	Marc Mayer, Director and CEO National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
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At The Metropolitan Museum of Art, we offer our warmest thanks to Thomas P. Campbell, director and chief executive officer, for his interest in and support of this project. We acknowledge a superior exhibitions team: Jennifer Russell, associate director for exhibitions; Linda Sylling, manager for special exhibitions and gallery installations; Martha Deese, senior administrator; Nina S. Maruca, senior associate registrar; Michael Langley, exhibition design manager; and Mary Flanagan, senior press officer, as well as Yen-Wei Liu, senior graphic designer, and Jennifer Mock, assistant museum educator. We recognize Sarah Higby, deputy chief development officer for corporate programs, and Jason Herrick, senior philanthropy officer. We are grateful for the assistance of Keith Christiansen, John Pope-Hennessy Chairman, Gretchen Wold, Rebecca Ben-Atar, Lisa Cain, Patrice Mattia, and Carol Bergren Santoleri, in the Department of European Paintings; of Michael Gallagher, Sherman Fairchild Conservator in Charge, Dorothy Mahon, George Bisacca, and Cynthia Moyer, in the Department of Paintings Conservation; and of Marjorie Shelley, Sherman Fairchild Department of Paper Conservation.

For the catalogue of the exhibition, we thank Mark Polizzotti, publisher and editor in chief, and his colleagues in the Editorial Department: Gwen Roginsky, Michael Sittenfeld, Peter Antony, Sally VanDevanter, Jane S. Tai, Crystal A. Dombrow, and Sarah McFadden. Elizabeth L. Block has adapted our various writing styles into a coherent, lucid, and elegant book, one that is worthy of its subject. Laura Lindgren created the splendid design.

At the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, we are grateful to Marc Mayer, director and chief executive officer, and Jean-François Bilodeau, deputy director of advancement and public engagement, for heralding the exhibition and catalogue from the beginning. Their colleagues in the departments of Exhibitions, Design, Publications, Technical Services, and the Registrar were instrumental in realizing our fine exhibition: Yves Théoret, Marie-Claude Rousseau, Christine La Salle, Gordon Filewych, Ellen Treciokas, Ivan Parisien, Jean-François Castonguay, Alana Topham, and Erika Dolphin.

We acknowledge the contribution of Xavier Salmon, general heritage curator and director of the Department of Graphic Arts, Musée du Louvre, who served as the curator for the Paris exhibition, held at the Réunion des Musées Nationaux – Grand Palais, Paris, from September 23, 2015, to January 11, 2016.

As the acknowledged expert on the work of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, Joseph Baillio has assumed the role of principal curator of this

exhibition with boldness, passion, and tremendous ability and commitment, while always remaining his proverbially magnanimous self. He was the instigator of the project, and without him nothing would have been possible. Vigée Le Brun has fascinated him for more than four decades, and his enthusiasm for her work inspired us all as we conceived and realized this splendid project.

We are extremely grateful to Béatrix Saule, director of the Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, for her steadfast support of the exhibition from the outset. A June day that we spent at Versailles during the preparatory stages will remain engraved in our memories as a high point of the venture.

It has been a privilege to work with Jean-Paul Cluzel, president, Réunion des Musées Nationaux–Grand Palais, with Laurent Salomé, exhibition director, who contributed to the shaping of the exhibition, and with Fabienne Charpin-Schaff, project chief, Isabelle Mancarella, and Chloé de Lustrac.

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VIGÉE LE BRUN



THE ARTISTIC AND SOCIAL ODYSSEY OF ELISABETH LOUISE VIGÉE LE BRUN

JOSEPH BAILLIO

Vigée Le Brun's name, for those who know it, calls to mind two or three "icons" emblematic of female coquettishness, motherly affection, or the memory of a martyred queen. This catalogue proposes to show that the artist's life and work continue to offer a vast and compelling field of investigation. The aim is to project the image of a supremely gifted Frenchwoman fully engaged in her time—a time marked by events that, over the course of half a century, propelled Europe into chaos. That France has never honored Vigée Le Brun with a monographic exhibition is astonishing; the only retrospective devoted to her was held at the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, in 1982. The present show is significantly more ambitious and inclusive.

Since 1982, many works known from the lists of sitters and subject pictures in Vigée Le Brun's three-volume *Souvenirs (Memoirs)* or from old exhibition and sale catalogues have resurfaced, and the artist's bibliography has increased substantially. Historians have shown renewed interest in the artist; new printed and online publications about her life and art number in the dozens, and her work has appeared in many museum, exhibition, and private collection catalogues. To read the story of her life before and after the French Revolution as recorded in her memoirs and in the excellent new biography by Geneviève Haroche-Bouzinac is to enter a world that would have intimidated artists less disciplined, confident, and determined than she. Her early successes allowed her to feel at ease not only with monarchs, the nobility,

Detail, cat. 40. Vigée Le Brun. *Self-Portrait in Traveling Costume*, 1789–90



Fig. 1. Louis Vigée (French, 1715–1767).
Elisabeth Louise Vigée, ca. 1760–61. Pastel
on paper. Location unknown

court officials, and financiers of all sorts but also with the luminaries of the world of arts and letters.

On April 16, 1755, Elisabeth Louise Vigée was born in the rue Coquillière in Paris, and two days later she was baptized in the nearby church of Saint-Eustache.¹ Nothing augured the extraordinary future that awaited her. She was the first of the two children of Louis Vigée (1715–1767), and his wife, Jeanne Maissin (cat. 2), the daughter of a merchant-farmer from the province of Luxembourg. Vigée Le Brun's father, an esteemed society portraitist whose clientele came for the most part from the upper echelons of the bourgeoisie, had received his license from the artists' guild, the Académie de Saint-Luc, the Salons of which enabled him to exhibit his works regularly between 1751 and 1764.

The girl (fig. 1) spent her first five years in the care of a farmer's wife in the country southeast of Paris. Her brother, Louis Jean Baptiste Etienne (cat. 1), born three years later in 1758, would become an author of light comedy and play

a notable role in his sister's life. At the convent school where she boarded in the capital's faubourg Saint-Antoine, Elisabeth Louise followed a curriculum reserved for daughters of the middle classes: reading, writing, catechism, music, and the domestic and social arts. She also covered the margins and blank pages of her books with small drawings of human figures.

In 1766, Elisabeth Louise—from an early age she was called “Lise” or “Lisette”—returned to the family home in the rue de Cléry. Her father gave her access to his studio and taught her the fundamentals of drawing. He introduced her to pastel, a technique in which he excelled to such a degree that he was considered a worthy imitator of Rosalba Carriera and Maurice Quentin de La Tour. He quickly realized that his daughter possessed prodigious artistic inclinations. Observing a head she had drawn, he exclaimed: “You will be a painter, my child, or never will there be one,” a prophetic remark, she later reported, that made her want to follow his example.² The sociable Louis Vigée invited artists and writers to his homes in Paris and in the village of Neuilly. Among the regulars were the painters Gabriel François Doyen and Pierre Davesne and the famous librettist Antoine Alexandre Poinciset. Elisabeth Louise acquired a lifelong taste for entertaining in this way: at the end of the Bourbon monarchy, her salon would be one of the most prestigious in Paris.

In May 1767, Louis Vigée died, leaving his beloved daughter distraught and depressed. Barely seven months later, his widow, in precarious financial circumstances, married Jacques François Le Sèvre (cat. 3), a goldsmith and shopkeeper who had a shop opposite the Palais Royal in the rue Saint-Honoré, where the Vigées took up residence. Elisabeth Louise loathed her stepfather, whose habits she found repellent. To distract her daughter from her grief, Madame Le Sèvre decided that she should study painting seriously. Elisabeth Louise attended a small drawing academy run by Marie Rosalie Hallé, the wife of Blaise Bocquet, a fan painter and curio merchant in the rue Saint-Denis, and became friends with their daughter, Anne Rosalie.³ Together the two adolescents copied drawings and plaster busts at the Louvre, working in the atelier of a mediocre history painter, Gabriel Briard. Vigée also took lessons in oil painting at Davesne's and received guidance from Doyen and Joseph Vernet (cat. 6), making pencil copies of at least two landscapes by the latter. Madame Le Sèvre gave her daughter a room to use as an atelier and supplemented the supplies left by her first husband with additional purchases. Meanwhile, Elisabeth Louise was turning into a beautiful young woman.

Her mother accompanied her on visits to some of the city's most important galleries of paintings, including those of Louis XV at the Palais du Luxembourg and the duc d'Orléans at the Palais Royal. She also visited collections formed by artists, such as that of the Hessian engraver Johann Georg Wille.⁴ While male artists who studied at the academy received prescribed training that included apprenticeship under an acknowledged master, Vigée had to restrict herself almost exclusively to portraiture, her father's specialty. She copied historical and contemporary paintings and worked from the model, educating herself. It is likely that from the beginning of her career she kept a record of the names of her sitters and the subjects of her history and genre paintings. She placed an inventory, more or less chronological, at the end of each volume of the *Souvenirs*, published by Hippolyte Fournier between 1835 and 1837.⁵ While mostly reliable, these lists contain some errors and lacunae and must therefore be used with caution. Naturally, Elisabeth Louise Vigée's first sitters were the members of her own household.

As she gained renown in Paris in the early 1770s, a well-heeled clientele streamed to her studio. When men came to pose, her mother remained at her side to discourage sexual advances.⁶ Elisabeth Louise also had musical talent, which opened doors to her, initially at the home of the sculptor Jean Baptiste Lemoyne, and then in the residences of aristocrats such as the princesse de Rohan Rochefort and the duchesse de Chartres.⁷

Vigée and her family had moved about 1774, subletting an apartment in the Hôtel de Lubert.⁸ The main occupant of that town house was an art dealer, Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun, a distant relative of Louis XIV's *premier peintre* (first painter). Le Brun had trained as an artist in the studios of François Boucher, Jean Baptiste Deshayes, and Jean Honoré Fragonard and had acquired the skills of an appraiser, auctioneer, and expert. His own publications, generally sale catalogues, were scholarly works that attested to his wide knowledge. Le Brun, seven years older than Vigée, who was already earning a living from her art, recognized her innate gift. He lent her works from his collection and from his constantly replenished stock, giving her the opportunity to copy or take inspiration from them. One copy she might have made after a work in Le Brun's possession is a *Danaë* after Titian.⁹ Through Le Brun, she acquired a broad pictorial knowledge. Moreover, she was not impervious to his charms (cat. 89).

Membership in an academy conferred legitimacy and professional autonomy, allowing artists to accept fees for their works without paying a penalty to the guilds that controlled production under the ancien régime. Because Vigée was unaffiliated, in 1774 her atelier was seized, and she was obliged to request admittance to the Académie de Saint-Luc, where her father had achieved the rank of associate professor. She was elected a member that same year and, before being officially inducted, was able to participate in what was to be the institution's final Salon. She submitted three allegories of the arts (see cat. 4) and nine or more other paintings and pastels, including her *morceau de réception* (diploma picture), the now-lost portrait of the former rector of the company, Pierre Louis Dumesnil.¹⁰ Exhibiting at the same salon and also newly admitted to the academy was her friend Madame Guiard, née Adélaïde Labille, her most formidable rival until 1789.

Le Sèvre's tyrannical behavior and habitual appropriation of his step-daughter's earnings prompted her to claim a modicum of independence. When Le Brun asked for her hand in marriage, with the encouragement of her mother, who thought he was wealthy, she accepted. The wedding took place in January 1776 in the church where she had been baptized. By marrying, as she herself observed, she traded one form of servitude for another. Le Brun was constantly in need of money to fuel his business and to satisfy his insatiable appetite for paintings, objets d'art, and valuable furniture. He consistently spent more than the couple earned. When the scales finally fell from Vigée Le Brun's eyes, it was too late, but the couple found a *modus vivendi* that permitted each of them to benefit from the marriage. Le Brun did everything he could to complete his wife's education and promote her career. He was assisted in that effort

by Etienne Vigée, now an author, who placed his pen at his sister's service. As part of his promotional strategy, Le Brun held sales at which he shrewdly presented her works and probably also set the prices, which were far above the fees set by most other painters.

Jeanne Julie Louise, the couple's only child to survive, was born on February 12, 1780. Madame de Verdun (fig. 2), Vigée Le Brun's closest friend, could barely persuade her to leave her studio in time to give birth. "Brunette," as the child was called (fig. 13, cat. 35), would be the center of her mother's life for many years. A second infant died shortly after birth in 1784. Throughout her career Vigée Le Brun painted children with great warmth and understanding (cat. 23).

With his wife's financial participation, Le Brun bought the Hôtel de Lubert.¹¹ Among those who sublet lodgings there were the history painter François Guillaume Ménageot, the marquise de Rougé (cat. 33), and the comte de Paroy, a collector of antiquities and member of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture.

Le Brun commissioned the Toulouse-born architect Jean Arnaud Raymond to build a superb sales and exhibition hall—an oval amphitheater with natural overhead light and casement windows on one side.¹² He rented out the premises for lectures and concerts, but the staging of sales and exhibitions remained the principal function of the Salle Le Brun, a center of the Paris art trade.

In 1778, Vigée Le Brun was called to Versailles to paint a full-length state portrait of the young queen of France, her exact contemporary, to be sent to the latter's mother, Empress Maria Theresa of Austria. The painting, *Marie Antoinette in Court Dress* (cat. 7), was very well received. Replicas were sent to various ministries and foreign courts—even to the United States Congress—where some of them served as pendants to official portraits of Louis XVI in coronation robes by Joseph Siffred Duplessis or Antoine François Callet.

With the closing of the Académie de Saint-Luc in 1777 following the edict dissolving guilds nationwide, and barred from participating in the Salon du Louvre because of her husband's commercial activities, Vigée Le Brun had few



Fig. 2. Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun. *Madame de Verdun*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 24³/₄ × 20⁷/₈ in. (63 × 53 cm). Private collection



Fig. 3. Vigée Le Brun. *Marie Antoinette with a Book*, ca. 1783–84. Oil on canvas, 36¾ × 29½ in. (93.3 × 74.8 cm). Signed and incorrectly dated (lower left): *LE Vigee Le Brun 1778*. Private collection

venues to show her work. In the early 1780s, she participated in the short-lived Salon de la Correspondance, organized and run by Pahin de la Blancherie. It was at this time that she achieved full artistic maturity.

Fortunately, the success of her state portrait of Marie Antoinette led to a further series of royal commissions for the portraits of the queen in a chemise dress, or “en gaulle” (cat. 16), “with a rose” (cat. 17), and “with a book” (fig. 3)—as well as for a double portrait of the dauphin, Louis Joseph, with his sister, Madame Royale (cat. 23). From then on, Vigée Le Brun could count on the

patronage of the Maison de la Reine and the members of Marie Antoinette's close circle, becoming their quasi-official painter and thus occupying a highly privileged place among court portraitists. She recounts in her memoirs an anecdote from that era that was touchingly commemorated much later in a painting by Alexis-Joseph Pérignon (cat. 90): having missed a sitting because of an advanced pregnancy, Vigée Le Brun went the next day to apologize to the queen; nervous, she dropped her box of colors, and Marie Antoinette herself purportedly picked them up.

The Le Bruns lived in grand style. Vigée Le Brun's salon attracted Paris and Versailles society in addition to well-known artists and writers, brilliant raconteurs, and even free thinkers. At these gatherings, conversation, poetry, and music took precedence over political debate. Social prejudices and rules of protocol were suspended. Under such conditions, according to the chronicler of the *Mémoires secrets*, "infinitely more amusement was to be had at Madame Le Brun's than at Versailles."³

Vigée Le Brun was admitted to the Académie royale in 1783, owing to the queen's intervention. That acceptance marked the high point of her career, confirming her as a member of the artistic elite of France and according her the right to exhibit at the biennial Salons. Astutely, she did not submit as her *morceau de réception* a portrait of an academician, as the majority of her fellow candidates in portraiture did. Rather, she presented a history painting, *Peace Bringing Back Abundance* (cat. 9). Completed a few years earlier, the work had acquired particular resonance since the recent signing of a peace treaty between England and France. But the influence exerted from on high to circumvent the rules of the Académie royale—her husband's profession ought to have excluded her—antagonized officials of the Académie and made her the target of polemicists who were sworn enemies of the privileged and powerful who made up a good part of her clientele. The critics of the 1783 Salon set the tone. Her submissions elicited almost as much animosity as enthusiasm, both of which were plentiful. Consider a few passages from *Mémoires secrets*, which, under cover of praise, spread vicious gossip:

When someone announces he has just come from the salon, he is first asked: Did you see Madame Le Brun? What do you think of Madame Le Brun? At the same time, the answer is suggested to him: Isn't it true she's an astonishing woman, that Madame Le Brun? . . .

She is a young & pretty woman, full of wit and poise, quite amiable, seeing the best society of Paris & Versailles, giving delightful supper parties

for artists, authors, people of quality; and her home is the sanctuary where the Polignacs, the Vaudreuils, the Polastrons, the most highly placed & refined courtiers, come to seek refuge from the tedium of court life. . . . It required nothing less than such powerful patronage to allow her to pass through the gates of the academy, where, despite her merit, she would not have been admitted, on the grounds that her husband degrades art by mercantile activities, a prime reason for exclusion (M. Le Brun buys & sells paintings for a living). . . .

I will not conceal a rumor given credence among her colleagues. It is insinuated that she does not paint her own pictures, that she does not finish them at least, & that an artist who is in love with her (M. Ménageot) assists her. . . . Madame Le Brun's paintings will belong to her so long as the true collaborator does not challenge her, & it is up to her, by providing the evidence of new masterpieces, by surpassing herself if that is possible, to justify her reputation & give the lie to these contemptible remarks.¹⁴

In 1785, the Bâtiments du Roi—in charge of the royal buildings, art production, academies, and manufactories—assigned to Vigée Le Brun the most important commission of her career, a dynastic portrait of Marie Antoinette with her children (cat. 32). For the painter as for the royal arts establishment, this was a huge gamble: Vigée Le Brun hoped to justify her reputation, and the monarchy sought to rehabilitate the image of an increasingly unpopular queen. Inspired by Madonna and Child compositions of the Italian Renaissance, Vigée Le Brun devised the image of a virtuous spouse and attentive mother.¹⁵ However, in such an unfavorable political climate, the hoped-for redemption of the artist's and sitter's reputations was unattainable.

Did the duchesse de Polignac (cat. 11) introduce her cousin and lover, the comte de Vaudreuil (cat. 21), to Vigée Le Brun, or vice versa? That Creole aristocrat drew a large part of his considerable revenue from plantations in the West Indies. He was the soul of the queen's coterie, though she cared little for him.¹⁶ Possessing sufficient resources to purchase from the artist's husband the sublime *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4), the portrait of the duchesse de Polignac singing at the pianoforte, and the very sensual *Bacchante* (fig. 5; exhibited at the Salon of 1785), he was Vigée Le Brun's most important private patron.¹⁷

About 1787 the Le Brun family moved into the new Hôtel Le Brun, a residence of sober, Neoclassical elegance designed by the architect of the Salle Le Brun. Husband and wife had separate apartments on either side of a long

Fig. 4. Vigée Le Brun. *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat*. Oil on wood, 37³/₈ × 27¹/₈ in. (95 × 68.5 cm). Signed and dated (lower right): *L^e Le Brun / 1782*. Collection of Baronne Edmond de Rothschild





Fig. 5. Vigée Le Brun. *Bacchante*, 1785. Oil on wood, 43 × 34⁵/₈ in. (109 × 88 cm). Signed and dated (lower right): *L V Le Brun / 1785*. Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris (113)

gallery where the storied *souper grec* (Greek supper) probably took place. The event was a milestone in the history of the eighteenth-century French salon. In a setting modeled on ancient Greek interiors as imagined by Poussin, the participants—dressed in tunics, mantles, and veils—gathered to eat and drink from Etruscan dishes and goblets lent by Vaudreuil’s cousin, the comte de Paroy.

Vigée Le Brun’s fame and financial success, her triumphs at the Salon, and, more particularly, her connections at Versailles, which included “that

Austrian woman” Marie Antoinette, the finance minister, Charles Alexandre de Calonne (cat. 25), Vaudreuil, and the Polignacs, made her a vulnerable target for the underground press. She was hounded by slander and invective.¹⁸ The defamation became all the more venomous as the Revolution approached. According to her detractors, the beautiful artist could not have achieved such resounding success without selling her charms to men of wealth and power. The mechanisms of character assassination were never better described than by the playwright Beaumarchais (1732–1799):

Slander . . . I have seen the most upright people nearly done in by it. . . . First a mere rumor, skimming the earth like a swallow before the storm, murmurs pianissimo and skips off, and sows the poisoned dart as it runs its course. One mouth seizes it, and piano, piano drops it adroitly into an ear. The mischief is done, it germinates, creeps, trudges, and goes like hell afire *rinforzando* from one mouth to another; then suddenly, without rhyme or reason, you see Slander arise, swell, grow in front of your eyes. It darts forth, stretches its wings, whirls, envelops, seizes, drags, bursts and thunders, and becomes . . . a universal chorus of hatred and proscription. Who the devil could withstand it?¹⁹

Vigée Le Brun did not withstand it. When the Revolution erupted violently in July 1789, she suffered acute depression and sought refuge in the homes of her friends and relatives. On the evening of October 6, as the mobs were invading Versailles to bring the royal family to Paris, she fled the country in one of the first waves of the emigration, departing with her daughter and the child’s governess in search of a safe haven.

From Lyon, they traveled to Rome, beginning a twelve-year period of exile. These would be productive years that would yield masterpieces and rebuild the fortune her husband had recklessly dissipated. The roster of distinguished sitters she portrayed during her peregrinations across Italy, Austria, the Russian Empire, Germany, England, and Switzerland is impressive indeed. (She was paving the way for two portraitists of the following generation, Baron François Gérard and Sir Thomas Lawrence, whose clientele was also international and cosmopolitan.)

In Rome, Vigée Le Brun completed a self-portrait for Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany and then traveled to the kingdom of Naples, where she found clients who could afford her steep prices. One of them was Ekaterina Skavronskaya (cat. 43), the former mistress of Prince Grigory Potemkin, her uncle, and wife

of the Russian ambassador. Vigée Le Brun portrayed Skavronskaya dressed exquisitely but, perhaps understandably, gave no inkling of her character, since the sitter reportedly had none. Another client, Emma Hart, the mistress and later the wife of the British minister, Sir William Hamilton, she painted in the Neoclassical poses and costumes (fig. 6) that had so captivated visitors to Naples, Goethe among them. Two of her portraits of Hart, which the artist regarded as history paintings, accompanied her during her trek across Europe and into Russia, where she exhibited them in her various studios to show potential clients the range of her talent. In Rome, she visited palaces, museums, churches, ancient ruins, and holiday resorts—and began to draw and paint, especially in pastel, the first of hundreds of landscapes and studies of skies, relatively few of which have come to light (Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 324–27, nos. 153–60, ill.).

Although the *famosa Le Brun* was celebrated and honored in Rome, she left in April 1792, intending to return to Paris. But the terrorized French exiles she saw streaming into Turin, the abolition of the monarchy, and the bloodbaths in the streets of Paris made her revise her plans. It was then that Etienne Vigée's brother-in-law, Auguste Rivière, joined her: until 1801, Rivière would serve as her traveling companion and, as he was not only a diplomat but had trained as a painter under Joseph Benoît Suvée, would copy many of her works on a small scale and even in miniature. They left for Milan, where Count Johann Joseph von Wilczek, the Austrian ambassador to Lombardy, provided her with passports so that they could continue on to Vienna.

For two and a half years, Vigée Le Brun was fêted as a prima donna by the Austrian, Bohemian, Hungarian, Polish, and Russian aristocracy in the capital of the Habsburgs. Some, such as the Liechtensteins (cat. 54), the Esterházy, the Pálffy, and the Thuns, were patrons of Haydn and Mozart. Vigée Le Brun, loyal to the French royalist cause, also sought out friends who had emigrated to Vienna: Vaudreuil, the duchesse de Polignac, and her daughter, the duchesse de Guiche (cat. 57).

As had been the case on the Italian peninsula, Vigée Le Brun was constantly spied on by French agents who regarded her as a counterrevolutionary, and the case of *citoyenne* Le Brun was used as an example of why women should be barred from patriotic organizations:

One member [of a revolutionary committee] cites the Société des Jacobins, to which a female citizen has been admitted. But another member, disregarding that exception, says that, among republicans, women must absolutely



renounce work meant for men. He agrees, however, that for his own satisfaction he would take a great deal of pleasure in living with a wife who had talents in the arts, but that this would be acting against the laws of nature. Among the savage peoples, he says, who are the closest to nature, does one see women doing the work of men? He thinks it is because a famous woman, *la citoyenne* Le Brun, showed great talent in painting that a host of others have wanted to take up painting, whereas they ought only to engage in embroidering police officers' belts and caps. . . .²⁰

Fig. 6. Vigée Le Brun. *Emma Hart as Ariadne*, 1790. Oil on canvas, 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 62 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (135 × 158 cm). Signed and dated (lower left, on tambourine): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun naples / 1790*. Private collection

In vain, Le Brun published an eloquent defense of his wife in *Précis historique de la vie de la citoyenne Lebrun, peintre*, trying to get her name removed from the list of émigrés whose property was slated for confiscation. For him, this meant everything he owned. In the end, he had no choice but to divorce her, which he did on Prairial 15, Year II of the Republic (June 3, 1794), a week before the Reign of Terror was officially decreed.

The Russian ambassador to Vienna, Count Andrey Razumovsky, gave the artist the idea of traveling to Saint Petersburg, where excellent prospects awaited her. In April 1795 she and her companions left Austria for the capital of the Romanovs. During her six years there, she commanded prices for her works that some found exorbitant. Count Fyodor Rostopchin wrote ironically to the Russian ambassador to England, Count Semyon Vorontsov, about the prices she commanded: “Mme Le Brun is paid a thousand, two thousand rubles for a portrait, as one would be paid two guineas in London.”²¹ In the first month, she earned fifteen thousand rubles, which she lost in a bank failure. Undaunted, she rented a spacious apartment in a house overlooking the Winter Palace and set about amassing another fortune.

She was able to paint nearly all the most important members of the Russian imperial family, including state portraits of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna (cat. 58) and her mother-in-law, Empress Maria Fyodorovna (State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, on deposit at Peterhof Palace). Also notable is the only known oil sketch by Vigée Le Brun (fig. 7), for the latter portrait.

In Saint Petersburg, Vigée Le Brun competed with Dmitry Levitsky and Vladimir Borovikovsky, and with Jean Louis Voille and Jean Laurent Mosnier, French exiles like herself. But for two years she had much more to fear from the Tyrolean Johann Baptist von Lampi the Elder, the portraitist of choice of Catherine the Great’s last favorite, Platon Zubov, who had little appreciation for Vigée Le Brun and did everything he could to discredit her. Indeed, Catherine took a dislike to her: ever since the Revolution, she had become implacably anti-French. But the representatives of the Russian nobility welcomed Vigée Le Brun.

The names of her sitters in Russia include members of the following aristocratic families: Baryatinsky, Golitsyna, Golovina, Poniatowski, Samoilova, Skavronskaya, Tolstaya, and Vorontsova. The death of Catherine II in November 1796 marked the beginning of the grim reign of her psychologically unbalanced son, Paul I (1754–1801), which lasted five years. An event in Vigée Le Brun’s personal life would cause her great distress: Julie Le Brun became infatuated with Gaëtan Bernard Nigris (d. 1831), the French secretary to Count Chernyshev,



Fig. 7. Vigée Le Brun. *Sketch for the State Portrait of Empress Maria Fyodorovna in Coronation Robes*, 1799. Oil on canvas, 13 × 9½ in. (33 × 24 cm). Last recorded in the collection of Madame Gaston Palewski, Château du Marais

assistant director of the imperial theaters of Saint Petersburg, whom the artist had painted in 1793 (cat. 55). On August 31, 1799, against the protests of both of her parents, Julie, headstrong and rash, married Nigris in Saint Petersburg.

In Paris, Le Brun was attempting to have his former wife's name removed from the list of émigrés. He solicited the assistance of *citoyenne* Tallien, a friend of Josephine Bonaparte's and the mistress of Paul Barras, the leader of the Directoire. At her divorced husband's initiative, a petition requesting that the



Fig. 8. Diploma presented to Vigée Le Brun when she was received into the Imperial Academy of Arts, Saint Petersburg on June 16, 1800. Private collection

name of the *citoyenne* Le Brun be struck from the list of émigrés was circulated, and he gathered more than two hundred fifty signatures of artists, writers, and scholars. On June 5, 1800, the government of the Consulate restored Vigée Le Brun's nationality. Shortly before, on April 9, she was elected to the Academy of Fine Arts of Saint Petersburg. There, on June 16, she was welcomed by the director, her old friend Count Alexander Stroganov, who signed her diploma (fig. 8). As her *morceau de réception* she submitted the self-portrait in which she is drawing Maria Fyodorovna in coronation regalia (cat. 72).

That October, Vigée Le Brun left with Rivière for Moscow. At first sight, the city appeared pleasantly exotic, but she had difficulty finding suitable lodgings. Finally, Countess Stroganova, long separated from her husband, lent her a house. In thanks, Vigée Le Brun painted one of her most exquisite portraits, that of Varvara Ivanovna Lodomirskaya (cat. 74), the countess's daughter by her lover Ivan Rimsky-Korsakov. In March 1801, the painter and Rivière were returning to Saint Petersburg when they learned of the tsar's assassination. Vigée Le Brun stayed only long enough to do pastel studies for portraits of his successor, Alexander I, and his wife, Elizabeth Alexeyevna. They then left Saint Petersburg. They stopped in Berlin for almost six months,

where she did portraits in pastel of members of the ruling family of Prussia, the Hohenzollerns.

Leaving Rivière in Braunschweig, Lower Saxony, Vigée Le Brun returned to Paris on January 18, 1802, and moved into the Hôtel Le Brun, but strained relations with her ex-husband and her disdain for Consulate society rekindled her desire to travel. She rented a house in the village of Meudon, where she completed portraits in oil of members of the Hohenzollern family (cat. 75), then left for England, newly accessible to French visitors after the signing of the Treaty of Amiens. Disappointed by the climate, the customs, and the animus of such local artists as John Hoppner, she nevertheless made portraits of prominent personalities—the Prince of Wales (Earl of Portarlington collection, Australia), the contralto Giuseppina Grassini (Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 302–3, no. 140, ill.), and the poet George Gordon, Lord Byron (location unknown) among them. Peace between England and France was short-lived; the resumption of hostilities prevented Vigée Le Brun from returning to Paris until 1805.

Le Brun sold her the Hôtel de Lubert and its outbuildings to settle his debts in 1807. Vigée Le Brun then made her first trip to Switzerland, visiting Germaine de Staël (cat. 80) at the Château de Coppet, where she began her portrait of the writer, Napoleon's *bête noire*, as the poetess Corinne. In Switzerland she also made many Alpine landscapes in pastel, notably a *View of Lake Challes and Mont Blanc* (Minneapolis Institute of Art).²² For thirty years she would paint *en plein air* studies of picturesque sites and skies that anticipate the pastels of Eugène Boudin and the young Claude Monet.

In the succeeding years, Vigée Le Brun lost several family members, beginning with Le Brun, from whom she had long been estranged. He died of cancer in 1813. Julie Nigris, separated from her husband, had friends of whom her mother disapproved. Their quarrels over money became so bitter that they stopped speaking to one another. As Geneviève Haroche-Bouzinac has persuasively shown, Nigris contracted syphilis prior to her death in 1819. The next year, Etienne, Vigée Le Brun's brother, died an alcoholic. Her niece Caroline Rivière, with Le Brun's niece Elisabeth Françoise ("Eugénie") Tripier Le Franc, took the place of her daughter.

Vigée Le Brun had continued to host salons in her temporary homes, and on her definitive return to France she resumed entertaining in Paris and in the country house she bought in 1809 in the village of Louveciennes, located in the western suburbs of Paris, between Versailles and Saint-Germain-en-Laye. She was indignant when she found out that, despite her international renown, she could not be elected to the Institut de France, a rigid bastion of

male prerogative. Concerned with the image she would leave to posterity, she began in 1825 to devote herself to writing and publishing the *Souvenirs*, the magnum opus of her old age.

My passion for painting was innate. That passion has never waned; I believe, in fact, that it has only grown with time. Even today I feel all its charm, which I hope will end only with my life. It is, moreover, to that divine passion that I owe not only my fortune but also my happiness, since in my youth—as at the present time—it established relations between me and all the most amiable and distinguished men and women in Europe. The memory of the many remarkable people I have known often brings a certain charm to my solitude. Then I live once more with those who are no longer with us, and I must thank Providence, who has left me that reflection of past happiness.²³

In 1830 she was horrified by the popular uprisings that drove the elder branch of the Bourbon dynasty from France and propelled Louis Philippe d'Orléans to power. The liberalism of the new king and his mostly bourgeois government transformed the political landscape of her country, and she regarded it scornfully.

When she died on March 30, 1842, the eighty-seven-year-old Vigée Le Brun had long since become a legend. Born the year Louis XV turned forty-five, she lived to see the advent of the Industrial Age. She had confessed to a friend that she would have to forgo reading *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, published in 1831, because, from what she had heard about it, it was too raw for her sensibility.²⁴ “I’m not of this century,” she said.²⁵

Vigée Le Brun was a self-made woman in the sense that she invented her professional and social identity by imitating courtier-artists, especially Raphael, Rubens, and Van Dyck. She saw herself as the heir and guardian of a rich tradition of portraiture, both ceremonial and intimate. She drew on the achievements of Nicolas de Largillière, Hyacinthe Rigaud, Jean Marc Nattier, and François Hubert Drouais. Throughout her career she found inspiration in the sculpture of classical antiquity as well as in that of contemporary France; she absorbed lessons from old-master painting and—via prints—from the English pictorial tradition. By immersing herself in the art of the past and the inventions of the modern age, she forged a synthesis of the classical and the modern. Yet it is not always easy to discern the borrowings in her works.²⁶

When her genius was fully in play, Vigée Le Brun ranked equally with the great masters of her time. She did not allow herself to be held in check by the cultural prejudices associated with her status as a woman, wife, and mother or by the psychological conditioning to which members of her gender were routinely subjected. Independently, she developed her taste, sense of color, and technical mastery—in short, her *style*.

She far surpassed most of the portraitists in Paris through her pictorial inventions and her audacity as a colorist. Only one other woman, Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, was able, occasionally, to rival her (see fig. 21). At her best, Vigée Le Brun demonstrated an originality in her portraits comparable to that of David, Pajou, and Houdon. Artists of the next generation, such as François Gérard and Antoine Jean Gros, found valuable lessons in her work.

The success Vigée Le Brun enjoyed at the Salons between 1783 and 1789 stimulated her competitive nature and audacity, and the quality of her submissions rose. She gave primacy to color, varying bright, warm, and muted tones in the treatment of fabrics and accessories, and she often applied transparent glazes over warm, mostly light-toned preparations to suggest the effect of blood pulsing beneath the surface of the skin. These skills she owed partly to her study of Rubens, whose works she had sought out in Flanders. It was after that trip that she adopted wood, mostly oak, panels as the support for her most ambitious easel paintings (see, for example, figs. 9, 10), the first of which was *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4). She sometimes painted very quickly, recalling Fragonard, as in the portrait of Suzanne Rivière Vigée (cat. 30).

Vigée Le Brun used pastel with a dazzling touch. She had a sense for color juxtapositions that was altogether personal, highlighted in the portrait of the duchesse de Guiche (cat. 57).²⁷ In the minds of her contemporaries—as affirmed by Jean François de La Harpe at a session of the Académie Française in 1784—she compared favorably to Rosalba Carriera. Her drawings, the most neglected part of her oeuvre, deserve attention: consider, for example, the superb sheet representing Marie Antoinette in a park (fig. 11).²⁸

Whenever possible, Vigée Le Brun placed emphasis on her sitters' temperaments and expressive features. She varied costumes, poses, and settings, imbuing state and ceremonial portraits with sumptuous solemnity, portraits of actors and singers with dynamic vivacity and dramatic flair, likenesses of society women or courtesans with seductive nonchalance, and those of children with cheerful or mischievous innocence. It is as if her own optimistic temperament colored her art. The sitters in many of the works she sent to the



Fig. 9. Vigée Le Brun. *Madame Molé-Reymond*, 1786. Oil on wood, 41 × 30 in. (104 × 76 cm). Signed and dated (upper right): *Louise Vigée Le Brun f / 1786*. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (MI 694)

Salons, beginning with her own self-portraits, smile widely—an expression that provoked controversy at the time.²⁹

The critical avant-garde was promoting a return to the style of classical antiquity and viewed Vigée Le Brun's innovations as a breach of the new order, marked by feminine affectation. However, certain artists, including David, studied her work. The clients who poured into Vigée Le Brun's atelier knew she would capture not only their appearance but also their characters, and



Fig. 10. Vigée Le Brun. *Madame Perregaux*, 1789. Probably exhibited at the Salon of 1791. Oil on wood, 39 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 30 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (99.6 × 78.5 cm). Signed and dated (lower left): *Louise Vigée Le Brun f. 1789*. Wallace Collection, London (P457)

even fleeting emotional states. The theorist who best understood that aspect of portrait painting as practiced by Vigée Le Brun was Pierre Charles Levesque (1736–1812):

The most difficult expressions to capture, & which require the most talent on the artist's part, are not those of the violent passions . . . but rather the gentle passions that come closest to the tranquility of the soul.



Fig. 11. Vigée Le Brun. *Marie Antoinette in a Park*, ca. 1780–81. Black chalk, stumping, and white chalk, on blue antique laid paper, 23¹/₈ × 15⁷/₈ in. (58.7 × 40.3 cm). Private collection

It even seems that the painter of portraits must in that respect experience a greater difficulty than the history painter. . . . The sitter grows tired . . . boredom overtakes her . . . she now expresses nothing but a languor resembling a state of death. The painter who wants to give expression to his work must have mental resources sufficient to restore the life to his sitter, as it were, by the pleasantness of his conversation, or he must await another session for the opportunity to animate his work. . . .

Quickness, a quality that is rather immaterial in the other genres, would be very useful to the portrait painter, because it would spare him the inconvenience of fatiguing his sitter.³⁰

Vigée Le Brun preferred clothing that freed the body, unpowdered hair, and a minimum of artifice. When she could, she forbade her sitters to wear the panier gowns, jewelry, and elaborate hairstyles then in vogue, replacing them with tunics, shawls, and turbans. While her portraits were truthful, she endowed even the plainest of her female sitters with grace and real sophistication.

Vigée Le Brun, without altering Marie Antoinette's essential likeness, makes her look radiant, recognizable as the sovereign by her bearing and Olympian gaze (cat. 16). Her official portraits of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna (cat. 58) and her mother-in-law, Maria Fyodorovna (fig. 7), are hardly less splendid. Other portraitists faced with the same subjects succeeded less well.

Some of the women have a sensuality and erotic charge that would certainly have pleased Renoir. One has only to look at Vigée Le Brun's comtesse Du Barry, retired from the court but still supremely beautiful and provocative with her doe eyes; the courtesan Madame Grand, transformed into a modern Saint Cecilia; the actress and singer Madame Dugazon in the role of Nina, waiting breathlessly for a lover's arrival; the adventuress Gabrielle Hyacinthe Roland, enveloped in her long hair; and Emma Hart disguised as a "cheerful Ariadne" (see fig. 6), or as a Cumaean sibyl (see cat. 50). Other portraits are remarkable for the contemplative air of their subjects, such as the elegant comtesse de la Châtre in English dress (cat. 39) and the superb marquise d'Aguesseau de Fresnes (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.).

Following the ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau, a mother might be represented as a Madonna or in a Raphaellesque pose, which Vigée Le Brun popularized in two superb self-portraits (figs. 12, 13). Her compositions were characterized by a minimum of domestic furnishings and by dark or neutral backgrounds. But she also represented her subjects in natural settings. The oil paint was often applied as *frottis* or glazes, and her varied palette was employed with

discernment. Her portraits of children and adolescents—of Etienne Vigée (cat. 1), of the androgynous Henryk Lubomirski (cat. 38), or finally, of Grand Duchess Alexandra Pavlovna and her sister (cat. 59)—display signs of a subtle understanding of the psychology of the young.

Pierre Charles Levesque particularly praised the self-portrait of Vigée Le Brun with her daughter, which was often called *Maternal Tenderness*, and was exhibited at the Salon of 1787 (fig. 13):

I believe it is a failing on the part of artists to pose the people who request portraits. All individuals have their own customary attitudes. . . . One sees in the portraits of Titian & van Dyck that their sitters presented themselves to the artists as they were. One finds that same naïveté of nature in the portraits done in England over the last few years. It is because of this truth that family pictures produced in that nation are quite touching. It is also because of this truth that the public has recently seen with such pleasure the painting in which Mme Le Brun represented herself with her daughter.³¹

Her most remarkable portraits of male subjects are of Calonne (cat. 25), the aristocrat Emmanuel de Crussol (cat. 36), and the painter Hubert Robert (fig. 14). Tours de force, they are remarkable character studies, and the workmanship is suave and perfectly controlled. David, when he saw Vigée Le Brun's *Giovanni Paisiello* (cat. 49) at the Salon of 1791, where his own rather pallid portrait *Comtesse de Sorcy-Thélusson* (Neue Pinakothek, Munich) was exhibited, is said to have declared to his pupils, "You'd think . . . my portrait was done by a woman and the Paisiello by a man."

Despite her renown, the Goncourt brothers, nineteenth-century champions of French art and eighteenth-century women, devoted only a few lines to Vigée Le Brun, and some historians in the English-speaking world seem intent on misrepresenting her life and work. Michael Levey, in his authoritative study of eighteenth-century French painting and sculpture, reduces Vigée Le Brun to an ambitious woman intent on conquering the Académie royale, until then reserved for men. He denies her any true creative talent: "It must be admitted that in the very real success Madame Vigée-Le Brun enjoyed there is significance. She was to employ—if not positively exploit—her own femininity, throwing it over her female sitters with almost exaggerated effect."³² In fact, Vigée Le Brun has been criticized for having been a "woman painter" and not a "painter who was a woman." But that view overlooks the climate of the



Fig. 12. Vigée Le Brun. *Self-Portrait with Her Daughter Julie (à l'Antique)*, 1789. Oil on wood, 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 37 in. (130 × 94 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3068)

age, when feelings were expressed without restraint. In the arts such expression tended toward eloquence: that is why the comte de Caylus, an influential art theorist, in 1761 founded the “competition for the head that expresses the soul’s passions,” promoting a new emotional register. David and Houdon are among those who also tried their hands.



Fig. 13. Vigée Le Brun. *Self-Portrait with Her Daughter Julie (Maternal Tenderness)*, 1786. Oil on wood, 41 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 33 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (105 × 84 cm). Signed and dated (upper right): *Louise Vigée Le Brun f. 1786*. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3069)

Vigée Le Brun's life and work give the lie to the assumption behind the question asked by the art historian Linda Nochlin in 1971: "Why have there been no great women artists?"³³ In fact, Vigée Le Brun poses a serious problem for certain proponents of a hardline feminism. The artist never experienced her femininity as a curse or an obstacle to the full realization of her intellectual and creative potential. She gloried in it. In her memoirs, she speaks bluntly of the enmity between herself and her main rival, Labille-Guiard (although without naming her). Labille-Guiard had adopted a position favorable to the Revolution,

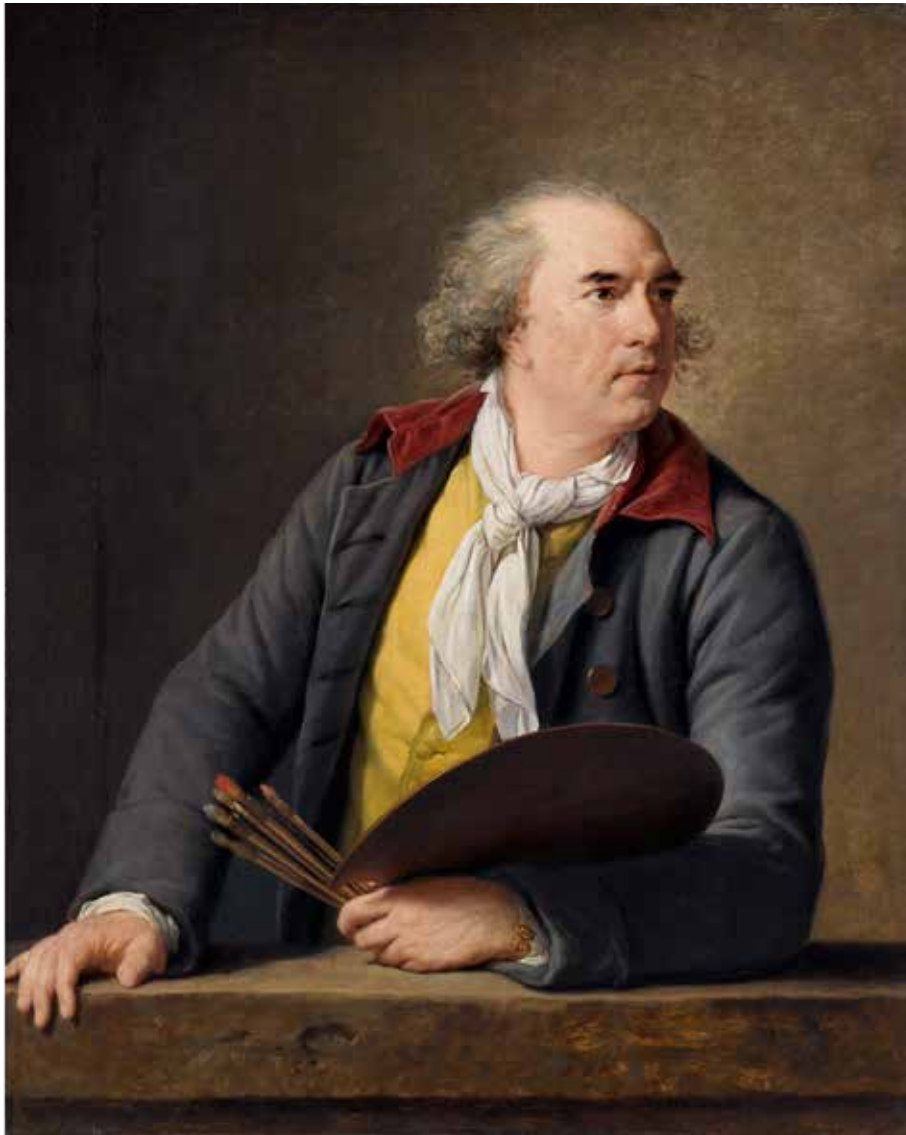


Fig. 14. Vigée Le Brun. *Hubert Robert*, 1788. Oil on wood, 41 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 33 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (105 × 84 cm). Signed (upper right): *E. Vigée Le Brun*. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3055)

which, however, caused her enormous harm, as her most monumental composition, *The Reception of a Chevalier of Saint-Lazare by the Comte de Provence, Grand Master of the Order*, was destroyed by order of functionaries of the Revolutionary government in 1793, an iconoclastic act from which she never recovered.³⁴

Finally, Vigée Le Brun never disavowed her loyalty to the legitimist cause, an attitude that was shared by the many French who were horrified by the Reign of Terror and the incessant wars of the regimes that followed. Among them were one of the giants of French literature, François René de Chateaubriand,



Fig. 15. Mary Cassatt (American, 1844–1926). *Mother and Child*, ca. 1890. Oil on wood, 35½ × 25⅜ in. (90.2 × 64.5 cm). Signed (lower left): *Mary Cassatt*. Wichita Art Museum, Wichita, Kansas, Roland P. Murdock Collection (M109.53)

and his wife, Céleste Buisson de la Vigne. Under the Restoration, Vigée Le Brun produced a history painting for them, *The Apotheosis of Marie Antoinette*.³⁵ At some point during the twentieth century, that work mysteriously disappeared from the chapel of the Infirmierie Marie-Thérèse in the rue Denfert-Rochereau and sadly can no longer be traced.

Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex*, anathematized Vigée Le Brun by including her among a group of wholly self-absorbed female narcissists:

Instead of giving herself generously to a work she undertakes, a woman too often considers it simply as an adornment of her life; the book and the picture are merely some of her inessential means for exhibiting in public that essential reality: her own self. Moreover, it is her own self that is the principal—sometimes the unique—subject of interest to her: Mme Vigée-Lebrun never wearied of putting her smiling maternity on her canvases. . . .³⁶

The author seems to be saying that happy motherhood, as part of private experience, ought to go uncelebrated. And

yet, in the second half of the nineteenth century and in the early part of the twentieth, maternity would become a theme in painting that Pierre Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt (fig. 15), Paul Gauguin, and Pablo Picasso, among others, sought to reinterpret, and they are not criticized for it. Mary Sheriff indicates the pointlessness of de Beauvoir's remark, since Vigée Le Brun painted only two portraits in which she represented herself with her daughter, and both of them, like *Marie Antoinette and Her Children* and the sublime *Madame Rousseau and Her Daughter* (fig. 16), have their iconographic source in engravings of Italian High Renaissance paintings.³⁷ They are primarily tributes to Raphael, a master Vigée Le Brun revered and who, more than any other artist, influenced French painting over the centuries.³⁸

A complete inventory of Vigée Le Brun's oeuvre would include nearly a thousand works, now in private and public collections in many countries. It is in France, Russia, and the United States that most of them can be found, while the Musée du Louvre and the Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon hold the largest number of her masterpieces.



Fig. 16. Vigée Le Brun. *Madame Rousseau and Her Daughter*, 1789. Oil on wood, 45½ × 34 in. (115.5 × 86.5 cm). Signed and dated (lower right, on balustrade): *L. Vigée Le Brun f. 1789*. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (RF 2681)

Our objective has been to revitalize the image of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun. To this end, by favoring a historical and contextual approach, it was indispensable to assemble a major exhibition and catalogue that would allow the public to follow the compelling story of her life, understand the immense celebrity she enjoyed in her own time, and appreciate her art in all its variety, vitality, and technical refinement.



Brun. f1780

THE WOMEN OF THE FRENCH ROYAL ACADEMY

KATHARINE BAETJER

The career of Vigée Le Brun (and of all of the women in the Paris art world of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) was shaped in great part by the fact that access to the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture was strictly limited, and it is therefore important to understand the ways in which this body functioned. The Académie royale was established in 1648.¹ The petitioners, painters and sculptors already employed by the court and the crown, argued that in view of their superior training, education, and moral purpose, they should be protected from regulations governing the larger body of master artisans and dealers of the Paris guild, or *maîtrise*. The academy they proposed would safeguard members' rights should the guild continue to fine them, seize their works, or seek legal redress for noncompliance with regulations. The group was led by Charles Le Brun.² He and others practiced classicizing narrative styles influenced by Nicolas Poussin, and they looked to Poussin and to Rome's Accademia di San Luca for inspiration.³

The Académie royale was a self-perpetuating deliberative and teaching institution established by royal mandate.⁴ Twelve founders met to conduct its business, each of them taking charge for a month, on a rotating schedule. New members were required to present a work or works of art and pay an admission fee. A room of the academy was available for two hours every afternoon except Sundays and holidays for life-drawing classes open to any (male) student who could pay a portion of the cost for the services of the (nude male) model. The academician in charge posed the model and corrected the students' drawings (fig. 17). Later, direct financial subsidy was provided to the academy by the government.⁵ The organization gained a formal structure, advisory protectors, a director, chancellor, rectors, and counsellors in addition to twelve

Detail, cat. 9. *Peace Bringing Back Abundance*, 1780. Paris, Salon, 1783

professors, and the number of senior members soon rose from twelve to forty. These officials made decisions for the entire body in open assembly. Lectures were offered, and qualified students were provided with instruction in anatomy, geometry, and perspective. Later it was stipulated that professors would be promoted only from among adjunct professors who showed competence in history painting. Le Brun was named chancellor and then director, while Jean Baptiste Colbert held oversight as the superintendent of the king's building works.⁶ He established—and the ministry financed—the Académie de France in Rome in the belief that an artist's education was incomplete without study in Italy.

Membership of the Paris academy conferred immediate access to royal and other official commissions from those occupying positions of power in the fine arts administration. Louis XIV and until 1661 the regent, members of the royal family, courtiers, and other officials formed an exclusive group of patrons centered around Versailles, which had become one of the great building enterprises of the later seventeenth century. The château was largely constructed and its interiors decorated in two campaigns initiated in 1669 and 1678. It was critical to have the contacts the Académie royale afforded with the palace, the center of court life and the seat of government from 1682 until the Revolution.

The academicians' first public exhibition was held in 1667, and six further exhibitions were staged between 1669 and 1683, with a seventh in 1699.⁷ That of 1673 was accompanied by a hand list, or *livret*, which became standard, and in 1699 the display was installed for the first time in the palace of the Louvre. While those who belonged to the *maîtrise*, which admitted women, could offer their work for public sale as and when they chose, academicians were barred by statute from doing so and at first exhibited privately in their studios. From the late seventeenth century through the eighteenth they therefore depended upon the so-called Salons as their public venue.

From 1648, foreigners were admitted but not women. The latter subject was raised for the first time in 1663, when without forewarning Le Brun announced, "It is an obligation and does honor to the Académie, in accordance with the King's intention, which is to extend his favor to all those who excel in the arts of Painting and Sculpture, to include those who are judged worthy without regard to difference of sex."⁸ He then presented a painting by "Mademoiselle" Girardon. The candidate was the first and almost certainly the only married woman admitted in the seventeenth century. Her maiden name was Catherine Duchemin and since 1657 she had been the

Fig. 17. Charles Joseph Natoire (French, 1700–1777). *The Life Class at the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, 1746, 1746. Signed and dated (lower center): C. NATOIRE/F. 1746. Pen, black and brown ink, gray wash and watercolor over black chalk, 17^{7/8} × 12^{3/4} in. (45.4 × 32.3 cm). The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London (D.1952.RW.3973)



Fig. 18. Madeleine Boullogne (French, 1646–1710). *Trophies of War*, ca. 1673. Paris, Salon, 1673, p. 36. Oil on canvas, 46⁷/₈ × 59¹/₂ in. (119 × 151 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 7129)



wife of the academician and sculptor François Girardon.⁹ There is no verifiable information about her training.¹⁰ What is certain is that her husband was a protégé of Le Brun's, who, given charge in 1663 of a new program of decoration for the Galerie d'Apollon at Versailles, engaged Girardon to model the stuccos.

In what would become highly standardized language, the company, admiring Mademoiselle Girardon's work and knowing her merits, agreed to admit her to the academy and inform her by letter.¹¹ A still life of flowers in a basket that Charles Le Brun submitted on her behalf was accepted as her reception piece and displayed among the paintings in the academy's rooms at the Louvre, but it has since disappeared.¹² Only one modest canvas by her is known, a still life of peaches, grapes, and roses.¹³ She did not show at any of the several Salons for which she was eligible, but meanwhile became the mother of ten children. Her admission must have been intended—by Le Brun—to honor her ambitious, uxorious husband as much as, if not more than, herself.

Paintings by Geneviève and Madeleine Boullogne were presented in 1669 by their father, the academician Louis I Boullogne.¹⁴ Geneviève's submission showed a vase of flowers, Madeleine's, poppies and the foliage of the thistle plant. Louis I wished them to be honored with the title "academician" so that they would continue their studies and improve their skills. In view of their

virtues, and to encourage others, the academicians agreed and sent letters. The *livret* for the 1673 Salon lists a landscape by Geneviève Boullogne.¹⁵ That year Madeleine sent six trophies of arms painted for Versailles (three survive) (see fig. 18) and a still life of fruit.¹⁶ Thirty years later, in 1704, she showed seven still lifes.¹⁷ The Boullogne sisters had two younger brothers, Bon and Louis II, who attended the academy drawing classes.¹⁸ Each spent five years in Rome and both were history painters. Bon was received in 1677 and became a professor and painter to the king. Admitted in 1681, Louis II attained the ranks of professor, rector, and director, as well as painter to the king. The family operated a successful practice in which the sisters must have shared but nothing more is heard of them. They were represented at the academy by a single work titled *Several Designs of Figures after the Model and Designs of Architecture*.¹⁹ Doubtless they also advanced through family ties, as was often the case especially in the late seventeenth century.

The fourth and the most talented French woman entrant of that period seems by report to have been Elisabeth Sophie Chéron, daughter of a minor artist and engraver.²⁰ When Le Brun presented two of her portraits in 1672, the academicians judged them to be exceptionally strong for an artist of her sex.²¹ They resolved to admit her and notify her by letter and “joyfully” acceded to her request that they accept her self-portrait (fig. 19) as a reception piece.²² It was exhibited at the 1673 Salon.²³ In 1699, the same painting was evidently shown again, and in 1704, Chéron sent eleven portraits and disguised portraits and a biblical subject, *Descent from the Cross*.²⁴ She was described by a major critic, Antoine Joseph Dézallier d’Argenville, as gifted in history painting, making fine drawings from prints after the antique.²⁵ Admired in the realm of arts and letters, Chéron knew Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and in 1694 published *Essay de pseumes et cantiques mis en vers et enrichis de figures*. She was also recognized by the Accademia dei Ricovrati in Padua.²⁶

Later, Anne Marie Renée Strésor, Dorothee Massé, and Catherine Perrot gained full or provisional entry.²⁷ The work of Strésor was presented in 1676, and the assembly esteemed and received her.²⁸ Her miniature of Christ and Saint Paul on the Road to Damascus was placed in a window embrasure in the academy’s rooms.²⁹ In 1680, the secretary proposed a sculpture of foliage delicately carved in wood by Dorothee Massé.³⁰ She, however, was accepted only preliminarily and with a caution: that while the king’s grace should be extended to her, *this did not constitute a precedent for the future*.³¹ A similar qualification was issued in 1682 when Catherine Perrot was admitted.³² Her miniature, showing a pot of flowers, was installed with that by Strésor.³³

Chéron and Strésor tried historical subjects but did not risk submitting history paintings. All of the women were barred from the various forms of academic instructions, and all were ineligible for advancement. The method by which they were admitted in absentia and informed in writing kept them at a distance. Apparently none of them attended the assemblies or participated in the election of new members. Only the Boullogne sisters and Chéron took advantage of the one important option open to them, exhibiting at the 1704 Salon. Even this may have given cause for anxiety to those belonging to the governing body, as in 1706 a meeting was held for the purpose of stipulating that in the future women need not present their work for admission, as they would no longer be accepted.³⁴

The central, universally understood issue was that women were excluded from drawing the male nude. As, absent knowledge of human anatomy, it was impossible for women to infuse their narratives with life, they were effectively barred by their inadequate training from painting historical, mythological, or religious subjects. In the words of André Félibien, critic and honorary counsellor of the Académie royale:

He who makes perfect landscapes is above another who only paints fruit, flowers, or seashells. He who paints living animals is worthier of estimation than those who paint only things that are dead and without movement. And as the figure of man is the most perfect work of God on earth, it is also certain that he who becomes an imitator of God by painting human figures is much more excellent than all the others. However, even though it is no small thing to make the figure of a man appear as if alive, and to give the appearance of movement to that which has none, nevertheless a painter who only makes portraits . . . may not pretend to the honor accorded to the most learned. For that, it is necessary to progress from the single figure to the representation of several together, to depict history and myth . . . the virtues of great men and the most elevated mysteries.³⁵

Administrators for the crown would hold to this standard, even as the so-called Rubénistes declared war on the Poussinistes, color gained the same importance as drawing, study of the northern schools was recommended if not compulsory, and the academy embraced genre painting and landscape as well as portraiture and still life.

When the academicians reversed their position of 1706, it was to recognize Rosalba Carriera, the first of three foreign women to attain membership.



Fig. 19. Elisabeth Sophie Chéron (French, 1648–1711). *Self-Portrait*, 1672. Paris, Salon, 1673, p. 36. Oil on canvas, oval, 34⁵/₈ × 28³/₄ in. (88 × 73 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3239)

Invited by the collector Pierre Crozat, Carriera left her native Venice for Paris, where her reputation had preceded her, and she was greeted with acclaim.³⁶ In addition to various pastel portraits, she painted for Crozat a series of female heads, allegories of the four seasons.³⁷ Louis XV had succeeded in 1715 at the age of five, and in the summer of 1720, Carriera began a small pastel of the boy king; a week later she set to work on another, larger one, and she also painted him in miniature.³⁸ He accorded her further sittings through the autumn. It would have been expected that Carriera would seek entry to the academy, and on October 26, 1720, she caused to be brought before the members a pastel

representing Louis XV.³⁹ Acknowledging her memberships in the academies of Rome, Florence, and Bologna, her colleagues received her, but even though she was a highly distinguished visitor, the qualification that her admission did not constitute a precedent was set down in the register. She attended a meeting on November 9 and in 1721, from Venice, sent her reception piece, *Nymph of Apollo with a Laurel Wreath*, a pastel lauded in the February 1722 *Mercure de France*.⁴⁰

A younger foreigner who received high praise was Margareta Haverman.⁴¹ Trained in Amsterdam, she was the only pupil of the well-known flower painter, Jan van Huysum. She married a French architect, Jacques de Mondoteguy, and they moved to Paris, where on January 31, 1722, she sent to the academy a still life of fruit and flowers. Haverman was present when the academicians received her, with their usual caveat, and requested an example of her work. However her membership was revoked in 1723, either owing to a scandal, or more likely because she failed to submit her reception piece within the usual time, and she is never heard of again as a painter.⁴²

Anna Dorothea Therbusch trained with her father, the portraitist Georg Lisiewski.⁴³ She married in 1742 and had three children. Influenced by Antoine Pesne and by the French Rococo pictures of Watteau and his circle in the collection of Frederick II of Prussia, she painted genre scenes in the French taste while developing gradually as a skilled portraitist. She worked at the princely courts of Stuttgart and Mannheim in the early 1760s, and her reputation preceded her to Paris, where she became the only German academician. On February 28, 1767, Therbusch's works were presented, she was admitted, and a half-length study of a man leaning on a table illuminated by the light of a shaded candle was selected as her reception piece.⁴⁴ She attended the assembly of March 28 to express her thanks. Later, in Berlin, she received commissions from both Frederick II and Catherine II of Russia and joined the academies of Stuttgart, Bologna, and Vienna. Little risk had been attached to her reception: like Carriera, who had died, she did not stay in Paris.

Five French women sought admission in the second half of the eighteenth century. A pupil of adjunct professor Joseph Marie Vien, whom she married in 1757, Marie Thérèse Reboul was proposed by her husband and with the usual qualifier was received the same year.⁴⁵ Vien presented several of her "miniatures" showing objects of natural history. When informed of her admission in writing, she selected for presentation a watercolor of two pigeons on the branch of a tree.⁴⁶ Madame Vien attended the assembly of August 27 and was the first woman in the eighteenth century to take advantage of access to the Salons, by then held every two years. She exhibited in 1757, 1759, 1763, 1765,



Fig. 20. Anne Vallayer-Coster (French, 1744–1818). *Bouquet of Flowers with Grapes and Apples*. Oil on canvas, oval, 20½ × 24¼ in. (52.1 × 61.5 cm). Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{lle} Vallayer / 1775*. Paris, Salon, 1775, under no. 102, with its pendant. Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, Institut de France, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat

and 1767.⁴⁷ Her watercolors (the presumed medium, based on slender evidence) are listed vaguely in the *livrets* as “morceaux,” “tableaux,” and “en Miniature.” She was mentioned in the 1759 press, and in his 1763 review, the critic Denis Diderot admired her birds, insects, and flowers.⁴⁸

Anne Vallayer, later Vallayer-Coster, daughter of a goldsmith, may have studied with a botanical illustrator as well as with the marine painter Joseph Vernet but equally was influenced by Jean Siméon Chardin.⁴⁹ For her reception, on July 28, 1770, she submitted several paintings from which two, showing instruments of music and the visual arts, were chosen, and she was seated.⁵⁰ She made a successful debut at the 1771 Salon with eleven works representing musical and other instruments, natural history subjects, and fruit and vegetables, as well as a painting of “A bas-relief.”⁵¹ These attracted attention and a flattering appraisal from Diderot.⁵² In opposition to the traditional focus on invention, Diderot drew attention to Vallayer’s gift for imitation, which reflected a helpful shift in taste.

Vallayer knew she must bring her work before the public, and from 1771 until 1789 she sent as many as eight to ten paintings to each of the biennial Salons (fig. 20).⁵³ Among those who owned her pictures were the prince de Conti, a cousin of Louis XV’s, and Jean Baptiste François de Montullé, an adviser to

the Académie.⁵⁴ Her 1779 Salon exhibits included a canvas representing a vestal virgin belonging to Marie Antoinette. In that year and the following she painted all three of Louis XVI's aunts and made a pastel of the queen, whose influence was instrumental in securing for her an apartment in the Louvre.

Marie Suzanne Giroust trained with the pastelist Maurice Quentin de La Tour and with Joseph Marie Vien.⁵⁵ In the latter's studio, she met the Swedish portraitist Alexander Roslin, who in 1753 had joined the French academy, and they married and had six children. Madame Roslin was received and admitted on September 1, 1770.⁵⁶ One of the pastels presented by her husband, a counsellor, was her portrait of the sculptor Jean Baptiste Pigalle, which the assembly accepted, inviting her to take her seat. Pigalle's portrait and others were shown at the 1771 Salon.⁵⁷ Having taken her into their ranks, the assembly promptly introduced new guidelines.⁵⁸ On September 28, the academicians noted that as much as they were pleased to encourage females, their admission was to a degree alien to the constitution: their number should not exceed and need not reach four. The last of four (after Therbusch, Reboul, and Vallayer) to enter, Madame Roslin died in 1772, thereby creating an opening.

Madame Therbusch having also expired, in 1782, the assembly convened on May 31, 1783, to consider the candidacies of Elisabeth Louise Vigée, wife of the picture dealer Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun, and Adélaïde Labille, wife of Louis Nicolas Guiard.⁵⁹ Labille-Guiard's portraits were subject to a review process more typical of the admission of a male. Once her pastels had been presented by Roslin, she was accorded preliminary admission by voice vote. Her pastel of the sculptor Augustin Pajou was selected as one of two reception pieces, and it was stipulated that she would paint a second, the subject to be decided by the director. She was received that day but seated later, with Vigée Le Brun, on June 7, 1783.⁶⁰

Labille-Guiard was as highly trained as a woman could be, having studied with a miniaturist, with the pastelist Maurice Quentin de La Tour, and with the painter François André Vincent. She had exhibited at the Académie de Saint-Luc and also at the Salon de la Correspondance.⁶¹ Conspicuously independent, separated from her husband, and a teacher of female students, she made her own way and as an academician sought against the odds to increase the number of women admitted. Among her exhibits in 1783 were a remarkable lifesize self-portrait with two pupils (fig. 21) and more than a half-dozen pastels of fellow academicians (while it was customary for candidates to paint members, the many tributes to her fellows could be read as an adept move on her part). Her self-portrait attracted a great deal of mostly positive press

attention. She sent numerous works to each subsequent Salon and was engaged by the king's aunts, Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, both of whom sat for her, as their court painter.⁶² As she held democratic sentiments, she remained in France and survived the Revolution, exhibiting whenever possible, but her career was greatly affected and restricted by political and cultural circumstances in her native country.

On the same day, May 31, 1783, the academy was obliged “par ordre” to receive Vigée Le Brun.⁶³ No such event had occurred before. Habitually conservative and protective of their interests, the academicians directed that the letter addressing this matter—sent on behalf of Louis XVI by his minister, comte d'Angiviller—be read into the register. The letter states that when the minister placed before Marie Antoinette the article in the statutes excluding anyone involved directly or indirectly in the sale of works of art, the queen asked him to secure a dispensation from the king. Louis XVI held that the circumstances were unlikely to recur. In view of the queen's support and Madame Le Brun's exceptional abilities, and as her husband was involved in the art trade and not the candidate herself, she must be admitted. The king also ruled that the number of women members would continue to be limited to four.

When and what did Vigée Le Brun submit? Her 1780 painting *Peace Bringing Back Abundance* (cat. 9) was not presented to the assembly but was listed as “the reception piece given by the author” in the hand list of the 1783 Salon.⁶⁴ She was seeking recognition as a history painter. Vigée Le Brun offered a gloss on the difficulty of her circumstances in the *Souvenirs*, observing that the director, Jean Baptiste Marie Pierre, opposed the membership of women despite the fact that Reboul and Vallayer already belonged.⁶⁵ She then recounted that Vernet admired her recent self-portrait, and decided to propose her, and rather breezily mentioned that a cabal formed in her favor.

The registers are sometimes silent on the category in which an artist was received, and the academicians held the right to choose, but this was usually determined by the content of the applicant's submissions. Duchemin, the Boullogne sisters, Haverman, and Perrot were admitted as flower painters; Stré-sor and Reboul as miniaturists; Carriera and Giroust as pastelists; Therbusch and Vallayer as genre painters; while Chéron, Labille-Guiard, and Vigée Le Brun were received as portraitists.⁶⁶

D'Angiviller and Pierre were ardent exponents of history painting. They would have ensured that the 1770 recommendation on limiting the membership of women remained the rule and would have opposed the admission of a woman as a history painter. Royal command was the only route by which



Vigée Le Brun overcame the provision against her connection with a dealer, a provision emphatically restated in 1777.⁶⁷ While she exhibited her best work in the Salons of 1783, 1785, 1787, and 1789, her association with the queen led her to seek exile in the first days of the Revolution. She soon secured the patronage of other exiles from France and of foreign aristocrats, princes, and monarchs. In this endeavor she was uniquely successful. Meanwhile the Académie royale ceased to exist by decree of the Assemblée Nationale on August 8, 1793.⁶⁸ The total number of academicians had been close to five hundred fifty, and more than one hundred others had been accorded preliminary admission. Of that number, fifteen were women. Doubtless in the belief that their standing would improve under the new government, female artists flocked to the first open Salon, that of 1791. The near future, however, would be a sore disappointment for them both culturally and politically.

Fig. 21. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard (French, 1749–1803), *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils, Marie Gabrielle Capet (1761–1818) and Marie Marguerite Carreaux de Rosemond (died 1788)*. Signed and dated (left, on easel): *Labille f^{me} Guiard / 1785*. Oil on canvas, 83 × 59½ in. (210.8 × 151.1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Julia A. Berwind, 1953 (53.225.5)



ELISABETH LOUISE VIGÉE LE BRUN AND THE EUROPEAN SPIRIT

PAUL LANG

In these modern times, the mind should be European.

—Germaine de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, 1810

With the exception of one visit to Flanders and Holland in 1781, Vigée Le Brun was not a great traveler before 1789, and it was the turbulence of the Revolution that compelled her to traverse the length of Europe. In 1789 she was the first artist to choose the path of exile.¹ She became part of a second wave of departures, called the “fearful” emigration, brought on, after the alarming disturbances of the summer, by the march on Versailles in October.² The portraitist would be absent from the French capital for a dozen years, from October 6, 1789, until January 18, 1802. Certain that the political situation would stabilize, she imagined that she would be able to return to Paris by September 1790.³ For her, then, a sojourn in Italy undertaken in the interest of a belated education in the arts—the painter was thirty-four at the time—could further legitimize her supremacy on the Paris art scene.⁴

ITALY, 1789–92

In the course of her travels, the artist stopped in Bologna, where on November 3, 1789, she was elected to the Accademia Clementina. In Florence, she boldly took up the proposal that she should paint her self-portrait for the famous Corridoio Vasariano (cat. 42).⁵ Then, shortly after her arrival in Rome and as a result of the positive reception of this self-portrait, she was accepted into the Accademia

Detail, cat. 50. Vigée Le Brun. *Life Study of Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl*, 1792



Fig. 22. Angelica Kauffmann (Swiss, 1741–1807). *Self-Portrait*, 1787. Oil on canvas, 50³/₈ × 37 in. (128 × 94 cm). Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (62115)

di San Luca. Exhibiting the first painting of her exile in her atelier, she enjoyed a success equal to that obtained by Jacques Louis David with *The Oath of the Horatii* (Musée du Louvre) in Rome in 1785, even though, as François Guillaume Ménégeot, director of the Académie de France in that city, remarked, “the Romans are not laudatory, especially when it comes to foreigners.”⁶

“They call me Mme Van Dyck, Mme Rubens,” she proclaimed in her correspondence,⁷ easily assuming these titles. She deliberately did not send her self-portrait to Florence until September 1791, choosing instead, during these first years abroad, to display the picture to promote her artistry, in a strategy to conquer a new market. In Rome, the artist found herself in competition with the other great woman painter of her time, Angelica Kauffmann.⁸ Vigée Le Brun was indebted to her rival for the major artistic impulses of her stay in the city,⁹ foremost among them her extended research into the practice of the mythological portrait, as well as the growing importance she would grant to landscape.

On April 17, 1790, the artist left the Eternal City for Naples, where she would reside intermittently until March 1792, her visits prolonged

by royal commissions from Queen Maria Carolina, Marie Antoinette’s elder sister. There she began a third portrait of the former Emma Hart: *Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl* (1792, private collection). The painting is represented here by the first, bust-length version, titled *Life Study of Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl* (cat. 50). Impressed by the celebrated improvisations of her sitter,¹⁰ the artist executed what would prove to be her favorite work. If the pose owes much to Kauffmann’s Florentine self-portrait (fig. 22), the work was also influenced by Domenichino (fig. 23), Guido Reni, and Guercino, whose paintings were readily available to her as part of the patrimony of Italy. Vigée Le Brun would always consider it a history painting, mentioning it in her *Souvenirs* as “the picture of a Sibyl . . . after Lady Hamilton.”¹¹ *The Sibyl*, which was completed in spring 1792, would thereafter serve her strategically in her quest for

recognition and in her search for new commissions.¹² During a visit to Parma in summer 1792, she was accepted as a member of the Accademia di Belle Arti and exhibited her “masterpiece”; she would later revel in the memory of the enthusiastic reactions of the students who identified the work as belonging to the Italian school.¹³

Vigée Le Brun left Naples for Rome in March 1792 with the declared aim of “once again admiring Raphael in all his glory.”¹⁴ Pursuing this interest in Florence, she copied his portrait of Bindo Altoviti (ca. 1515, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), which was considered a self-portrait at the time.¹⁵ In May 1792, the French artist and archaeologist Dominique Vivant Denon exhibited *The Sibyl* at his home in Venice. It was Vivant Denon, later known as “Napoleon’s eye,” who would capture, in his engraving of Vigée Le Brun (fig. 24), the dual purpose of her stay in Italy.¹⁶ In this image, the artist appears in the same position as in her Florentine self-portrait (cat. 42), but the presumed self-portrait of Raphael replaces that of the queen on the easel, thus signifying her intense productivity and drawing attention to the rich fruits of her journey to the Italian peninsula.



Fig. 23. Domenichino (Italian, 1581–1641). *The Cumaean Sibyl*, 1616–17. Oil on canvas, 48³/₈ × 37 in. (123 × 94 cm). Galleria Borghese, Rome (55)

VIENNA, 1792–95

The fall of the French monarchy on August 10, 1792, made a return to Paris totally inconceivable for Vigée Le Brun, and she decided to move to Vienna. There she was joined by the artist Auguste Rivière, her sister-in-law’s brother, who would be at her side throughout the balance of her years abroad, committing himself to the dissemination of her portraits by means of copies.¹⁷

While in Paris her affiliation with the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture had been essential, in Vienna, her membership in several Italian academies appeared incidental. Here she established connections with her patrons directly, without the legitimization of an institution. In fact, upon her arrival in November 1792, the artist seems to have avoided the Akademie der



Fig. 24. Dominique Vivant Denon (French, 1747–1825). *Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun*, 1792. Engraving, 7¼ × 5⅜ in. (18.5 × 13.7 cm). Institut de France, Paris

Bildenden Künste, given that its vice director, Heinrich Friedrich Füger (fig. 25), could be perceived as a competitor on the Viennese portrait market. The most solid support came from Prince Kaunitz-Rietberg, who invited her to exhibit *The Sibyl* for two weeks at his palace. Not only did this promotional strategy elicit many commissions,¹⁸ but the work also sparked the frequent use of mythological portraiture in her Viennese production and influenced the poses chosen by many sitters.¹⁹

In Vienna, which she called “a perfect Babel,” Vigée Le Brun met former Paris acquaintances, particularly French émigrés acting as if they were ambassadors of a pretend French government in exile. However, she rarely painted them because their finances were precarious and they could no longer afford the services of a notoriously expensive portraitist. In addition, the “Polignac clan” was kept at a distance by the court, and this reluctant welcome had certain repercussions for her, as she obtained no significant commissions from the imperial authorities. Nevertheless, the painter “worked a great deal in Vienna,”²⁰ appealing to a clientele recruited from the aristocracy. The business they brought her, though perceived as less prestigious than imperial commissions,

was still extremely lucrative. In April 1795 she left Vienna, where, in contrast to her stay in Italy, she did not benefit from any significant new influences.

“A SECOND HOMELAND,” 1795–1801

En route to Saint Petersburg, Vigée Le Brun stopped in Dresden, where she discovered the riches of what she called “that famous gallery.” Prince Elector Frederick Augustus III invited her to present *The Sibyl* there, believing that the composition deserved to be associated with the lessons in art history that were illustrated by his fabulous collections. As in Parma and Venice, the decision to display the painting stemmed from a desire for official approval, rather than an effort to obtain commissions.

Vigée Le Brun’s move to the capital of the tsars in July 1795 belonged to a prestigious tradition of cultural relations between France and Russia dating back to Peter the Great.²¹ Furthermore, she had frequented the Russian community in ancien régime Paris, and she was already well known on the banks of the Neva owing to the accounts of the tsarina’s correspondent, Melchior Grimm.²² In addition to the problem of Catherine II’s indifference to her art,²³ Vigée Le Brun, scarcely two months after her arrival in the capital, was already

contending with malicious gossip, as indicated in a letter written by Count Fyodor Rostopchin²⁴ denouncing the stratospheric prices she charged. The social life she cultivated with her patrons was also perceived as transgressive. Faced with the rivalry of Russian artists—Dmitry Levitsky and Vladimir Borovikovsky had until then claimed a monopoly on the Saint Petersburg portrait trade—Vigée Le Brun soon entered into competition with two of her compatriots as well: Jean Louis Voille and Jean Laurent Mosnier. But it was the Austrian painter Johann Baptist von Lampi the Elder who proved to be the most hostile.²⁵

Her first imperial commission was a portrait of the two grand duchesses (cat. 59). The initial version greatly displeased Catherine II, who seems to have vehemently rejected any reference to Neoclassical dress.²⁶ As a result, the “slightly Greek look” yielded to court costume, which Vigée Le Brun must have considered antiquated.²⁷ Forced to adapt, the artist subsequently painted a full-length portrait of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna (cat. 58) which turned out to be a less personal state portrait in the tradition of Hyacinthe Rigaud and Nicolas de Largillière.

In 1802, after the artist had left Saint Petersburg, Mosnier would borrow her formula for a three-quarter profile portrait of the grand duchess, who had by then become empress (fig. 26). Mosnier’s work is one of very few to attest to any lasting influence of Vigée Le Brun in Russia.

Vigée Le Brun continued to hold a preeminent position during the reign of Paul I and executed an official portrait of Tsarina Maria Fyodorovna in the same Baroque vein. It was not long before she received, among her many visitors, the former king of Poland, Stanislaw Poniatowski, who, since 1795, had owned a copy of her Florentine self-portrait (cat. 42).²⁸ Two commissions resulted from their meeting, one a majestic image of the king (cat. 63) that the artist would keep until the end of her life. If, in Italy, the artist had been received by all the academies of the Italian cities through which she passed, this was not the case in Russia. In fact, she had to wait five years to be elected an honorary member of the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg. Only on June 16, 1800, was this official recognition bestowed, and it took



Fig. 25. Heinrich Friedrich Füger (German, 1751–1818). *Prince Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov*, 1783. Oil on canvas, 44 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 34 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (112 × 87 cm). The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 5770)



Fig. 26. Jean Laurent Mosnier (French, 1743–1808). *Empress Elizabeth of Russia*, 1802. Oil on canvas, 51³/₈ × 39 in. (130.5 × 99 cm). The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

Detail, cat. 59. Vigée Le Brun. *Grand Duchesses Alexandra Pavlovna and Elena Pavlovna*, 1796

until 1829 for the imperial mint to strike a medal in her honor.²⁹

On June 5, 1800, Vigée Le Brun's name was finally removed from the list of émigrés, which would have allowed her to return immediately to France if she chose. However, she procrastinated, alleging an obligation to sell paintings sent by her husband, and instead traveled to Moscow, staying from October 1800 to March 1801. Commissions for her work poured into the old Russian capital, but she devoted herself exclusively to bust- or half-length portraits that could be completed quickly, a sign of her determination to view Moscow as merely a way station.

It was in March 1801, in the course of her return journey to Saint Petersburg, that the news of Paul I's assassination reached her. In a short time her talents were solicited for official portraits of his successor, Alexander I, and his wife. Though she had not yet executed a state portrait of a reigning Russian sovereign, she declined. The commission would go to her rival Mosnier, who remained in Russia.

Before returning to France, Vigée Le Brun made a long stop in Berlin, where, on December 11, 1801, she was admitted as an honorary member of the

Preussische Akademie der Künste. The high point of the visit—interrupted by a stay in Dresden—was the invitation she received in November to portray Luise von Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of Prussia, in Potsdam (cat. 75).

POSTLUDE: LONDON (1803–05) AND SWITZERLAND (1807, 1808)

The Peace of Amiens was concluded two months after Vigée Le Brun's return to Paris in January 1802: the signing of the treaty made it possible for her to consider a trip to England, a prospect she had abandoned in favor of Vienna in autumn 1792. In late 1802 the artist declared, "I want to travel another 2 years, first to London."³⁰ That trip, in the footsteps of Van Dyck, seems to have been motivated by a desire to duplicate the success she had enjoyed during her years of exile. She left in April 1803 and stayed for two years, though claiming in her *Souvenirs* that she had initially planned a visit of only three months.³¹ Her lack of mastery of English was only one of the many difficulties with



which Vigée Le Brun was confronted. If in 1787 Reynolds had paid homage to her portrait of Calonne (cat. 25),³² she had hardly won over the country. In London, she ran into stiff competition from other portraitists in the context of a very institutionalized art market. Keeping resolutely to the financial aims of her stay, she did not participate in the Royal Academy exhibitions.

Owing to her social skills, she was able to gain access to the Prince of Wales, later George IV, whose portrait she painted, but it was not long before their intimate association roused bitter jealousy. She was criticized not only for the lack of naturalness of her portraits but also because English painters emulated her style:³³ Henry William Beechey, a student of Reynolds's, was singled out in this regard.³⁴ The portraitist John Hoppner would prove to be the most violent polemicist. In 1805, he published a veritable indictment of Vigée Le Brun in the preface to his *Oriental Tales*.³⁵ Having denounced the mediocrity of her talent—he considered her success imputable exclusively to her society connections—he decried her fees, supposedly three times higher than those charged by Reynolds in his time. The offended party responded to the insult in a letter which she published in her *Souvenirs*. The controversy then seems to have turned into a quarrel between the schools, with Vigée Le Brun styling herself as the defender of French painting under the tutelary authority of Simon Vouet. It is clear that her experience on the other side of the Channel hardly corresponded to the relatively optimistic reading given it by her nephew by marriage, Justin Tripiet Le Franc.³⁶ She left England in July 1805.

Vigée Le Brun's final journeys abroad were to Switzerland. During the summers of 1807 and 1808, she traveled widely in "that land so beloved of artists, poets, and dreamers."³⁷ Dedicating herself to the study of nature, she lists in her repertoire "nearly 200 landscapes both in Switzerland and England." While the portrait of Madame de Staël (cat. 80) seems to have capped the first visit, on her second trip the artist gave all her attention to the shepherds' festival in Unspunnen, the occasion for a singular composition (cat. 81). On November 30, 1807, as if the acceptance of an honorary title in every country she visited had become a habit during her years of exile, she was awarded a "certificate of membership in the Académie de Genève" as an "honorary associate" (fig. 27).³⁸ However her travels now took on a completely different purpose, since the artist, released from the obligation to promote her career, came to perceive Switzerland as a place of regeneration.



Vigée Le Brun's flight from France in October 1789, far from leading to her banishment from the realm of the arts, would allow her to find a sociocultural context in which she could thrive for more than a decade. At every stage of her journey, the dazzling speed of her achievements, both as a painter and socially, proved confounding. That success can be ascribed to her mastery of her art, of course, but also to the reputation she had acquired during the ancien régime. Nevertheless, though she regained her renown, she paid a high price for the notoriety. Outside France, the malevolent commentary that continued to haunt her was similar to the scurrilous pre-Revolutionary tracts she had had to contend with from the time of her first success. She frequently encountered great hostility, often equal to that which had influenced her decision to leave her own country. These responses were perhaps part and parcel of her identity as a woman painter. As was the case with Rosalba Carriera, the itinerant Vigée Le Brun seems to have been welcome only as long as she did not settle anywhere.³⁹ She was nominated for admission to the academies of Saint Petersburg and Berlin only when it became known that she was going to depart, and too late not to leave ill feeling.

Unlike Van Dyck in Italy, and then in England, Vigée Le Brun did not attract followers, and it must be said that her style had little lasting impact in the countries she visited. Her participation in the Salons of 1791 and 1798, the discreet connections she maintained with Paris through her husband,⁴⁰ and a return she so often alluded to are also signs of irrepressible longing.

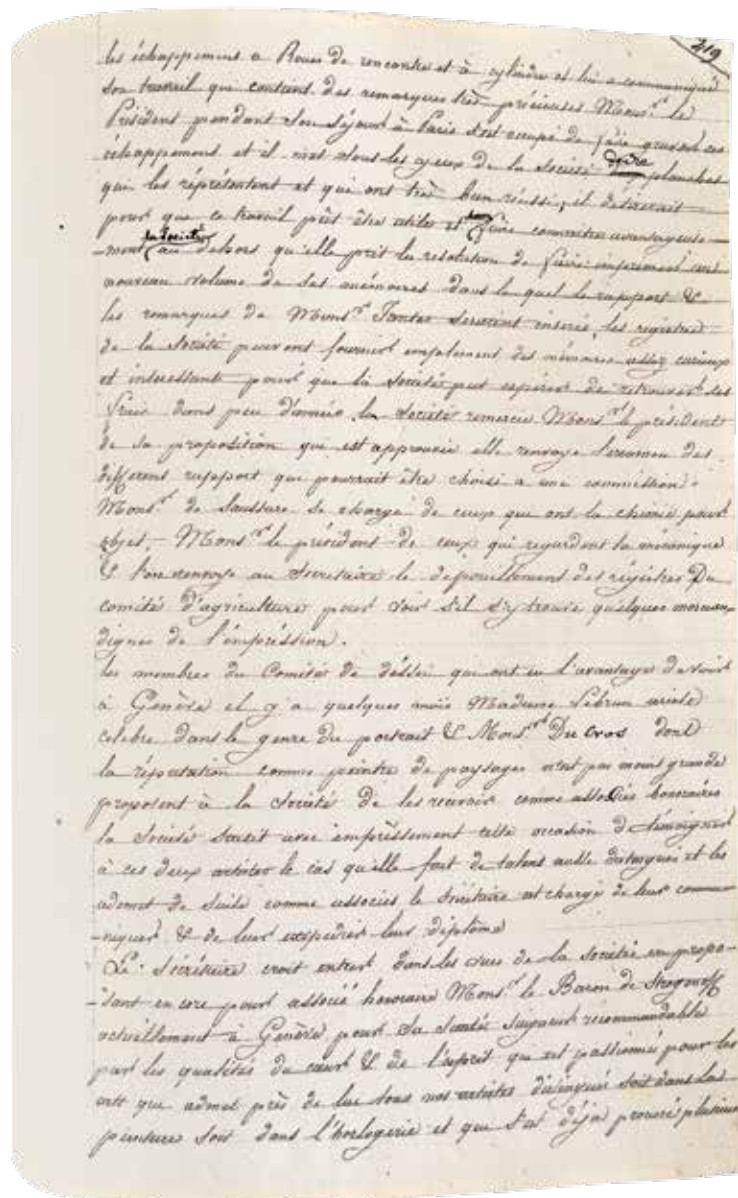


Fig. 27. Minutes of the General Assembly and Committee Meetings of the Société des Arts de Genève, vol. IV, 1799–1817: Excerpt from the meeting of November 30, 1807, p. 219





Catalogue

1. *Etienne Vigée*, 1773

Oil on canvas, 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (61.6 × 50.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{lle} Vigée / 1773*

Saint Louis Art Museum, Museum Purchase, 1940 (3:1940)

This portrait of Louis Jean Baptiste Etienne Vigée is undoubtedly the finest work painted by the artist in her late adolescence. The model was her brother, born in 1758 and three years her junior. Holding an artist's *porte-crayon* (pencil or chalk holder) and portfolio, he plays the role of a young draftsman, a subject already popularized in the eighteenth century by the painters Jean Siméon Chardin, François Hubert Drouais, and Nicolas Bernard Lépicié. Louise Vigée treated the theme more than once at the start of her career; the signed and dated Saint Louis painting is the best-known example. In this writer's opinion, another painting of a boy holding the equipment of a draftsman (fig. 30), formerly misattributed to Chardin, ought to be credited to her. A canvas representing a young apprentice wearing a tricorne hat, wrongly ascribed in the past to Pierre Louis Dumesnil and to Nicolas Bernard Lépicié, might be an early work of this artist as well.

The Saint Louis painting appears, together with an autograph replica in pastel, on the list of portraits composed by Vigée Le Brun for the years 1768–72 (although it was painted in 1773): “2. My brother as a schoolboy. One in oil, the other in pastel.” This canvas or figure 30 may be the painting listed in the sale of Madame Pinel-Grandchamp (Paris, March 13, 1850) as *Portrait of the Young Vigée, the Artist's Brother; he holds a portfolio under his arm*.

The artist also executed at least two full-length drawings of her brother in black chalk, as a little boy in a plumed hat (fig. 28) and—the finer of the two—

as an adolescent (fig. 29). Louise Vigée was very fond of Etienne:

My brother was one of those men who was much sought after in society. He had a refined manner, having been often in good company from an early age, as well as wit, and learning; he wrote elegant verse with exceptional facility and played comic roles

better than many professional actors. He contributed infinitely to the charm and gaiety of all of our gatherings; perhaps the eagerness with which he was received had a harmful effect on his literary career, as we took up much of his time. He found it possible nevertheless to distinguish himself as a man of letters. In addition to the literature course that he



Fig. 28. Elisabeth Louise Vigée. *Etienne Vigée in Theatrical Costume*, ca. 1765. Black chalk on laid paper, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (21 × 13 cm). Signed and inscribed (below, on each side of the boy's shoes): *mon frère / E. L. Vigée*. Private collection





Fig. 29. Elisabeth Louise Vigée. *Etienne Vigée Seen from Behind*, ca. 1772–73. Black chalk on laid paper, $12\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{5}{8}$ in. (32.5 × 21.8 cm). Signed and inscribed (below): *dessin d'après mon frère/E L. Vigée*. Private collection

presented at the Athénée with great success . . . Vigée left a volume of light poetry and several comedies in verse, of which two, *Les Aveux difficiles* and *L'Entrevue*, were in the repertory of the Théâtre-Français for a long time. I am surprised that they do not perform them still. (Vigée Le Brun, 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 282)

Etienne Vigée was enrolled at the Collège Sainte-Barbe, where he primar-

ily studied literature. He subsequently embarked on a career as a writer and acquired a reputation as a poet and playwright with a light and witty style. In 1783, he staged *Les Aveux difficiles* at the Théâtre-Français and then at Versailles, and the next year—during which he married Suzanne Rivière, daughter of a diplomat (cat. 30)—the Comédiens-Français performed two of his works. Thanks to his sister, Etienne enjoyed the protection of patrons

such as the comte d'Artois; the comte de Vaudreuil (cat. 21), to whom he was beholden for a position as private secretary to the comtesse de Provence; and Charles Alexandre de Calonne, minister of finance (cat. 25), who had him named comptroller of the Amortization Fund, which had just been re-created. On December 6, 1788, his most successful play, *L'Entrevue*, was performed at the Château de Versailles by the Comédiens-Français before

Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and their court.

In the late 1780s, in periodicals such as the *Journal de Paris*, Etienne Vigée attempted to defend his sister, who had become the object of a defamation campaign in the underground press. Having remained in France during the Revolution, he went over to the other side and accepted a position on the Comité de Nationalisation des Biens du Clergé (Committee for the Nationalization of Church Property). He even composed a fiercely antimonarchist work, an *Ode à la liberté*. Arrested shortly after the victory of the Montagnards over the Girondins, he was incarcerated at the Prison de Port-Libre and then released in the summer of 1794. Between 1795 and 1799 he was a member of the committee charged with liquidating the debts of émigrés by state appropriation.

Vigée Le Brun returned to France in 1801, but her relations with Etienne cooled as she learned the details of his conduct after 1789. At one point, he published “Vers d’un frère sur l’inimitié qui s’est élevée entre sa soeur et lui” (Verses by a brother on the enmity that has arisen between him and his sister), a bombastic poem in which he tried to justify himself. His inconstancy and opportunism impelled him to praise to the skies both Napoleon and the Bourbon prince who drove him out in 1815—namely, Louis XVIII (the former comte de Provence), from whom he solicited the position of official reader. It was during Louis XVIII’s regime that Etienne Vigée received the medal of the Legion of Honor. He belonged to several literary societies, held a chair at the Athénée Français, and, as a professor of elocution, trained several actresses, including the



Fig. 30. Elisabeth Louise Vigée. *Young Draftsman*, possibly Etienne Vigée, ca. 1772–73. Oil on canvas, 16½ × 22⅞ in. (42 × 58 cm). Private collection

celebrated tragedienne Mademoiselle Duchesnois. The acerbic tone of Vigée’s polemical verses earned him the animosity of a good number of the members of the Institut de France, some of whom derided him. After separating from his wife, he died an embittered alcoholic (see Viennet 2006, pp. 350–51) on August 12, 1820.

In 1800, Adèle Romany painted a portrait of him seated in his study (Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 104, no. 14, ill.). His brother-in-law, Auguste Rivière, drew his head in profile, a work engraved by Jean Duplessis-Bertaux. Finally, Robert Lefèvre painted an almost half-length effigy of the writer, which has remained with his descendants.

JB

2. *Madame Jacques François Le Sèvre, the Artist's Mother*, ca. 1774–78

Oil on canvas, 25⁵/₈ × 21¹/₄ in. (65 × 54 cm)

Private collection

Vigée Le Brun's mother, Jeanne Maissin (1728–1800), was born in Orgeo near Neufchâteau, in the Walloon section of the Vosges. One of the five children of Christophe Maissin, a shopkeeper and farmer, and his wife, Catherine Grandjean, she left her native region for Paris, perhaps to embark on a career as a hairdresser, a profession in which she acquired a great reputation, if we are to believe the newspaper columnist Mouffle d'Angerville (see Barthélemy François Joseph Mouffle d'Angerville, in Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 22, p. 104 [February 24, 1783], and vol. 24, pp. 3–11 ["Première lettre . . ."]).

In 1750, she married the portraitist Louis Vigée (1715–1767), a member of the Académie de Saint-Luc since 1743, and moved into his apartment in the rue Coquillière, near the church of Saint-Eustache in Paris. The couple had two children, Elisabeth Louise, the future Vigée Le Brun, and Etienne (cat. 1). While Jeanne was partial to her son, Louis liked to spoil his daughter, who in return idolized him. In his atelier, he gave her a few lessons in drawing and taught her the rudiments of pastel painting,

his specialty. After Louis Vigée's tragic death in 1767, Jeanne married a goldsmith and shopkeeper, Jacques François Le Sèvre (cat. 3), to ensure that she and her children would be provided for.

Aware of her daughter's despondent state after her father's death, Jeanne did everything she could to encourage the girl's professional aspirations: in imitation of Louis, Elisabeth Louise wanted to make a career as a painter, not an easy thing for a young girl at the time. During posing sessions, Jeanne was in close proximity even after her daughter had acquired a reputation as a virtuoso and established a clientele. After Madame Le Sèvre realized that her second husband was appropriating the money Elisabeth Louise was earning, she pressed her to marry the art dealer Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun (cat. 89), the main tenant at the Hôtel de Lubert in the rue de Cléry, where the Le Sèvres had moved with the two Vigée children. Jeanne died in Neuilly on April 9, 1800.

According to the artist, this was the portrait that ensured her early success, but there is some uncertainty about its date of execution. In a draft of her

memoirs, she asserts that she painted it between the ages of thirteen and fifteen. The statements of a woman who was in her seventies at the time and who had a tendency to confuse the significant events of her life should be taken with a grain of salt. In fact, the obvious stylistic mastery rules out the possibility that this is the work of an adolescent. Most likely, the painting was executed after Vigée Le Brun was elected to the Académie de Saint-Luc in 1774. In 1778 it made such an impression on the duchesse de Chartres that she commissioned her own portrait from the artist (Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 149, no. 43, ill.).

Vigée's mother wears a cap over her lightly powdered hair and a white satin pelisse, a long loose coat, trimmed with swan's down. The blue used for the ribbons was among the young painter's favorite colors.

Her niece by marriage, Eugénie Tripier Le Franc (1797–1872), painted a copy of this portrait in 1842 and two additional replicas were made by René Louis Damon for descendants of her niece Caroline de Rivière. The location of these copies is unknown.

JB



3. *Jacques François Le Sèvre*, ca. 1774

Oil on canvas, 23³/₈ × 19¹/₂ in. (60 × 49.5 cm)
Private collection

Jacques François Le Sèvre (1724–1810), Vigée Le Brun's stepfather, was apprenticed at the age of sixteen to master silversmith Henri Cain in Paris, maintaining the engagement for three years and probably specializing in the production of silverware and surgical instruments. Upon the completion of his training he opened a shop in the rue Saint-Honoré facing the Palais Royal, the private residence of the king's cousin, the duc d'Orléans.

Vigée Le Brun included the present portrait in her list of sitters for 1768–72, and must have painted it in the apartment over Le Sèvre's shop. The silver- and goldsmith is shown seated at a desk wearing a dressing gown of bluish green satin, and a nightcap decorated with a wide ribbon of the same material. This informal wear is reminiscent of the costume worn by the famous writer Denis Diderot in Louis Michel van Loo's portrait shown at the Salon in 1767 (fig. 31), and by that of the physician Alphonse Leroy, whom Jacques Louis David painted in 1783 (Musée Fabre, Montpellier). Such morning or dressing gowns, comfortable and stylish, exuded an air of timelessness and had often been featured in portraits of professional men since the seventeenth century. Nightcaps served a practical purpose, keeping the head warm before wigs or hair could be properly dressed (Ribeiro 1995, pp. 51–52).

Le Sèvre's hair, only lightly powdered, is tied into a long ponytail that flows down his back. In his right hand he holds an open book, and in his left a magnifying glass. With his body nearly in profile he scrutinizes the

viewer with his dark brown eyes. The immediacy of the likeness is such that he appears to be on the verge of speaking. Louise Vigée has already mastered her technique, so assured despite her young age, for she cannot have been much older than seventeen or eighteen when she painted this work. She has rendered her subject's features with a certain amount of realistic detail, modulating the warm flesh tones of the face with blue shading to suggest that he has shaved and indicating blue veins on his temples.

This altogether sympathetic portrayal belies the intense dislike Louise Vigée felt for Le Sèvre, whom she accused of trying unsuccessfully to take the place of her late father, of wearing his clothing imperfectly, behaving like a tyrant, and hoarding the proceeds from her burgeoning portrait practice.



My father did not leave a fortune. But I was already earning a good deal of money, as I had many portraits to paint. This, however, was insufficient for household expenses, since in addition I had to pay for my brother's schooling, his clothes, his books, and so on. Therefore my mother felt obliged to remarry. She chose a rich jeweller, whom we never had suspected of avarice, but who immediately following the wedding exhibited his penny-pinching by denying us the bare necessities of life, even though I was good-natured enough to hand over to him everything I was earning. Joseph Vernet was enraged; he repeatedly advised me to pay for my room and board and to keep the rest for myself. But I did no such thing. I was too afraid that my mother would suffer the consequences with such a miser for a husband.

I despised the man, all the more so as he had appropriated my father's wardrobe and wore the clothes just as they were without having them altered to fit him. You can easily understand . . . what a shabby impression he made on me! (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 20–21)

JB

Fig. 31. Louis Michel van Loo (French, 1707–1771). *Denis Diderot*. Oil on canvas, 31⁷/₈ × 25⁵/₈ in. (81 × 65 cm). Signed and dated (center right): *L. M. Van Loo/1767*. Paris, Salon, 1767. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (R.F. 1958)





4. *Allegory of Poetry*, 1774

Oil on canvas, 31½ × 25⅝ in. (80 × 65 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left, on column): *M^{lle} Vigée/1774*

Académie de Saint-Luc, 1774, no. 170

Collection of Henry and Catherine Robet

In 1774, the bailiffs of the Châtelet sealed the studio of Louise Vigée at the Hôtel de Lubert in the rue de Cléry on the pretext that she was painting professionally without having been admitted to a guild. She therefore applied to the Académie de Saint-Luc, where her father had been a member. The official reception ceremony for her and for her friend Anne Rosalie Bocquet was not until October 25, but as of August 25, they and their rival, Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, reserved the right to show their works at the Salon of that institution held at the Hôtel Jabach.

Louise Vigée's contribution to the exhibition was significant (nos. 169–175 in the *livret*), but most of the work has disappeared. Only the three allegories of the arts—Painting, Poetry, and Music—are featured in the lists of the artist's works at the end of the first volume of her *Souvenirs*. In the 1774 *livret*, the three were catalogued under one number:

Par Mademoiselle Vigée. . .

170. *La Peinture, la Poésie, & la Musique, sous des figures des femmes qui les caractérisent.*

The present author has identified the *Allegory of Painting* as an oval canvas misattributed in a 1949 sale to François

André Vincent (see Baillio 1982a, p. 17, ill. p. 20, fig. 11). *Music*, also probably an oval canvas, is missing, and thus it appears that *Poetry* constituted the center panel of the group.

Here, a young woman turning her body to the right, her head in profile, is viewed from the back. She is depicted hip-length, resting her left elbow on a column. The pose has an important precedent in the Italian Baroque painting *Venus with a Satyr and Cupids* by Annibale Carracci (Uffizi, Florence), which Louise Vigée may have known through a copy or print. The ash-blond hair is arranged in loops, held in place by a blue ribbon. The rosy-cheeked face is raised, and the eyes look upward, an expression conveying the movement of her soul at the moment of inspiration—she writes on a tablet with a goose quill. Her lower back is covered with silk drapery, the whiteness of which is set off by the Prussian blue velvet of the cushion. The flesh passages, rendered in pearlescent tones, attest to great sensitivity, since it is delicately colored glazes that render the shapes and enhance the torsion of the body. The head, surrounded by a slight aureole, is dramatically set against the

bluish gray ground, which vanishes into a deep tone on the right and left. This is Mademoiselle Vigée's first foray into painting the female body—if one excepts an oval, bust-length study of her mother, her torso nude, seen from behind (Baillio 1982a, p. 16, fig. 4; a work Jacques Mathey once incorrectly ascribed to Watteau). It is likely that by this time she was able to employ a professional model.

According to an anonymous critic, “[T]his young virtuosa has . . . proven her talent for history subjects. . . . The color is agreeable, the brush deft, the stroke sure” (Deloynes 1881, vol. 51 [1774], no. 1412, pp. 297–98). But another writer dissented: “Her Poetry, her Music, and especially her Painting are dark, the drawing stiff and the draperies ungainly: we see that this young lady, filled with the desire to succeed, is consulting several masters and attempting to imitate them” (*ibid.*, no. 1416, p. 337).

In terms of style and emotional content this allegorical subject has a kinship with similar works by such French masters of the time as Jean Baptiste Greuze and Nicolas Bernard Lépicier (Percival 1999, 2001, 2003).

JB

5. *Prince de Nassau-Siegen*, 1776

Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (64.4 × 53.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{de} Vigée le Brun / 1776*

Indianapolis Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Ralph W. Showalter (64.740)

According to Vigée Le Brun, “I was not yet married when the Prince of Nassau, who was then in his youth, was introduced to me. . . . He asked me for his portrait which I did full-length, of very small dimensions and in oil” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 252). The artist married on January 11, 1776, and if she remembered the circumstances correctly, she had received the commission previously. The present picture is one of very few small whole-lengths by her that are known. It was perhaps prudent for a young woman necessarily without academic training to work on a smaller scale when painting one of her first portraits of a client who was very well known to fashionable society. The sitter was identified by Joseph Baillio in 1980.

Charles Henri Nicolas Othon of Nassau was born in Senarpont, Picardy, on January 9, 1745. His father, Maximilien, who belonged to a minor Roman Catholic branch of the house of Orange, had married Marie Madeleine Amicie de Monchy-Senarpont and died three years later while still very young, in 1748. Several years previously it had been discovered that Maximilien’s parents, Emmanuel Ignaz, Prinz von Nassau-Siegen and Charlotte de Mailly-Nesle, had separated before he was born. Maximilien, declared illegitimate by a Brussels court in 1746, was granted posthumous legitimacy in France ten years later. His son was the last to hold the title.

At fifteen the prince of Nassau had entered the royal navy, but finding no future in that quarter, in 1766 he joined the expedition of Comte Louis Antoine de Bougainville, to whom Louis XV had

granted permission to sail around the world. The first French navigator to do so, Bougainville explored the South Pacific, visiting Samoa and Tahiti, where the queen was impressed by the elegant young aristocrat who was a member of the party. Bougainville returned to France in 1769 and in 1771 published *Voyage autour du monde*, which brought renown to the participants in the expedition. Later the prince served in the naval forces of Spain and Russia, on balance an unequal and in the end unsuccessful career. When Catherine II’s imperial navy, fighting in 1790 under his command, suffered a stunning defeat at the hands of the Swedes at Svensksund, the empress forced him to retire. Later he settled at Tynna in Ukraine, where he died in 1808.

The portrait is like a very large miniature in its handling of detail. The fashionably slope-shouldered prince wears the ribbon of the Polish Order of the White Eagle. The badge of the order is embroidered on the breast of his coat, which with waistcoat and breeches is lavishly decorated in gold and colored silks. The sitter rests one hand on a globe and points to a map in what must be the volume recording his adventures. Elements of the imaginary setting—a column draped with a curtain and a desk on a terrace overlooking a park—are artificially arranged and disproportionately large in scale. There is a pentiment, which indicates that at a late stage the artist made an adjustment in the position of the sitter’s right leg.

KB





6. *Joseph Vernet, 1778*

Oil on canvas, 36¹/₄ × 28³/₈ in. (92 × 72 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *M^{de} Le Brun f. 1778*

Probably exhibited at the Salon de la Correspondance, 1783

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3054)

France's preeminent eighteenth-century landscape and marine painter, Joseph Vernet (1714–1789), was born in Avignon, the son of a carriage painter, and received his initial training in Aix-en-Provence. In 1734, he traveled to Rome, where he would spend the next twenty years of his life. He worked under Bernardino Vincenzo Fergioni and Adriaen Manglard, and studied with Giovanni Paolo Panini and Pietro Locatelli, but was chiefly inspired by the works of Claude Lorrain, Gaspard Dughet, and Salvator Rosa. Specializing in the genre of the dramatic and poetic landscape, he painted the Roman *campagna* and the Neapolitan seacoast. He had a keen eye for the variety of nature, and

avored sunrises and sunsets, stormy seas, and moonlit vistas, all with picturesque accompaniments of pools, torrents, rocks, tree trunks, lush foliage, and ruins. By 1740 he had already acquired a distinguished international clientele.

The Académie royale made Vernet an associate member in 1745, and thereafter he exhibited at the biennial Salons. Returning to Paris in 1753, he was given full academic honors, and Louis XV commissioned from him the famous topographical series of the ports of France (Musée de la Marine, Paris), which he worked on until 1765. His paintings were avidly sought after, and the critics, especially Denis Diderot, were exuberant in their praise.

Vernet befriended Louise Vigée when she was quite young, offering her sound advice:

My child, . . . do not follow the established system of any one school. Consult only the works of the great Italian masters, as well as the Flemish. But especially, you must paint as much as you can from nature. Nature is the best master of all. If you study her carefully, you will avoid any kind of mannerism. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 12)

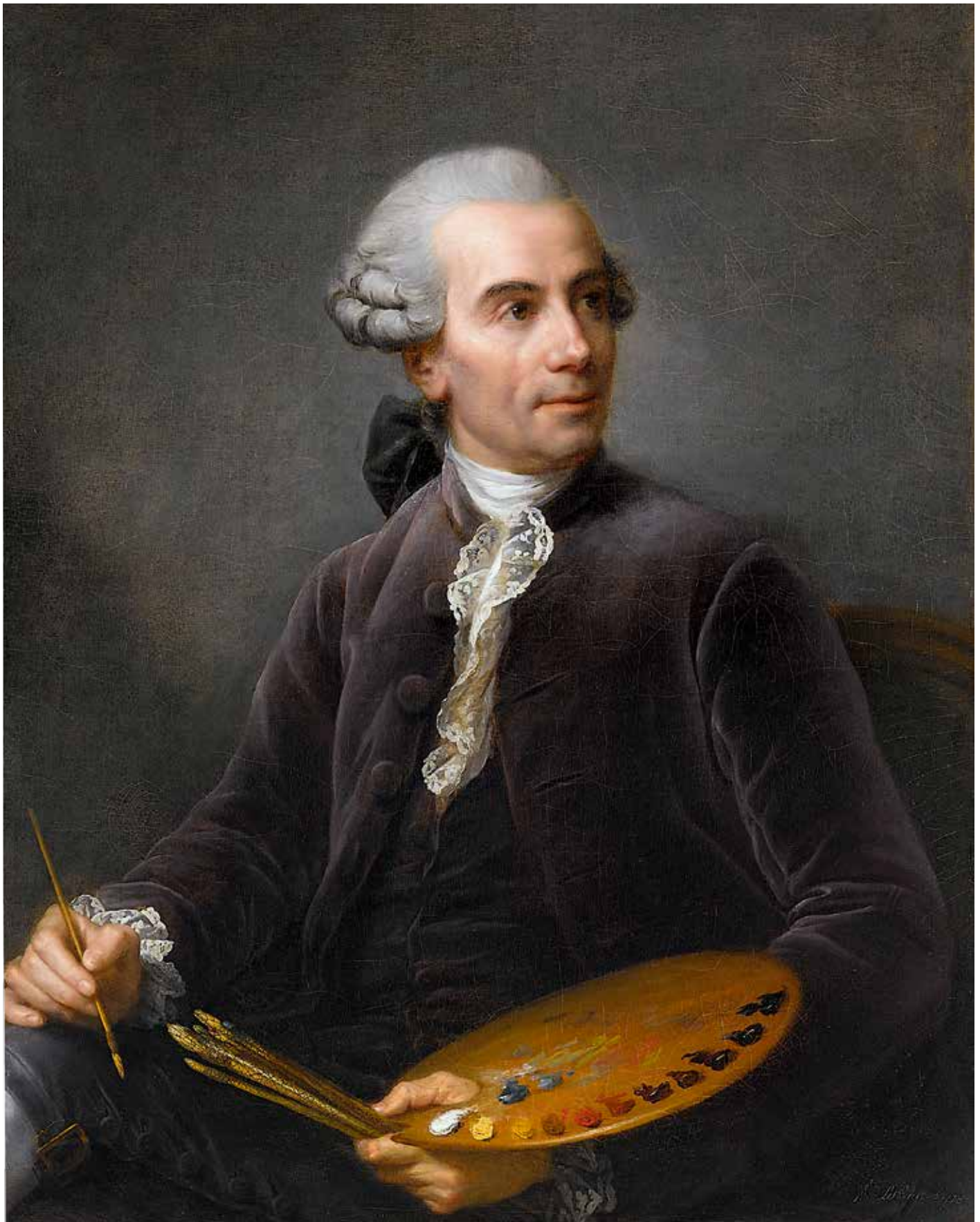
As a very young woman, she copied landscapes by Vernet, but in terms of technique, his influence on her work was negligible. She states that he sponsored her for membership in the Académie royale (ibid., p. 84).

This handsome portrait, a refreshingly sober image of the kindly Vernet in his studio, was painted when he was sixty-four. He took possession of it in October 1779 and noted in his account book that he gave six livres in gratuity to the servant who delivered it (Lagrange 1864). In March and April of 1783, the portrait was probably shown at the Salon de la Correspondance in a retrospective exhibition of Vernet's work.

Vernet died the year the Revolution began. In 1794, his beloved daughter, Emilie Chalgrin, and the portraitist Anne Rosalie Filleul (see Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 98–101, nos. 11, 12, ill.) were guillotined on trumped-up charges of having stolen objects belonging to the Revolutionary republic. The three women had been close friends since childhood.

JB





7. *Marie Antoinette in Court Dress*, 1778

Oil on canvas, 107½ × 76 in. (273 × 193.5 cm)

Inscribed (lower right): *Peint par M^{de} le Brun âgée de 22 ans, en 1780*

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Gemäldegalerie (GG 2772)

Having become dauphine in April 1770, Marie Antoinette wrote on November 16, 1774: “Painters are the death of me and drive me to despair. I held up the postman until my portrait was finished; it was just brought to me; and it is such a poor likeness that I cannot send it. I hope to have a good one by next month” (Maria Theresa 1866, p. 134). She would have to wait until 1778 to finally have the work that pleased her, and it was Vigée Le Brun who painted it. On June 16, 1777, the queen wrote to her mother: “I have placed myself at the painter’s discretion for as long as she likes” (ibid., p. 210). On the 29th, Maria Theresa informed her daughter of her wishes: “I would like to see your bearing in court dress, even if the face is not such a good likeness. So as not to bother you too much, I need only have a sense of your figure and bearing, which is unfamiliar to me and with which everyone is so happy. Because I lost my dear daughter when she was very small and still a child, this desire to know what she has become must excuse my importunity, arising as it does from the depths of maternal tenderness” (ibid., p. 213).

The portraitist responded to the empress’s desires in every particular. Without a doubt, she began by painting the face of Marie Antoinette in her presence. Vigée Le Brun later described that first meeting, embellishing the event:

It was in 1779 [*actually, 1778*], my dear friend, that I first did the portrait of the queen, who was in all the glory of her youth and beauty at the time. Marie Antoinette was tall, with

an admirable figure, fairly plump but not too much. Her arms were superb, her hands small and perfectly formed, and her feet charming. She walked better than any other woman in France, holding her head very high with a majesty that singled her out in the midst of the entire court. But that majesty in no way compromised the sweetness and benevolence of her appearance. In the end, it is very difficult to give someone who has not seen the queen an idea of so much grace and nobility combined. . . . At the first session, the queen’s imposing demeanor intimidated me tremendously, but Her Majesty spoke to me with such kindness that her considerate graciousness immediately dissipated that impression. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 44)

Regarding the queen’s face, the portraitist added:

Her features were not at all regular: she inherited from her family that long, narrow oval peculiar to the Austrian nation. Her eyes were not large, and their color was almost blue; her gaze was full of wit and gentleness, her nose refined and pretty, and her mouth not too large, though the lips were a bit thick. But what was most remarkable about her face was the glow of her complexion. I have never seen one so brilliant, and brilliant is the word; for her skin was so transparent that it was impervious to shadow. I therefore could not render its effect

as I wished: I did not have the colors to capture that freshness, shades so subtle that they belonged only to that charming face, and which I have found in no other woman. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 44–45)

We may almost register surprise on viewing the portrait that won the queen’s approval, as the composition was still quite conventional and the execution not without awkwardness. Vigée Le Brun did not seek to disguise reality. The queen’s deeply flushed face hides nothing of the Habsburg physiognomy. The composition respected Maria Theresa’s instructions and conformed to the traditional iconography of queens. Dressed in a formal court gown with white satin panniers and a train with a fleur-de-lis pattern, Marie Antoinette is represented in a palace setting with the crown resting on a ceremonial cushion beside her. The bust of Louis XVI, placed on a high pedestal adorned with the figure of Justice, is easily recognizable. Vigée Le Brun, certainly ill at ease within a codified genre, has yet to master certain rules of scale—notable in the disproportion of the column—and to demonstrate the dazzling technique that would later characterize her oeuvre. Nevertheless, she gave full satisfaction. On April 1, 1779, Maria Theresa, having received the canvas in Vienna, wrote: “Your grand portrait delights me! [The prince de] Ligne saw a certain resemblance; but for me it was enough that it represents your bearing, with which I am very happy” (Maria Theresa 1866, p. 271). The queen of France had finally found her portraitist.

XS



8. *Study for Abundance*, 1780

Pastel and black chalk on paper, 17³/₄ × 18⁷/₈ in. (45 × 48 cm)
Inscribed (lower right, apocryphal signature): *Lagrenée*
Private collection

9. *Peace Bringing Back Abundance*, 1780

Oil on canvas, 40³/₈ × 52¹/₈ in. (103 × 133 cm)
Signed and dated (lower center): *M^{de} Le Brun. f 1780*
Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 115
Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3052)

Vigée Le Brun's goal was to be admitted to the Académie royale with history painting, the most important genre. In 1779, she executed in pastel the allegory *Innocence and Justice* (Musée d'Angers), and in 1780, she painted *Peace Bringing Back Abundance*. Thereafter, she treated three additional mythological subjects. For an ambitious artist, election to the Académie royale was critical. Without belonging to that august body, an artist could not exhibit in the biennial Salon and patronage was severely restricted. There were already women academicians, but their numbers were limited, and all were practitioners of lesser genres. The director, Jean Baptiste Marie Pierre, stubbornly opposed Vigée Le Brun's candidacy because her husband was a dealer and the bylaws of the Académie royale excluded anyone associated with the art trade. An order from the king was required. Marie Antoinette applied pressure on behalf of her painter, Louis XVI acquiesced, and on May 31, 1783, Vigée Le Brun was granted full membership. The minutes record that in making this exception the Académie royale was "executing with profound respect the orders of their sovereign" (Montaignon 1875–92, vol. 9 [1889], p. 153).

The category in which she was admitted was not stipulated. Her chief rival, Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, was received as a portraitist on the same occasion, submitting a pastel of the sculptor Augustin

Pajou. Later the astute Vigée Le Brun offered *Peace Bringing Back Abundance*. In August 1783, as part of her sizable contribution to the Salon, the painting elicited favorable reviews. It had been executed while France was heavily involved in the American War of Independence, and the relevance of the subject was underscored when the treaty ending the war was signed in 1783. As the review in the *Mémoires secrets* stated:

It is very likely that her reception piece will secure her admission. It is *Peace Bringing Back Abundance*, an

allegory as natural as ingenious: one could not choose better under the circumstances. The first figure, noble, decent, as modest as the peace that France has just concluded, is characterized by the olive, her favorite tree. . . . As for the other [figure], she pours a profusion of different fruits of the earth from a cornucopia. (Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 24, pp. 5–6 [September 13, 1783])

The conventional symbolism largely accords with Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593).





Although some suspected Vigée Le Brun of having plagiarized, she was defended in the *Loterie pittoresque*:

Some critics, to diminish the glory of the artist, say that Madame Le Brun, having greater access to excellent models, simply copied them. They claim to find in her picture Guido, Cortona, Cignani, Santerre, etc.; but all of that proves that she did not copy a single one of them. If she strove to imitate them,

nothing is more valid, and it is even a precept of Art. (Deloynes 1881, vol. 13, p. 332, no. 291)

More cogent sources may be a pastel by Rosalba Carriera, *Peace and Justice*, two versions of which were in France at the time (one is now in Dresden and the other was sold in Paris on March 11, 1997), and Simon Vouet's much earlier *Allegory of Prudence, Peace, and Abundance* (Musée du Louvre), which Vigée Le Brun surely must have known.

The artist John Trumbull saw the painting in the exhibition hall of the Académie royale at the Louvre in 1786 and noted: "Among [the *morceaux de réception*], Madame Le Brun's Peace and Plenty holds a conspicuous rank; the coloring is very brilliant and pleasing" (Trumbull 1953, p. 102).

In addition to the *Study for Abundance*, a pastel *Study for Peace* is in the collection of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris (see Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 132–33, no. 33, ill.).

JB

10. *The Comtesse Du Barry in a Straw Hat*, ca. 1781

Oil on canvas, laid down on board, 33⁷/₈ × 26 in. (86 × 66 cm)
Private collection

In her *Souvenirs* (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 160–61, 162, 167–68), the artist describes her meeting with Jeanne Bécu, Madame Du Barry (1743–1793), who, having emerged from the lowest ranks of society, would eventually pass through the king's palace on her way to the guillotine:

It was in 1786 that I went for the first time to Louveciennes, where I had promised to paint Mme Dubarry. I was extremely curious to see the favorite, whom I had so often heard about. Mme Dubarry may have been about forty-five at the time. She was tall but not too tall; plump, with a rather large but very beautiful bosom; her face was still charming, her features regular and graceful; her hair was ash-gray and curly like a child's; only her complexion was beginning to fade. She received me with a great deal of graciousness and seemed to me very courteous; but I found there was more naturalness in her wit than in her manners. Apart from the fact that she had the gaze of a coquette, her elongated eyes never opening completely, there was something childish about her pronuncia-

tion that was no longer becoming at her age. . . . Summer and winter, Mme Dubarry wore only chemise-gowns in white percale or muslin, and every day, regardless of the weather, she took walks on her grounds or outside without any ill effects, the time spent in the countryside having given her such robust health. She maintained no further relationships with the many members of the court who had surrounded her for so long. . . . I did three portraits of Mme Dubarry. In the first I painted her half-length, nearly three-quarter profile, wearing a peignoir and a straw hat; in the second, she is dressed in white satin and holds a wreath in one hand, with one arm resting on a pedestal. I did that painting with the greatest care; like the first one, it was for the duc de Brissac, and I recently saw it again. The old general to whom it belongs undoubtedly had the head painted over, for it is not the one I did; this one has rouge up to the eyes, and Mme Dubarry never wore any. I therefore disown that head, which is not by me; all the rest of the painting is intact and well preserved. . . .

The third portrait I did of Mme Dubarry is at my home. I began it in about mid-September 1789.

On the list of works painted before 1789 (in addition to a copy she painted in 1778 perhaps after François Hubert Drouais), the artist mentions a first portrait of the countess from 1781, not 1786, and two others from 1787, one depicting the sitter full-length, and the other “en peignoir.” As the artist's lists and recollections are not always in agreement, any information of this kind must be compared to the extant works. Based on the apparent age of the sitter, the present portrait likely dates to 1781. In that year Vigée Le Brun also worked for the duc de Brissac, Madame Du Barry's lover, who may well have commissioned the painting and who was in any case its recipient. The image pays admirable homage to Louis XV's deposed mistress, emphasizing her beauty and her liberty of dress, which many ladies of the court would adopt as their own. That is certainly why it was found fully satisfactory and was replicated by the painter, perhaps in 1787, and copied several times. The copies were studied by Marianne Roland Michel in 1979.

XS



11. *The Duchesse de Polignac in a Straw Hat*, 1782

Oil on canvas, 36³/₈ × 28⁷/₈ in. (92.2 × 73.3 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L^e Le Brun 1782*

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 8971)

Gabrielle Yolande de Polastron (1749–1793) married comte Jules de Polignac in 1767. At first they lived quietly, but their fates were altered when the countess became a favorite of Marie Antoinette. In 1780, Louis XVI made the comte de Polignac a duke, and two years later he became superintendent of the postal service, while the duchess succeeded the princesse de Guéméné as governess of the Enfants de France, the royal children. The thirty-three-year-old sitter, represented frontally, a rose in her hand, wears a chemise dress of white lawn, the plunging neckline of which is adorned with a lace ruffle fastened with a sky-blue ribbon (an arrangement called “parfait contentement” at the time). A straw-colored belt with blue stripes cinches the waist below the breasts. The

black taffeta mantle bordered with filet lace has slipped down her left arm. In this informal portrait, the sitter’s blond hair falls to her shoulders in loose ringlets (“en confidants abattus”); her half-open mouth shows her white teeth, a trait common to a number of the artist’s portraits, including *Self-Portrait with Her Daughter Julie* (fig. 12).

The large-brimmed straw hat, known as a gardener’s, milkmaid’s, or shepherdess’s hat, would have suited the country atmosphere of the Petit Trianon, where this intimate friend of the queen occasionally stayed. Here it is topped with a bouquet of flowers and a black *follette*, or plume, held in place by a sky-blue ribbon. The artist was inspired by Rubens’s *Presumed Portrait of Susanna Lunden (The Straw Hat)* (fig. 34), which she had seen at the home of the collector Jean Michel van Havre. Curiously, the “straw hat” in that portrait, which is thought to represent the Flemish painter’s sister-in-law, is really black felt. More important than the accuracy of the description, however, is the effect of the cast shadow, the treatment of the golden light on the sitter’s face, and the elegance of the young woman so adorned. An identical hat appears repeatedly in Vigée Le Brun’s oeuvre. It is found in her *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4) and is worn elsewhere by the comtesse

Du Barry (cat. 10), Marie Antoinette (cat. 16), and others.

The artist particularly appreciated this friend of the queen and portrayed her at least six times, recalling: “The duchesse de Polignac combined her beauty, which was truly ravishing, with the sweetness of an angel and the most alluring and at the same time most solid mind” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 238). On her list of paintings and portraits, the Versailles work mistakenly appears under the year 1787 as “with a straw hat,” along with another work, identified as “the same, holding a sheet of music and singing near a piano” (fig. 32). Yet another, titled “Madame de Polignac,” is included in the same list. A “Madame la Duchesse de Polignac” is also mentioned under 1782. Finally, under 1789, the artist identifies two works as “Madame de Polignac.”

According to an unconfirmed tradition, this picture was given by Queen Marie Antoinette to the postmaster who helped the duchess and her family emigrate to Basel on the night of July 16, 1789. It is said to have remained in the family of this faithful servant of the monarchy until the last remaining descendant bequeathed it to the duc de Polignac, whose family later presented it to the Château de Versailles.

GF



Fig. 32. Vigée Le Brun. *The Duchesse de Polignac at the Pianoforte*, 1783. Oil on canvas, 38⁵/₈ × 28 in. (98 × 71 cm). National Trust, Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire (2154)



12. *Self-Portrait with Cerise Ribbons*, ca. 1782

Oil on canvas, 25½ × 21¼ in. (64.8 × 54 cm)

Signed (lower right): *L. E. Vigée/Le Brun*

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas (ACK 1949.02)

This composition is very likely one of the “2 Portraits of me” on Vigée Le Brun’s list of paintings for 1781 and as such is contemporaneous with the *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4), which the artist exhibited at the Salon de la Correspondance in 1782. In addition to the similarities in the expression and hairstyle, she wears an identical shawl trimmed with black lace and the same earrings of milky iridescent opal.

At the time, Vigée Le Brun was one of the most prominent figures in Paris society and, at the age of twenty-seven, at the pinnacle of her fame. Although awareness of her own beauty suffuses all the self-portraits of these years, the artist’s seduction of the beholder is most intense here. The hint of a smile and the slightly open mouth and beautiful teeth convey direct address, as she uses her femininity to promote her art.

In her memoirs Vigée Le Brun points out: “I wore only white dresses in muslin or linen lawn” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 109). Such modesty is seen in the artist’s outfit, which prefigures the costume worn by the queen in *Marie Antoinette in a Chemise Dress* (cat. 16), the subject of a controversy at the Salon of 1783. Distributed by the milliner Rose Bertin in the early 1780s, the chemise-style dress made from a length of muslin was fashionable, though considered suitable only for inside the home. The costume is enlivened by cerise ribbons in a tribute to the age of Rubens—but also, as the memoirs indicate, “with large scarves interlacing slightly around the body and over the arms, by which I tried to imitate the high style of Raphael’s and Domenichino’s draperies” (ibid., p. 53). At the same time, the high-waisted “Greek” cut anticipates the elegant gowns popularized at the end of the following

decade by sitters such as Henriette de Verninac, as painted by Jacques Louis David (Musée du Louvre). The feathered hat, borrowed from Van Dyck, is thrown back nonchalantly to emphasize her natural curls—thus confirming that she “could not stand powder.”

The figure emerges from a neutral, dark ground that accentuates the rigor of the composition’s color scheme, essentially a contrast between black and white. The simplicity is somewhat disrupted by the two bright notes conferred by the ribbons and the belt. The sitter’s body, moreover, turns slightly to the right, creating a discreet asymmetry that casts one of the earrings into shadow and allows the artist to indulge in miraculous variations of flesh tones. The tremendous success of the portrait is attested by the existence of two other autograph versions (private collections).

PL



13. *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat with a Plume*, ca. 1783

Black chalk, stumping, and charcoal, on paper, 18⁷/₈ × 14¹/₂ in. (48 × 37 cm)
Private collection



This drawing, which is executed with great finesse, came to light recently. The pose and clothing are like those in Vigée Le Brun's self-portrait in a muslin dress and round hat adorned with a black ostrich plume, known as *Self-Portrait with Cerise Ribbons* (cat. 12), usually dated to about 1782. But the straw hat and the long feather are also reminiscent of those worn by the Maréchale-Comtesse de Mailly, whose portrait the artist painted in 1783 (cat. 19). The same kind of shading effects, created by rubbing the black chalk with a stump, can also be found in certain drawings the artist made in the 1780s and 1790s. The light strokes used to shape the teeth are particularly delicate.

Louis de Bayser, in consultation with the specialists at the Institut Néerlandais, has identified the watermark on the paper as most likely that of H. Vorster (see Churchill 1935, p. 17). The Vorsters, or Voerstes, founded their manufactory in Mülheim an der Ruhr, Westphalia, in the seventeenth century; the best-known members of that family in the following century were Hermann Vorster (1716–1773) and his son Johann Hermann Vorster (1757–1832), who became mayor there in 1808.

JB

14. *Sleeping Baby*, ca. 1783

Black, white, and red chalk with stumping, on beige paper, 12³/₄ × 10¹/₄ in. (32.5 × 26 cm)
Private collection

15. *Eugène de Montesquiou-Fezensac Sleeping*, ca. 1783

Pastel on paper, 9¹/₈ × 12¹/₂ in. (23 × 31.5 cm)
Private collection

The *trois-crayons* drawing and the pastel date to about the same time and show Vigée Le Brun in full possession of her technical skills in both media. Each represents a newborn swaddled and wearing a bonnet. They are so similar in pose and composition that they could be studies of the same little boy.

Vigée Le Brun was not the only eighteenth-century French artist to use a small child as a model. Without a doubt, the publication of the first book of Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* (1762), in which the author emphasizes the need to pay attention to children from "the age of nature" on, stimulated an interest among painters in very young models. Newborns are depicted in two wash drawings by Jean Michel Moreau the Younger of his daughter Catherine Françoise, later the wife of Carle Vernet and the mother of Horace (ca. 1772, Fondation Custodia, Frits Lugt Collection), and in Pierre Paul Prud'hon's exquisite 1811 drawing of the King of Rome sleeping (Musée du Louvre).

Other pastels by Vigée Le Brun representing infants and dating to the early 1780s include a portrait of a blue-eyed boy and one of a sleeping baby, members





of the Lastic Sieujac family (Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 192–93, nos. 68, 69, ills.), which in 1981 this author misidentified as preparatory studies of the duc de Normandie and his sister Madame Sophie Hélène Béatrix for *Marie Antoinette and Her Children* (see Baillio 1981b, p. 54, figs. 10, 11). Additionally, there is an image of a child identified by a non-autograph inscription as the artist's daughter (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm; see Olausson 2012, pp. 21–22, fig. 4); and a bust-length portrait of a baby, previously attributed to Louis Vigée but in 2006 properly credited to his daughter by Neil Jeffares (fig. 33).

Eugène de Montesquiou-Fezensac d'Artagnan was the son of Comte Anne Elisabeth Pierre de Montesquiou-Fezensac, first equerry to the comte de Provence, Louis XVI's brother, who would later (in 1809) rally behind Napoleon, replacing the prince de Talleyrand as first chamberlain to the emperor. In 1811, the baby's mother, née Louise Charlotte Françoise Le Tellier de Louvois-Courtanvaux de Montmirail de Creuzy, would be appointed governess of Napoleon and Marie Louise's infant son, the King of Rome, who would call her "Maman Quiou." In January 1781, shortly after the countess married, Vigée Le Brun had done her portrait in pastel (private collection). Rodrigue Eugène was born in Paris on August 14, 1782.

Nothing is known about the boy's childhood and adolescence. In 1803, he married Aline d'Harcourt d'Olonde,

with whom he had three children. A biography devoted to Empress Joséphine tells us a bit more about his career as a military officer:

Rodrigue-Charles-Eugène de Montesquiou, named chamberlain to the empress in 1807, had long been enlisted in the service and was passionate about the military: although

he married Mlle d'Harcourt, he rarely resided in Paris, and, under fire, he earned the title of chevalier, then baron of the empire, as well as the gold eagle of the Legion, a stipend of ten thousand francs, and the plume of colonel of the 13th infantry—only to die of an illness at Ciudad-Rodrigo toward the end of 1810. (Masson 1903, pp. 200–201)



Fig. 33. Vigée Le Brun. *Head-and-Shoulders Portrait of a Baby*, ca. 1782–85. Pastel on paper, 11⁷/₈ × 9¹/₄ in. (30 × 23.3 cm). H. M. Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 400933)



16. *Marie Antoinette in a Chemise Dress*, 1783

Oil on canvas, 35³/₈ × 28³/₈ in. (89.8 × 72 cm)
Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg

As a result of the queen's support, Vigée Le Brun was received and accepted into the Académie royale on May 31, 1783, and invited to exhibit at the Salon for the first time that August. In addition to her *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4), her *morceau de réception* (cat. 9), and several other paintings and pastels, the artist displayed portraits of the queen and of the comte de Provence and his wife. These three works underscored the royal family's support and were undoubtedly meant to silence malcontents who had opposed the artist's admission to the Académie royale.

As was the case with her self-portrait, the portraits of the comte and comtesse de Provence (the former, Louis XVI's younger brother, would later be King Louis XVIII of France) (Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 153–54, nos. 45, 46, ills.) had been painted the previous year. All three were official images depicting the sitters at half- to three-quarter length, in two cases with virtually no hands visible, and all three were intended to be replicated and presented as gifts. As a result, the cost for each picture would have been reasonable

and the time accorded for the sittings somewhat limited.

The portraits of the queen and her sister-in-law, Marie Joséphine Louise, comtesse de Provence, both wearing a chemise dress or “en gaulle,” the height of fashion at the time, caused an uproar. As the *Correspondance littéraire* tells it, visitors were shocked to see the two young women represented in such unseemly attire. The *Mémoires secrets* held Marie Antoinette responsible for the fashion choice:

Mme Lebrun exhibited three portraits of the royal family, those of the Queen, of Monsieur, and of Madame. The two princesses are “en chemise,” a costume recently thought up by women. Many people have found it inappropriate to portray these august personages in public in a garment reserved for the interior of their palace; it may be presumed that the artist was authorized to do so and would not have taken such liberties on her own. Be that as it may, Her Majesty is very fine; she has that nimble and resolute air, that ease she

prefers to the discomfort of formality, and which in her case does not compromise the nobility of her role. A few critics find the neck too slender; that would be a minor flaw in the drawing. Otherwise, a great deal of freshness in the face, elegance in the bearing, and naturalness in the attitude make this portrait appealing; it is even of interest to those who at first glance would not recognize the Queen in it. (Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 24, 1784, p. 9)

The critique, both laudatory and duplicitious, captured the public's reaction. Vigée Le Brun was asked to remove the image of the sovereign who had agreed to appear in a chemise, an impropriety that also drew attention to her taste for foreign-inspired (in this case, English) fashions. The artist substituted a new portrait, in which Marie Antoinette appeared in exactly the same position, with the same face and hands, but dressed formally and standing in front of a landscape (cat. 17). Paris had imposed its respect for decorum.

XS

17. *Marie Antoinette with a Rose*, 1783

Oil on canvas, 46 × 35 in. (116.8 × 88.9 cm)

Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 110

Collection of Lynda and Stewart Resnick

This graceful portrait owes its existence to the scandal occasioned by the portrait of Marie Antoinette “en chemise,” or “en gaulle,” which was exhibited at the Salon of 1783. (The original version is shown here as cat. 16. As was the case with the other half- or knee-length portraits of the queen predating the Revolution, it is neither signed nor dated.) A number of young women of the court, including the duchesse de Polignac (cat. 11), posed for Vigée Le Brun dressed in white muslin and a wide-brimmed straw hat worn at a jaunty angle. This sort of costume, lacking the pompous accoutrements required by court etiquette, was worn by Marie Antoinette at the Petit Trianon but was deemed unseemly for a portrait shown in public.

In fact, it had played a role in the “Diamond Necklace Affair,” one of the biggest swindles of the eighteenth century, which proved to have damaging consequences for the queen and the monarchy. A prostitute, Nicole Leguay d’Oliva, who resembled Marie Antoinette, had been hired by scam artists to play the role of the queen attired in the same type of muslin dress. On the night of August 11, 1784, in one of the thickets of Versailles, she managed to lure the Cardinal de Rohan, chaplain to the king, into believing that she was Marie

Antoinette, with whom he had long been out of favor. The performance so bedazzled the foolish and gullible prelate that he later agreed to purchase, he believed in the queen’s behalf, a gaudy diamond necklace she had already refused to buy from its makers. (Presumably he paid for the necklace, which disappeared.)

To avoid shocking certain sensibilities, a top-level decision was made to remove the portrait of the queen from the exhibition and to replace it. Vigée Le Brun completed another depiction of the royal subject, and on September 17, 1783, nearly a month after the opening of the Salon, the substitute canvas in a larger format, illustrated here, was installed. Marie Antoinette is shown almost knee-length gathering flowers, a large cabbage rose in full bloom and a few sprigs of jasmine, whose stems she ties with a white ribbon to make a nosegay. The verticality of the pose is offset on the left by a tree with ivy-covered branches growing diagonally. This bucolic setting brings to mind the gardens forming the background in several of François Boucher’s full-length portraits of the marquise de Pompadour (for example, that of 1759, Wallace Collection, London) and would be recycled a year later in Vigée Le Brun’s portrait of Madame Royale

and her brother the dauphin (cat. 23). The atmospheric setting—a patch of misty blue sky seen through dense foliage—casts into relief the gray dress with golden brown reflections, which is the height of elegance. Making the most of effects of transparency, Vigée Le Brun chose a palette of few colors—limited overall to a range of grays, blues, whites, and pinks—that accentuates the fair complexion and slightly rouged cheeks of the queen. The refinement of the costume and setting is matched by the artist’s dazzling technique.

The present painting exists in two autograph versions, one the replica (probably with studio assistance) of the other. The better known is the slightly smaller painting hanging today in the Petit Trianon. However, the queen’s face in the Resnick painting is treated more realistically, and the pictorial quality is clearly superior, suggesting that it is the prime example, that is, the one that replaced the portrait “en chemise” in the Salon of the Louvre in 1783.

The fixed gaze is a reminder of the queen’s myopia. But her face and demeanor also express the happiness of a woman oblivious to the perils to which her thoughtless behavior had for years exposed her, perils that ended only on the scaffold a decade later.

JB



18. *Madame Grand*, 1783

Oil on canvas, oval, 36¼ × 28½ in. (92.1 × 72.4 cm)

Signed and dated (at left): *L. E. Le Brun 1783*

Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 117

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Edward S. Harkness, 1940 (50.135.2)

The portrait of Madame Grand was exhibited as number 117 at the 1783 Salon and then disappeared from sight. In view of the questionable nature of the sitter's position in society, it is not surprising that we know nothing of its history or whereabouts until the twentieth century.

Noël Catherine Verlée was born on November 21, 1761, on the southeast coast of India in the Danish colony of Tranquebar. She was nearly sixteen at the time of her marriage on July 10,

1777, in Chandernagor to George Francis Grand, or Grant, who was of Swiss birth but in the employ of the British civil service. In 1779, she was discovered in compromising circumstances with Sir Philip Francis, a prominent Englishman, and Sir Philip was sued by Grand. His wife left him and after an interlude with Sir Philip took ship for England.

Madame Grand moved to Paris about 1782 and immediately became a figure of interest: tall and fair, with abundant blond hair, she was ill-educated, but

clever and charming. She had many lovers. In 1792 she fled in fear of the Revolution to London. It is not known when she returned to Paris, but in 1798 she was arrested and imprisoned as an agent of a foreign government, and it was Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, the brilliant, wily, and adept minister and former bishop of Autun, who secured her release, declaring that although she was idle and ignorant, he loved her. Madame Grand divorced. In 1802, at Napoleon's insistence, Talleyrand was released from his vows, and they entered into civil and religious marriages, but by that time he had lost interest in the lady from India. They lived apart for decades, and she died in Paris in 1835.

Madame Grand's portrait was favorably received by several critics, one of whom drew attention to its "bewitching sensuality." Her skin has a remarkable subtlety of tone, and the textures, patterns, and complex colored shadows of the upholstery and the ribbons on the dress are magisterial. The way in which her eyes are rolled back and her lips are parted should have been inappropriate to a portrait in modern costume. In the case of the present picture, it has been suggested that Vigée Le Brun, a student of the old masters, had in mind Domenichino's *Saint Cecilia* in the French royal collection (Musée du Louvre). Madame Grand holds a musical score. Her portrait forms a fascinating contrast to the more formal image of the aristocratic Madame de Mailly (cat. 19).



KB





19. *The Maréchale-Comtesse de Mailly in Van Dyck Costume*, 1783

Oil on canvas, 29 × 23¼ in. (73.5 × 59 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L^e Le Brun f. 1783*

Private collection

Blanche Charlotte Marie Félicité de Narbonne-Pelet, maréchale-comtesse de Mailly (1761–1840), was the daughter of François Raymond Joseph Herménegilde Amalric—vicomte de Narbonne-Pelet and lieutenant general in Louis XV's army, whose seigneurial fiefs were located primarily in Bas-Languedoc, and his second wife, Lucrèce Pauline Marie Anne de Ricard de Brégançon. On April 15, 1780, in Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Blanche married Joseph Augustin, comte de Mailly, marquis d'Haucourt, a septuagenarian and member of the old nobility of Picardy; she was his third wife. Despite the age difference, theirs was a happy marriage. Louis XVI greatly appreciated the marquis and entrusted to him the expansion and modernization of Languedoc-Roussillon, the port of departure for French vessels participating in the American Revolution. The king promoted the marquis to marshal of France in 1783. Blanche, whose kindness and sense of mischief greatly pleased Marie Antoinette, belonged to the intimate circle of the queen's friends.

The half-length portrait is not listed in the literature on Vigée Le Brun's oeuvre. It is a perfect example of the type of elegant society portrait that assured the painter a resounding success at the French court before the Revolution. The black silk gown with slit sleeves is a fashion also found in French

paintings before 1770, for example, in Carle and Louis Michel van Loo's conversation pieces and in Jean Honoré Fragonard's "fantasy figures." The taste for that type of Van Dyck or Henri IV masquerade—the so-called Spanish costume—had already swept across Europe, and especially to England and Sweden. The costume, including the colors of Madame de Mailly's gown, has a precedent in the 1769 portrait of Henrietta Somerset and her husband, Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn by Joshua Reynolds (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff).

The maréchal de Mailly would meet a tragic fate. Learning of the royal family's flight, he resigned as commander of one of the four armies decreed by the National Assembly on June 22, 1791. On February 19, 1792, Blanche gave birth to their son, Adrien Amalric Augustin. On August 10, the marshal returned to the Palais des Tuileries. Louis XVI entrusted to him the defense of the palace, a botched effort that failed, constantly held up by counterorders. The people in revolt stormed the palace, and the terrible bloodshed known to history followed. The marshal and his family took refuge at the Château de Moreuil, in Picardy, but were arrested there on September 7, 1793, on the order of André Dumont, deputy to the French National Convention. The marshal was guillotined on the Place du Théâtre in the nearby city of Arras on March 23, 1794.

Blanche barely escaped the same fate. Freed by the events of Thermidor (July 1794), the widow Mailly had a difficult life but displayed extraordinary strength of character and sangfroid. Her husband's wealth was confiscated, and she went into hiding in Paris; then, in October of the same year, she bought back the Château de la Roche de Vaux. In 1797, the administration of Sarthe returned to her not only the marshal's unsold property but also the money raised from the property that had already been sold. As the widow of a marshal of France, she received a pension of six thousand francs under the empire.

On Napoleon's orders, she was obliged to be in attendance at the imperial court and to send her seventeen-year-old son, Adrien de Mailly, to the Ecole Militaire. In 1812, he participated in the Russian campaign. Wounded during the Great Retreat, he owed his life to Napoleon, who would not allow the last of the Mailly line to perish. A peer of France, Comte Adrien would remain loyal to the elder branch of the Bourbons after the 1830 revolution and refused to swear an oath of fealty to Louis Philippe. He ordered the Château de La Roche de Vaux rebuilt and renamed it La Roche-Mailly. He died there on July 1, 1878.

As for his mother, she was almost an octogenarian when she died on January 15, 1840.

JB

20. *Duchesse de Guiche*, 1784

Pastel on two sheets of paper, joined, and laid down on canvas, oval,
31¾ × 25¼ in. (80.5 × 64 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{de} Le Brun / 1784*
Private collection

A few years before the revolution, the duchesse de Polignac came to my home, and I did her portrait several times, as well as that of her daughter, the duchesse de Guiche. Madame de Polignac looked so young that it was possible to believe she was her daughter's sister, and together they were the prettiest women of the court. Madame de Guiche would have been a perfect model to represent one of the Graces. As for her mother, I will not try to describe her face: that face was heavenly. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 237–38)

Clearly, the artist had fallen under the spell of the two women and, in fact, made multiple portraits of them (cats. 11, 20, 41, 57). She indicates, not quite accurately, that in 1783 she produced two portraits of the duchesse de Guiche, Louise Françoise Gabrielle Aglaé de Polignac (1768–1803), two more in 1787 (one a painting representing the young woman holding a garland of flowers, the other a pastel), and two additional portraits of her in pastel in 1789. Yet apparently she does not mention this portrait of 1784, though it is signed and dated. The work was engraved by Jean Philippe

Guy Le Gentil, comte de Paroy, cousin of its owner, the comte de Vaudreuil. It was also copied by the Swiss miniaturist Jacques Thouron (sale, Christie's, Geneva, November 21, 1979, no. 342).

At the time, the sitter had been married only a few years to Antoine Louis Marie de Gramont, comte de Louvigny and duc de Guiche (1755–1836), and the couple enjoyed the queen's friendship and the king's protection. For her wedding, the woman who would henceforth be called "Guichette" received a dowry of 800,000 livres from Louis XVI. Her husband had recently been named colonel, second in command of the Reine-Infanterie, and one of the four captains of the king's guard, succeeding the duc de Villeroy. In 1782 the duchesse de Guiche gave birth to her first daughter, Corisande Armandine Sophie Léonie (cat. 78). During the same years—in 1783 if the artist's list refers to a portrait different from that of 1784; or in 1784, if she is wrong about the date—the duchess posed for Vigée Le Brun. The pastel, which displays a masterly technique that graphically emphasizes the curls of the hair, the eyebrows, the shapes of the ribbon, and the creases in the fabric, shows the sitter in an unusual position, her head at a slight

angle, her hands at her breast. Joseph Baillio has pointed out similarities to Jean Baptiste Greuze's *Broken Pitcher* (Musée du Louvre), painted about 1772–73, a canvas that belonged to Madame Du Barry, who kept it at her house in Louveciennes. Vigée Le Brun may therefore have seen it during the sittings granted her by the deposed favorite in the early 1780s. The composition was certainly familiar to her as well through the engraving by Jean Massard exhibited at the Salon of 1773. In both works, the chemise dresses accentuate more than they conceal the beauty of the body, and the arrangement of the hands—with their long, tapering fingers—is intriguing. Whereas the erotic dimension of Greuze's painting is apparent, this does not seem to be the case here. Perhaps the pose of Guichette should rather be seen as an homage to her talent as an actress. At Marie Antoinette's invitation, the young woman was regularly called on to perform with the *troupe des seigneurs* at the Petit Trianon theater at Versailles. A few years later, Vigée Le Brun would use the same distinctive pose for a portrait of Countess Elizabeth Alexandrovna Demidova (the composition of which is known only through a miniature by Augustin Ritt).

XS





DUKE OF VALENTINIS
DU VALOIS
CHEVALIER DES ORDRES DU ROI
LIEUTENANT GÉNÉRAL ET PAIR DE FRANCE
NE 1740, MORT 1817.

21. *Comte de Vaudreuil*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 52 × 38⁷/₈ in. (132.1 × 98.7 cm)

Inscribed (lower left): COMTE DE VAUDREUIL/nd FAUCONNIER DE FRANCE/
CHEVALIER DES ORDRES DU ROI/LIEUT^{nt}/GÉNÉRAL ET PAIR DE FRANCE/
NÉ 1740, MORT 1817.

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Gift of Mrs. A. D. Williams, 1949 (49.11.21)

Joseph Hyacinthe François de Paule de Rigaud, comte de Vaudreuil, was born in 1740 in the French Antilles. At nineteen, he entered the army, serving during the Seven Years' War, and later joined fashionable Paris society. He was involved romantically with his cousin Gabrielle Yolande de Polastron, duchesse de Polignac (cat. 11), who as the queen's favorite obtained for him remunerative appointments, and he was a companion of the king's profligate youngest brother, the comte d'Artois.

Vaudreuil was reputed to be the finest amateur actor in France. At the theater of the Trianon on August 19, 1785, he played Count Almaviva in Pierre Beaumarchais's *Le Barbier de Séville*. Opposite was Marie Antoinette as Rosine, with the comte d'Artois as Figaro and Crussol (cat. 36) as Basile (Grimm 1877–82, vol. 14, p. 215). Vaudreuil was Vigée Le Brun's most important private patron in the 1780s, owning her *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4), the pastel *Duchesse de Guiche* (cat. 20), and *Madame Dugazon in the Role of "Nina"* (cat. 34), among other works. The artist's salon became fashionable in good part owing to her association with Vaudreuil, and in his honor, she improvised her famous *souper grec* (Greek supper), one

of the outstanding social events of the reign of Louis XVI. In newspapers and private letters of the period it was hinted that he and Vigée Le Brun were lovers.

Here Vaudreuil's formal attire is complemented by a lace jabot and cuffs. He wears the ribbon and badge of the Order of the Saint-Esprit and the rosette and cross of the Order of Saint-Louis. Tucked under his arm is a tricorne hat, and in his left hand he holds a ceremonial sword in an ivory sheath. Vigée Le Brun seems to have caught him recounting some witty gossip. Vaudreuil cuts a handsome figure, but the artist may not have been sufficiently detached from him to capture his personality on canvas, but then again, perhaps she did. The old comtesse de Boigne thought him callous and superficial:

I saw a great deal of the Comte de Vaudreuil in London without ever discovering the distinction accorded him by his contemporaries. . . . At Mme Le Brun's he would swoon before a painting and he protected artists. He lived on familiar terms with them, saving his grand airs for the salon of Mme de Polignac and his ingratitude

for the Queen, about whom I have heard him speak with the utmost impropriety. During the emigration, having grown old, the only things remaining to him were his many pretensions and the shame of seeing his wife's lovers helping to maintain his household with presents she was supposed to be winning at the lottery. (Boigne 1907–8, vol. 2, pp. 144–45)

Vigée Le Brun notes in her lists of sitters that she produced six versions of the painting in 1784, as well as additional versions dating to the Restoration (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 332, and vol. 3, p. 351). A same-size variant of good quality is in a private collection.

As his expenses surpassed his enormous personal revenues, when the finance minister Calonne (cat. 25) fell from grace in April 1787, Vaudreuil's credit entirely dried up. He left Paris with the comte d'Artois and the Polignacs on the night of July 16, 1789. When he finally returned in 1815, Louis XVIII appointed him to the Chambre des Pairs and granted him membership in the Institut de France. He died in 1817, at the age of seventy-seven, as the Governor of the Tuileries Palace.

JB

22. *Comtesse Du Barry de Cérès*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 36 × 29 in. (91.4 × 73.7 cm)

Signed and dated (on the letter): *L^e V^e Le Brun/1784*

Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment,
Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey (1963.33)

Joseph Baillio, having for some time believed that this composition corresponds to *Young Girl Caught Writing*, which the artist includes in her *Liste des tableaux et portraits*, argues convincingly that the mysterious letter writer can be identified as comtesse Du Barry de Cérès. In 1784, in fact, the artist mentions a portrait of “Madame la Comtesse de Serre,” as the name was pronounced at the time.

Originally from Toulouse, Anne Marie Thérèse de Rabaudy Montoussin (1759–1834) married the comte Jean Baptiste Du Barry de Cérès, thirty-six years her senior, in 1777. He was the elder brother of the accommodating husband of Louis XV’s last mistress (cat. 10). Barry de Cérès (nicknamed “the Rogue”) and his wife were a couple as mismatched as they were libertine. The comtesse, known as a great beauty, had in Vigée Le Brun’s view “a charming and sweet face, though you could see something false in her eyes” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 111–13).

Indeed, with her husband’s consent, the comtesse became the mistress of Charles Alexandre de Calonne, the con-

troller general of finances. To divert public attention from this relationship, the comtesse spread rumors that it was Vigée Le Brun who was engaged in the affair. The artist’s reputation was hurt by the rather vaudevillian slander put in motion by the comtesse, who later was said to have retired to Toulouse “in the most austere piety” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 111–13).

The work is exactly contemporaneous with the portrait of Calonne (cat. 25). Both share the theme of the missive and feature still lifes of desk accessories upon writing tables. Here, the artist has paid particularly close attention to the bronze ornamentation. The quill pen is arranged at a diagonal to the tabletop and in this fashion enters the viewer’s space. Vigée Le Brun made clever use of the letter, affixing to it her signature and the date, thus prefiguring the elegant gesture of Ingres, who in 1814 would insert his visiting card into the mirror frame of *Madame de Senonnes* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes).

Set against a dark, neutral ground, the formidable comtesse wears her

generously powdered hair under a lavender ostrich-plumed hat. She is framed on the left by the back of her chair, the curve of which corresponds to that of the paper about to be folded. The beholder seems to have interrupted her as she prepares the missive. That formula, indebted to Van Dyck and evoking a dynamic specific to the portrait *Lucas van Uffel* (ca. 1622, Metropolitan Museum, New York) is here adapted to a tightly focused composition, conferring on the work the intimacy of a genre scene. The sitter’s gown also nods to the age of the Flemish master, and is set off by an ample black silk shawl with lace trim that allowed the artist to ably convey effects of transparency. At the same time, both the iconography and the warm yellow-orange tones of the gown seem to echo those of Fragonard’s *Love Letter* (early 1770s, Metropolitan Museum, New York). The comtesse, a distant relation to the marquise de Merteuil, thus offers a final tribute to the waning century, that of Pierre Choderlos de Laclos and his *Les Liaisons dangereuses*.

PL





23. *Madame Royale and the Dauphin Seated in a Garden*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 45½ × 37⅞ in. (115.5 × 94.3 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L. Le Brun f. 1784*

Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 85

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 3907)

As the king's youngest brother already had two sons (the duc d'Angoulême, born in 1775, and the duc de Berry, born in 1778), the births of the royal children reassured the sovereigns. The arrival of Marie Thérèse Charlotte de France (1778–1851), Madame Royale, in 1778 proved that the royal couple was fertile; the appearance of the dauphin, Louis Joseph Xavier François (1781–1789), in 1781 provided an heir to the throne.

This double portrait, commissioned by the queen, depicts two of her royal children seated in a country setting, their interest sparked by a nest fallen from a tree that still contains its nestlings. The landscape, closed off on the right by a tree trunk, opens on the left to a path enclosed by trellises. The dauphin's felt hat is set on a bouquet of flowers. This is a far cry from official court portraiture. Even so, the costumes do not fail to recall the rank of Marie Antoinette's children. The dauphin in his plum-colored, silk satin "sailor suit" wears the cross and sky-blue sash of the Order of the Saint-Esprit, a distinction that every *filz de France* received on the day of his baptism. Madame Royale, shielded by a straw hat and with a muslin scarf tied around her shoulders, is dressed in a striped satin dress trimmed on the sleeves with fine lace.

As Joseph Baillio has pointed out, the artist has adopted the convention, introduced by François Hubert Drouais in the 1760s, of a double portrait of children in a landscape. The theme and composition of the latter's *Comte d'Artois and His Sister Madame Clotilde* (1763, Château de Versailles) are in fact very similar. The

comte d'Artois places his hand on his younger sister's shoulder, while Marie Thérèse Charlotte does the same with her little brother. The children in the Drouais painting are playing with a she-goat; here they have baby birds. The comte d'Artois grips a tuft of grass; the dauphin holds a nestling. But the tone has shifted. Vigée Le Brun places more emphasis on the relationship between the two siblings. Hence Madame Royale looks down protectively at her younger brother. Xavier Salmon has also noted that the integration of the children into the landscape is more successful in Vigée Le Brun's painting than in that of Drouais. The present work met with an enthusiastic reception at the Salon of 1785. The abbé Soulavie commented: "The head of Madame Royale, daughter of the king, is full of grace, Mme Le Brun

having drawn on her knowledge of the art of beautiful physiognomies, at which she excels" (Deloynes 1881 [1785], p. 29, no. 331).

A smaller autograph replica is mentioned in the artist's account book under the year 1789 (a replica was in the Roberto Polo sale, Ader Picard Tajan, Paris, May 30, 1988, no. 18, as *Les Enfants de France*, 116 × 96 cm). It was no doubt executed after the death of the dauphin. Of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI's four children, only Madame Royale, the future duchesse d'Angoulême, lived to adulthood.

Maurice Blot made an engraving after this painting in 1786 that was presented as a pendant to *The Riding Lesson* (1767), an engraving by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet after the portrait of the comte d'Artois and his sister.

GF



24. *Bacchante*, 1785

Oil on canvas, 28⁷/₈ × 23³/₈ in. (73.3 × 59.4 cm)

Signed and dated (upper center): *L^{se} V^{ge} LeBrun f 1785*

Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts,

Acquired by Sterling and Francine Clark, 1939 (1955.954)

The theme of the bacchante, a product and persistent symbol of the Rococo imagination, whether one thinks of Charles Antoine Coypel or of Charles Joseph Natoire, was also auspicious for subsequent generations, enriched along the way by the ardent sensuality that Jean Baptiste Greuze and his imitators were able to imprint on their figures of desirable and ruined women. In the wake of Vigée Le Brun's triumph at the Académie royale and her first critical successes, the artist, rather than depicting the world of antiquity, has instead painted a young woman from her own entourage, with fire in her cheeks, a smile on her parted lips, pearly teeth, and an unwavering and insolent gaze. One breast is uncovered, and its nipple is located along the picture's vertical center. We are truly in the sensual uni-

verse of the terracottas of Clodion and Joseph Charles Marin. It is tempting to compare this bacchante to one that is exactly contemporary, then the property of the comte de Vaudreuil, which Vigée Le Brun exhibited at the Salon of 1785 (fig. 5). The press, in more or less veiled terms, regretted the extreme chasteness of the seated bacchante: "Her head is certainly as charming as possible, full of subtlety, mischief, and good cheer," wrote the anonymous columnist for the *Mémoires secrets* (Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 30, 1785, p. 162):

The body, broadly painted with admirable flesh tones, is seductive in its lubricious nudity; but, apart from the tiger skin, which is perfectly imitated, she might be taken for a seraglio beauty rather than

a priestess of Bacchus. The head also seems too small for the body and the flesh not "laky" enough, a scientific term meaning not red enough, not sufficiently pumped full of blood, which the frequent and habitual condition of the nymph required.

The Camondo bacchante, which Colin Bailey calls "Rubenesque" (Bailey 2002, pp. 178–80), was more so by virtue of its roundness and cheerfulness than in its washed-out, "laky" epidermis. The term "Rubenesque" better suits the painting at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, in which the young model, indifferent to the fable for which, in spite of herself, she serves as a vehicle, forthrightly displays her appetite for life's pleasures.

SG





25. *Charles Alexandre de Calonne*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 61¼ × 51¼ in. (155.5 × 130.3 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *Le Brun. fe. 1784*

Inscribed (on the billet): *Au Roi*; (on the documents): *Edit du R . . . / Portant établissemen . . . / Caisse d'Amortissement . . . / La liberation des . . . / dettes de L'Etat / aout 1784 / et Arret du Conseil de l'Etat / au Roi qui . . . / fonds et . . . / Soulagement . . . / peuples . . .*

Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 87

Royal Collection Trust/H.M. Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 406988)

Vigée Le Brun participated at the Salon of 1785 with more than ten submissions, including, as number 94, “Several portraits under the same number.” The portrait of Calonne was number 87. Named controller general of finances in 1783, the sitter (1734–1802) later acquired the rank of minister of state. Heading off financial disaster for the monarchy, he skillfully negotiated a trade treaty with England and then attempted to boost economic activity by introducing monetary reform in 1785. At the start of that year, public opinion began to turn against him. The financial situation subsequently worsened and led to his dismissal two years later.

The exhibition of this portrait was marred by the subsequent rumor, spread by the comtesse Du Barry de Cérés (cat. 22), that the painter was the mistress of her illustrious sitter. In making the case for her innocence and providing an explanation for the slander, Vigée Le Brun concluded: “It is a sorry pass indeed, sure to inspire distaste for celebrity, especially when one has the misfortune of being a woman” (Vigée

Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 111–13). In general, the artist’s privileged relationships with her influential sitters were common knowledge, but they left her reputation as a woman painter vulnerable to criticism. As Sébastien Allard has pointed out, for the first time a woman, a member of the Académie royale, had attained the rank of official painter. It was after this Salon, in fact, that Vigée Le Brun obtained the commission for the portrait *Marie Antoinette and Her Children* (cat. 32).

Here the artist devotes herself to the exercise of the *portrait d'apparat*, or official portrait, even as, in Joseph Siffred Duplessis’s footsteps, she reinvigorates its conventions by emphasizing the sitter’s likability and expressiveness. At his work table, the minister sits in a sumptuous Louis XV armchair as if inadvertently celebrating the splendor of the previous reign. In the background on the left is a pilaster, which anticipates the monumental decor that would be used four years later in Jacques Louis David’s setting for *Antoine Laurent Lavoisier and His Wife* (1788, Metropolitan Museum, New York). That imposing aus-

terity is counterbalanced on the right, however, by a lavish, richly patterned red drapery trimmed with gold that complements the upholstery and the gilt frame of the armchair and confers an air of theatricality to the scene.

Like Anthony van Dyck’s *Lucas van Uffel* (ca. 1622, Metropolitan Museum, New York), Calonne appears as though he has been spoken to, and his response has been interrupted by the viewer. That beholder, however, is kept at a distance by the wide view, which, uncharacteristically, shows the sitter almost full-length. In his left hand, the statesman holds a missive intended for the sovereign: the inscription *Au Roi* (To the King) demonstrates the royal confidence the minister still enjoyed in 1784. If we are to believe the *Souvenirs*, Vigée Le Brun “rushed his portrait to the point of not making the hands his own” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 111). The swiftness hardly compromised the treatment of the glimmering light and the iridescence of the fabrics. Traces of powder on the sumptuous black suit attest to the artist’s virtuosic rendering of detail.

PL



26. *Comtesse de Ségur*, 1785

Oil on canvas, 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (92 × 73 cm)

Signed and dated (upper right): *L^e V^e Le Brun. f./1785*

Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 88

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 5962)

Antoinette Elisabeth Marie d'Aguesseau (1756–1828), granddaughter of a chancellor of France and daughter of a councillor of state, married the diplomat and historian comte Louis Philippe de Ségur, peer of France and member of the Académie Française, and shared his work, as his secretary. A supporter of the American War of Independence, the count joined the fight with Rochambeau, earning the rank of colonel during a naval battle. He subsequently pursued a career in Russia as a diplomat. The couple's son, General Philippe de Ségur, was the author of a history of the Russian campaign.

The countess, her hair long and loose, wears earrings *à la créole* and a hat with a large ostrich feather, held in place by a blue ribbon that matches the velvet of her gown. She wears a redingote dress, which would have had two rows of buttons down the back in the English style; the diaphanous lawn scarf barely conceals the low neckline, and a yellow skirt with sharp creases emphasizes the waist. The sitter's hands are crossed on the table, with wildflowers lying beside them. Her broad smile provides a glimpse of her teeth.

A touch of emotion recalls the style of Vigée Le Brun's predecessor and friend Jean Baptiste Greuze, while the play of light using layers of translucent glaze recalls the technique of the Flemish master Peter Paul Rubens (fig. 34). Falling at a diagonal from the upper left, the light casts a shadow on the sitter's forehead, producing slight color variations on the face. This subtle illumination makes the cerulean ribbon



Fig. 34. Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577–1640). *Presumed Portrait of Susanna Lunden (The Straw Hat)*, ca. 1622–25. Oil on wood, 31 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (79 × 54.6 cm). The National Gallery, London (NG852)

shimmer. “In general, let the background behind the model be of a soft and unified color, not too light, not too dark,” Vigée Le Brun recommends (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 357). The artist mentions the countess in her *Souvenirs* several times. Having returned from abroad, Vigée Le Brun saw her again in Paris, at first in difficult financial straits and

then, when her husband had been named grand master of ceremonies under Napoleon, surrounded by the most brilliant society at an evening of music “where she had assembled all the powerful of the day” (ibid., vol. 3, p. 141).

A replica of this portrait was bequeathed in 1916 by marquis Pierre de Ségur to the Musée de Versailles.

GF



27. *Baronne de Crussol Florensac*, 1785

Oil on wood, 44³/₄ × 33¹/₈ in. (113.8 × 84 cm)

Signed and dated (upper right, with a pointed instrument): *L^e LeBrun f 1785*

Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 89

Musée des Augustins, Toulouse (RO 307)

This portrait, one of Vigée Le Brun's most stylish, records the features of the baronne de Crussol de Florensac. Born Bonne Marie Joséphine Gabrielle Bernard de Boulainvilliers (ca. 1755–after 1826), she was the eldest child of Anne Gabriel Henri Bernard de Rieux, marquis de Boulainvilliers and seigneur de Passy, grandson of the immensely wealthy banker Samuel Bernard and provost of the criminal and civil courts of Paris, and his wife, Marie Madeleine Adrienne d'Hallencourt. The sitter had two sisters, Adrienne Marie Gabrielle, vicomtesse de Faudoas, and Anne Marie Louise, vicomtesse de Clermont-Tonnerre.

In 1770, Gabrielle married baron Emmanuel Henri Charles de Crussol, a member of an old family of the province of Languedoc. During the Revolution, she and her husband emigrated, and she was still alive in 1826, when she received compensation for property that had been confiscated under the Revolutionary government.

Gabrielle de Crussol is viewed from behind, seated on a Louis XV bench upon which her left arm rests, and turning her head toward the viewer as if she were interrupted while reading a score. The twisting pose of the head

is remotely related to the so-called portrait of Beatrice Cenci traditionally attributed to Guido Reni (ca. 1600, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome) and known from copies and prints, perhaps via François Boucher's *Head of a Woman* engraved in color by Louis Marin Bonnet or Jean Baptiste Greuze's *Young Woman Seen from the Back* (Musée Fabre, Montpellier). In her lap she holds the bound score of Christoph Willibald Gluck's opera *Echo et Narcisse* (1779) opened to the page of the final chorus, "Le dieu de Paphos et de Gnide."

The portrait's satiny finish is typical of the works the artist executed on wood. The flesh tones and the fabrics are painted with astonishing virtuosity. The baroness wears a splendid red silk dress with a *casquin* jacket with black velvet lapels ending in a deep collar falling onto her back. The bottom of the jacket is edged with black fur, and from the black velvet cuffs of her sleeves protrude delicate lace ruffles. Around her neck is a white muslin fichu that is tucked into the bodice. The wide-brimmed hat shading the top of the subject's forehead is trimmed with large silk bows of the same hue as the dress. The palette—the red and black of her clothes, the green of the bench, and the grayish blue back-

ground—shows the artist making the most of complementary colors. According to a former curator of the Musée des Augustins, "Although the costume is the *pièce de résistance*, it does not dominate this admirable painting, which remains above all a portrait: that of a lovely woman, whose youth and distinction are further enhanced by an outfit that, no doubt, could only be eclipsed by those qualities" (Mesplé 1959, n.p., text for pl. XI).

The artist sent the panel to the Salon of 1785, and the critics were struck by the unconventional pose, the treatment of the fabrics, and the palette. The analysis of the chronicler of the *Correspondance littéraire* is undoubtedly the most compelling:

Although a few critics found the baronne de Crussol's head to be in a rather uncomfortable position, others thought it conspicuously bold; . . . it cannot be denied that the pose has a certain negligence about it which, along with considerable grace, seems to add even more naturalness and authenticity. (Grimm 1877–82, vol. 14, p. 274 [November 1785])

JB

28. *The Comtesse de Clermont-Tonnerre as a Sultana*, 1785

Oil on wood, 38³/₄ × 28¹/₈ in. (98.5 × 71.5 cm)

Signed and dated (upper right): *L^e LeBrun. f 1785.*

Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 90

Collection of the Marquis de Ganay

Louise Joséphine Delphine de Rosières de Sorans, born in December 1766, was the second of the four children of Marie Louise Elisabeth de Maillé Brézé de Carman and her second husband, Henri Louis François de Rosières, marquis de Sorans. Her father, a brigadier in the royal armies, was also colonel of the infantry regiment of Artois, and chevalier of the Orders of Saint Louis and Saint Georges.

Her mother played a role at the court of Versailles as lady-in-waiting to Clotilde and Elisabeth de France, daughters of the dauphin, Louis, and his wife, Marie Josèphe de Saxe. Delphine's extended relations also held close ties to the ruling family, and at the age of thirteen, she was made a canoness of the abbey of Remiremont in Lorraine. She was related by blood to the scandalous marquis

de Sade, and both she and her mother sought repeatedly to secure his release from the prison of Vincennes, where he had been incarcerated by a royal *lettre de cachet* (see Guinet 1997).

In Paris on February 25, 1782, Delphine de Sorans married Comte Stanislas Marie Adélaïde de Clermont-Tonnerre (see Chateaubrun 1912; Du Bus 1931). On the following March 10, the newlywed, still an adolescent, was presented to the court. The couple had three children, of whom only the eldest, Célinie Louise Elisabeth, born at Versailles in 1783, would survive to adulthood. In 1785, when Delphine posed for Vigée Le Brun, she was probably pregnant with her second child, Charles Louis Gaspard, who, born in November 1785, died in infancy.

Small in stature and attractive, Delphine de Clermont-Tonnerre was described by baronne d'Oberkirch as endowed with "a lively intelligence, a sparkling originality" (Oberkirch 1853, vol. 2, pp. 128, 131–32; see also Reinach-Fousse-magne 1907, pp. 19–20). Vigée Le Brun portrayed her in Turkish costume as she had done some fifteen years earlier in a pastel likeness of her mother (presumed lost) and an oval portrait of the vicomtesse de La Blache (1774, private collection). Her long-sleeved dress of a sheer yellow-striped fabric is fastened at the waist by a clasped belt with two gold roundels. Similar belts are worn by women portrayed by Jacques André Joseph Aved (see Wildenstein 1922, vol. 2, no. 96, ill. opp. p. 124) and Jean Etienne Liotard (see Thornton 1993,





pp. 5–10). Her fanciful costume is complemented by a luxurious bluish-gray kaftan lined with ermine with black tail tips. She holds in her hands a string of pearls that suggests a Turkish *tespîh* (prayer beads).

In 1789, Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre actively represented the nobility of Paris at the Estates General, but ultimately joined the Third Estate and became one of the leaders of the aristocracy who, won over to liberal ideas, welcomed the Revolution and attempted in vain to save the constitutional monarchy. His eloquent speech before the Constituent Assembly to which he had been elected president, helped clear the way to

French citizenship for Jews, Protestants, and stage actors, who had been excluded until that time. He was attacked in the streets by a fanatical mob and was viciously slaughtered on August 10, 1792, the same day the Tuileries Palace was stormed and Louis XVI and his family were arrested and imprisoned.

Madame de Clermont-Tonnerre retired to Saintry, taking her mother and her daughter Célinie with her. On October 22, 1793, she was arrested and incarcerated in Paris in the rue de la Montagne des Champs, at the Montpin and Desnos asylum. Having been transported to the prison of Luxembourg, she managed, at the height

of her religious fervor, to convert the writer Jean François de La Harpe to Catholicism. She was not released until the fall of Robespierre and his terrorist accomplices. In 1802 she took as her second husband the wealthy vicomte Louis Justin Marie de Talaru, the last of his line (see Cazenove d'Arlens 1903, pp. 41–42, 86). The marquise de Talaru died at her home in Paris on October 26, 1832. She was buried in a chapel adjoining the village church of Chamarande, where Talaru had his château. The easily consolable widower wasted no time in marrying his ward, Louise Ernestine de Rosières de Sorans, the youngest niece of his late wife.

JB

29. *The Comtesse de Gramont Caderousse Gathering Grapes*, 1784

Oil on wood, 41³/₈ × 29⁷/₈ in. (105.1 × 75.9 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *L^e LeBrun. f. 1784*
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 91

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust through exchange of the bequest of Helen F. Spencer and the generosity of Mrs. George C. Reuland through the W. J. Brace Charitable Trust, Mrs. Herbert O. Peet, Mary Barton Stripp Kemper and Rufus Crosby Kemper Jr., in memory of Mary Jane Barton Stripp and Enid Jackson Kemper, and Mrs. Rex. L. Diveley (86-20)

Marie Gabrielle de Sinety, comtesse de Gramont Caderousse (1761–1832), is the subject of this engaging portrait, one of the artist's masterpieces. She was the daughter of André Louis, marquis de Sinety, and his wife, Marie Anne de Ravenel. The Sinetys descended from minor nobility of the kingdom of Naples who in the fifteenth century had settled permanently at Aix-en-Provence, then part of the Comtat Venaissin, governed by the papacy. Marie Gabrielle's mother was from a family of financiers and powerful civil servants whose wealth permitted her to marry into the patrician class. Her father's estates were in Aix and in the nearby town of Apt and at Lurcy-Lévis in the provinces of the Bourbonnais and Berry. At an early age Marie Gabrielle's education was entrusted to the care of the nuns of the convent of the Visitation in the rue du Bac in Paris.

In 1779, she was betrothed to André Joseph Hippolyte, marquis and comte de Gramont Caderousse. The contract was signed at Versailles by members of their two families and of the royal family. In the only known portrait of the marquis, he wears one of the uniforms of Louis XVI's military household guard and the cross of the Order of Malta (ca. 1778, private collection). He was the son of the marquis de Vachères,





who had inherited from a distant cousin the duchy of Caderousse, in Provence. On July 25, 1779, the new comtesse de Gramont Caderousse was formally presented at Versailles. Soon she was invited to join the circle of Marie Antoinette's closest female friends. The couple resided in Paris in the rue de Condé, in Orange, and in Avignon. They had four children.

Marie Gabrielle became duchesse de Caderousse in 1800. Her husband, from whom she obtained a financial separation, died in 1817, and the house of Gramont Caderousse became extinct in 1865 with the death of her eccentric and spendthrift grandson, the 9th duke. Vigée Le Brun executed this portrait of the diminutive countess in 1784. In the summer of 1785, the artist requested the loan of the painting for the Salon of the Académie royale. Her participation in the exhibition was a stellar performance, and this was one of the works that drew the most attention. She depicts her model dressed as a *vendangeuse* (grape harvester), in keeping with Marie Antoinette's love of contrived rusticity in the hamlet built for her on the grounds of the Petit Trianon.

Vigée Le Brun emphasizes her young subject's sensual qualities. The countess's open-lipped smile reveals her teeth—an innovation that other portraitists (such as Jean Antoine Houdon and Jacques Louis David) also exploited and that Vigée Le Brun had been using since she painted the portrait of her mother in a white pelisse (cat. 2). Her gaze was meant to seduce the viewers she so directly confronts.

The painting's wood support, which was prepared with coats of priming lightly tinted with ocher, adds to the brilliance of the Rubensian technique. The freshness of Madame de Gramont's complexion is the result of a masterful application of thin, softly brushed transparent colored glazes over the warm base tones. In 1782, the artist had created similar effects in her *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1782, fig. 4), the first of her panel pictures. The flesh tones contrast with the black curls framing the face. This coiffure was a radical departure from the powdered hair usually worn by women of the court and the privileged classes, and it caused a stir when Madame de Gramont attended a theatrical performance after one of the

posing sessions. Vigée Le Brun, who enjoyed innovating costumes for her sitters, recalls:

I could not stand powdered hair. I persuaded the beautiful Duchesse de Grammont-Caderousse not to use any for her portrait. Her hair was ebony black . . . arranged in irregular curls. After the sitting, which finished at the time of the midday meal, the duchesse left her hair as it was and went to the theater as she was. Such a lovely woman had to set the fashion, which gradually caught on and became wide-spread. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 53)

The Salon included ten or more portraits (see cats. 23, 25–29) by the now-famous Vigée Le Brun, as well as the seated bacchante sitting beside a tree from which hung bunches of grapes (fig. 5). The critical reception of the Nelson-Atkins picture was almost unanimously positive, and most writers stressed its vital sensuality, physicality, and slightly erotic charge.

JB

30. *Madame Etienne Vigée*, 1785

Oil on canvas, 22 × 18⁷/₈ in. (56 × 46 cm)
Private collection

Suzanne Marie Françoise Vigée, wife of Vigée Le Brun's brother, was born in Paris on June 19, 1764. She was one of seven children of Jean Baptiste Rivière and Catherine Antoinette Foulquier. According to family tradition, the Rivières, French Protestants, left France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and settled in Northern Europe, where they ultimately converted to Catholicism. Rivière, in the service of the house of Saxe like his father, was employed from 1756 onward as secretary to the legation of the electorate in Paris. Later the family lived in the rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin, next to the residence of Baron Grimm, emissary of the duchy of Saxe-Gotha.

Catherine Rivière was one of the three daughters of an itinerant musician, Jean Baptiste Foulquier, and Marie Toinette Tourneville. By her stage name "La Catinon," she had debuted at the age of fifteen in Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux's *La Mère confidente*. She and her sisters were associated with the Comédie-Italienne: the eldest was known by her married name, Bognioli, while the next married the actor Carlo Antonio Bertinazzi, whom Louis Vigée had rendered in the costume of a Harlequin in a pastel of 1751.

The wedding of Suzanne to Etienne Vigée was held on October 19, 1784. The newspaper columnist Pierre Jean Baptiste Nougaret reported on the ceremony and the reception at the home of the finance minister Calonne: "Court and town both attended [the] wedding. . . . All the pleasing talents of Paris made an appearance, and at that supper the husband received as a wedding present the position of comptroller of the amortization fund, with a salary of twelve thousand livres" (Nougaret 1808, vol. 2, pp. 230–31). The couple owed other lucrative benefits, including, for Etienne, the title of secretary to the comtesse de Provence and, for Suzanne, the mostly honorific position of *femme de chambre* to Madame Royale, to the influence of Vigée Le Brun's friends and clients.

Their only surviving child, Charlotte Louise Elisabeth ("Caroline") Vigée, would marry her maternal uncle Jean Nicolas Louis Rivière. The two would later share Vigée Le Brun's apartment and country house and would become the artist's sole heirs. Suzanne Vigée died on June 24, 1811.

According to the artist, her sister-in-law was not conventionally beautiful but was one of those women who have "physiognomy"—in other words, an

expressive face. Sweet-tempered, she had inherited from her mother a real talent as a musician and actress: she acted and sang at the comte de Vaudreuil's Château de Gennevilliers and in 1788 participated at Vigée Le Brun's Greek supper.

In this portrait, pulsing with life, the artist shows "Suzette" seated, with her body in profile. Her head is oriented toward the viewer, at whom she stares fixedly. The palette is rather restrained: aquamarine for the sky streaked with pink and gray clouds; and different shades of black and gray for the hair and the lace-trimmed shawl (one of the artist's favorite accessories: see, for example, cats. 11, 12, 22). The thick impasto gives substance to a wide white ruff fastened with a large pink satin bow glistening with blue highlights, while the frizzy, slightly powdered hair is rendered with sure strokes and a multitude of arcs and swirls. This freely painted portrait displays a rare technical skill, which links Vigée Le Brun's craftsmanship to Fragonard's *fa presto*. It is not the only example of this style. An earlier portrait of a young lady wearing a black shawl is painted with the same technique and a full brush (Musée Cognacq-Jay, Paris [J. 30/B. 29]).

JB





31. *Marquise de Puységur*, 1786

Oil on wood, 41½ × 29¼ in. (105.5 × 74.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left, with a pointed instrument): *L Le Brun f. 1786*

Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana,

Gift of Mrs. Fred J. Fisher (1951.004.015)

Marguerite Baudard was born in Paris on February 13, 1766, the second of four children of the financier Claude Baudard de Saint-James and Julie Augustine Thibault Dubois. At the height of his career, her father was a counselor to the king, treasurer general of the royal navy and of the French colonies in the Americas, and treasurer of the military Order of Saint-Louis. His personal wealth grew exponentially through investments in the stock market, as well as holdings in waterworks, mining, shipbuilding, and sugar plantations in the Antilles. Closely involved in the relaunch of the discount bank while Charles Alexandre de Calonne (cat. 25) was comptroller of the Exchequer, Baudard was instrumental in modernizing his nation's economic system. Unfortunately, his aspirations induced him to lend colossal sums of money to the state to help finance France's role in the American Revolution and, privately, to Louis XVI's two brothers and other highly placed but financially strapped courtiers and notables, many of whom defaulted. Meanwhile, he and his family lived on a princely scale in a town house on the Place Vendôme that was filled with art treasures and luxurious furnishings.

In 1781, the adolescent Marguerite Baudard de Saint-James was wed to the high-born Armand Marie Jacques

de Chastenet, marquis de Puységur, military officer and an enthusiastic follower and proselytizer of the pseudo-scientific theories of animal magnetism formulated by the German Franz Anton Mesmer. The couple had five children.

In 1777, Claude Baudard had engaged the architect and landscape designer François Joseph Bélanger to build the famous Folie Saint-James on the western outskirts of Paris near the village of Neuilly. The manor house was set in an elaborate English garden filled with fanciful constructions (*fabriques*), including ponds, streams and bridges, a rocky grotto, hothouses, classical buildings, and rustic cottages. The project was nearing completion in 1786 when Vigée Le Brun painted Baudard's daughter, and it is not known if it was he or Puységur who paid for the work. (Baudard's unrestrained spending would drive him into bankruptcy in 1787.)

This seductive likeness is part pastoral and part Neoclassical in inspiration. Vigée Le Brun represents the twenty-year-old marquise as a milkmaid. Her hands rest on an earthenware amphora beside a stone well or trough. Her costume, one of the artist's improvisations, harks back to that worn by the marquise de Laguiche in Vigée Le Brun's portrait of 1783 (last recorded at the Château de Chaumont, Saint-Bonnet-de-Joux; see Nolhac 1908, ill. opp. p. 142). The

subject wears a tightly corseted scarlet bustier. Part of her golden-ocher satin skirt is tucked into the striped brown sash at her waist. The curls of her barely powdered ash-blonde hair are rendered in a manner that is one of the hallmarks of the artist's Rubensian technique of the 1780s, with medium-thick highlights in long, liquid brushstrokes of raw-umber over the off-white undercoating of the oak support. To protect her face from the sun, the marquise wears a sheer scarf, and, positioned at a tilt, a broad-brimmed straw hat in the shape of a *petasos*, worn by ancient Greek travelers and an attribute of Hermes, the Hellenic god of commerce. Her nearly round face, with blue eyes, finely shaped brows, and lips upturned in a genteel smile, is angled toward her left shoulder.

The liberal-minded Puységur openly espoused the initial reforms of the French Revolution, but the ensuing violence cooled his ardor. He retired from the army after the Bourbon monarchy was toppled in 1792 and moved with his family to his ancestral lands at Buzancy, in Picardy. They were all incarcerated for a time in Soissons. In 1800, First Consul Bonaparte appointed Puységur to serve as mayor of that town. He died of an illness contracted at Reims during the coronation of Charles X in 1824. His widow lived on at their estate of Marcoussis (Seine-et-Oise) until her death on February 18, 1837.

JB



32. *Marie Antoinette and Her Children*, 1787

Oil on canvas, 108¼ × 85¼ in. (275 × 216.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L Vigée. Le Brun. 1787*

Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 97

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 4520)

On September 12, 1785, by order of Louis XVI, the office of the *Bâtiments du Roi* commissioned a large portrait of the queen from Vigée Le Brun. The instructions were precise: the painting would be monumental and would represent Marie Antoinette at Versailles in the company of her children, the guarantors of dynastic continuity. It was intended to restore the queen's image, lending respectability by extolling her maternal role. On July 22, 1786, the preparatory sketch received the approval of the comte d'Angiviller and then of the sitter, and the artist finished her studies of the heads at the Trianon in August 1787.

The queen, shown full length and lifesize, wears a toque with an aigrette and ostrich plumes that match her red velvet gown trimmed with sable. She holds her youngest son, Louis Joseph, duc de Normandie, on her knees. Marie Thérèse Charlotte de France, known as Madame Royale, leans lovingly against her mother. Louis Joseph François Xavier de France, the dauphin, wears the blue ribbon and plaque of the Order of the Saint-Esprit and pulls back the curtain of an empty bassinet, an allusion to Sophie Hélène Béatrix, born on July 9, 1786, who died at the age of eleven months while this group portrait was being painted. Some have speculated that the picture was reworked after her death, and a drawing in black chalk and pastel had been considered a study of the sleeping child (Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 191, no. 69, ill.). X-radiography of the painting, however,



has revealed no trace of the little girl in her bed.

Far from the tenderness that usually presided over Vigée Le Brun's mother-and-child double portraits (figs. 12, 13), here the artist depicts a solemn queen. On the advice of David, she conceived

of a triangular composition, inspired by Renaissance depictions of the Holy Family, to confer sacredness on her subjects. The red of the dress is the same as that in which the virtuous Marie Leszczyńska was represented by Jean Marc Nattier in 1748 (Château de Versailles). As Joseph



Baillio points out, and despite considerable scholarly comment on the subject, Marie Antoinette does not personify Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, whose children are her only jewels.

The artist, aware that “L’Autrichienne,” as Marie Antoinette was referred to disparagingly, was becoming increasingly unpopular, did not dare send the painting to the Salon. At the opening on August 25, 1787, the place of honor that had been reserved for it therefore remained vacant, giving rise to many critical comments, including the famous “There it is, the deficit!” (Sheriff 1996, pp. 143–71). To stem the tide of criticism, Amédée van Loo, organizer of the Salon, asked Vigée Le Brun to install her work.

Although its painterly qualities were appreciated, few admired it. Viewers were struck by the sadness of the faces, and by an evocation of motherhood that they would have wished to see more radiant. It was no easy task to suggest a royal family exemplifying the domestic virtues, rather than the members of a dynasty by divine right. Even Count Stanislas Kostka Potocki, a great lover of Vigée Le Brun’s art, was critical.

After the dauphin’s death in 1789, Marie Antoinette could not walk past the painting, which then hung in the Salon de Mars, without crying, and it was therefore removed from the apartments of Versailles. Vigée Le Brun later recalled that during the Empire, nos-

talgic or curious visitors often asked to see it. When, having returned from her years abroad, she went to view the portrait again, the guard thanked her for all the tips it had earned him (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 317).

Three tapestries based on this portrait were woven by the Gobelins manufactory. The first, made between 1814 and 1818, was given to the Empress Eugénie by the emperor of Austria in 1868; a second version, woven between 1818 and 1822, was installed at the Château de Saint-Cloud; and a third was made between 1897 and 1900, when it was shown at the Exposition Universelle in Paris and then given to Empress Alexandra of Russia by the French government.

GF



33. *The Marquise de Pezay and the Marquise de Rougé with Her Two Sons*, 1787

Oil on canvas, 48 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 61 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (123.4 × 155.9 cm)

Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 98

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of the Bay Foundation

in memory of Josephine Bay Paul and Ambassador Charles Ulrick Bay (1964.11.1)

As a group portrait, this spectacular composition is an exception in the artist's oeuvre. It is the result of a commission from the marquise de Rougé, who appears in the center of the canvas. She is flanked by her two sons, Alexis and Adrien, and by her close friend the marquise de Pezay, who seems to dominate this conversation piece. Vigée Le Brun's patroness had been a widow since 1783; her husband, Colonel-Marquis de Rougé, died on a ship bringing him back from Guadeloupe after a distinguished military career. Then, if we are to believe the memoirist Bombelles, this young aristocratic woman "attracted the favor of the king and queen."

The marquise de Pezay, also a widow, had married a libertine who became famous at the court of Louis XVI for a series of political intrigues that contributed to the dismissal of the brilliant economist and minister Turgot. Finally ejected from the circles of power, he was constrained to retire to his lands near Blois. He died in 1777. Vigée Le Brun's *Souvenirs* attests to the regular presence of the two friends at the musical soirées that she hosted before the Revolution.

At the Salon of 1787, the work was immediately compared favorably to Vigée Le Brun's famous *Self-Portrait with Her Daughter Julie*, which was shown at the same exhibition (fig. 12). In the

present painting, the intense, loving expressions seem to derive from Renaissance iconography of the Holy Family, while the sumptuous turban worn by the marquise de Rougé provides the sitter with the status of one of the most glorious sibyls by Domenichino. Ten years later, the artist, living in Saint Petersburg, would use a similar group arrangement for *Countess Ekaterina Sergeevna Samoilova with Two of Her Children* (cat. 66).

The group portrait also exalts the value of friendship, as demonstrated by the rhetorical gestures of the marquise de Pezay, who designates with her right arm little Adrien, resting on his mother's knee, while her left hand is placed affectionately on her friend's shoulder.

Vigée Le Brun, at the pinnacle of her art, employs extraordinary tonal shifts and virtuosic renderings of gleaming fabrics. The group is placed above a lush landscape, a choice that anticipates the more systematic use the artist would make of such settings during her exile in Italy at the start of the following decade. Attentive to the English school, Vigée Le Brun seems to have culled its innovations in portraiture from viewing engravings. For example, the arrangement of this composition is somewhat reminiscent of Joshua Reynolds's *The Ladies Waldegrave* (1780, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh [fig. 35]), a conversation piece exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1781 that magnificently conveys familial intimacy in a monumental composition.

PL



Fig. 35. Sir Joshua Reynolds (British, 1723–1792). *The Ladies Waldegrave*, 1780. Oil on canvas, 56 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 66 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (143 × 168.3 cm). National Galleries Scotland (NG 2171)

34. *Madame Dugazon in the Role of “Nina,”* 1787

Oil on canvas, 57 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 45 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (147 × 115 cm)
Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 103
Private collection

This masterpiece, both a portrait and a genre painting, has not been exhibited to the public since 1932. It represents a major figure of the theatrical world in the age of Louis XVI—the actress, dancer, and singer Madame Dugazon, née Louise Rosalie Lefebvre (1755–1831)—in the most memorable role of her career. Born in Berlin on June 18, 1755, she was within a few weeks the exact contemporary of Vigée Le Brun. She was the most talented of the four daughters of François Jacques Lefebvre, dancer and ballet master associated with Frederick II’s opera since 1747, and Magdelaine Louise Guérin. At the age of eight, after her family had moved to Paris, she took to the stage at the Comédie-Italienne as the prima ballerina of the corps de ballet. Endowed with the natural voice of a light mezzo soprano (the name Dugazon would later be used to designate that particular tessitura), she sang instinctively, without having had any voice training. She had a small waist, large brown eyes, magnificent hair, mobile features, and was good at expressing passion, a talent that allowed her to be cast both as the romantic lead in comedies and as the teary-eyed heroine of melodramas.

After her official debut (1774) in *Sylvain*, a comic opera by André Ernest Modeste Grétry, the singer won the favor of spectators and critics alike when she replaced Marie Thérèse Laruette in Pierre Alexandre Monsigny’s *Le Déserteur*, opposite the baritone Joseph Caillot. In 1776, having become a member of the Théâtre Italien, she married her lover,

the comic actor Dugazon—his real name was Jean Henri Gourgaud—who succeeded Préville (stage name of Pierre Louis Dubus, whose portrait by Vigée Le Brun is in the Musée de la Comédie Française; see Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 120, no. 25, ill.) at the Théâtre Français. Since he was jealous and she unfaithful, it was a stormy marriage.

The public did not spare its applause or its tributes to La Dugazon, who had her greatest triumph in the title role in *Nina, ou La Folle par amour*, a one-act opera by Nicolas Dalayrac and Benoît Joseph Marsollier des Vivetières. The simple story concerns a thwarted love affair between Nina, the daughter of a count, and Germeuil, the son of the count’s foster father. The heroine sinks into profound madness when she thinks her lover has been killed in a duel, a state that can only be cured by his kiss. Plots featuring madness had long been a recipe for success at the theater (see Couvreur 1992), and the character of Nina was the archetype for these “interesting madwomen” so greatly appreciated on the eve of the Revolution (Starobinski 1973, p. 163).

Vigée Le Brun, who truly worshipped Madame Dugazon, was overpowered by her interpretation of Nina, which she had seen “at least twenty times”: “Mme Dugazon had one of those natural talents that seem to owe nothing to study. You no longer perceived the actress. . . Noble, naïve, graceful, provocative, she had twenty different physiognomies” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 138–40).

In portraying the actress in 1787, Vigée Le Brun selected the moment, in scene 6 of the opera, when Nina will rise from the bench on which she has been waiting for Germeuil. Full of hope, she smiles naïvely—there is a slight gap between two of her teeth—and turns her wide-open eyes toward the gate of the property. She listens for the voice of Germeuil, who had promised to meet her before the duel but does not appear, and extends her arms, expecting a reply. Her close-fitting white silk gown (*robe à l’anglaise*), with a boned bodice, is decorated around the neckline with a fluted ruff in white tulle and muslin, and the sleeves are finished with several rows of fine gauze ruffles. Around her waist is a long, violet satin belt adorned with fringe similar to that worn by the artist in her two self-portraits with her daughter (see figs. 12, 13). The sitter’s lightly powdered blond hair is arranged in a multitude of little curls.

Despite the beauty of the model and her costume and the elegance of the composition, the fussiest literary hacks complained that the portrait was “only too good a likeness” of Madame Dugazon (*Figaro au Salon de peinture*), that her expression was “forced” (*Lettre* 1787), and that the artist highlighted only “a convulsively open mouth” (Pujoulx 1787) to “make us admire a beautiful set of dentures” (Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol 36, p. 352).

The painting’s first owner, who may have commissioned the work, was the comte de Vaudreuil (cat. 21).

JB



35. *Julie Le Brun Looking in a Mirror*, ca. 1786

Oil on wood, 28¾ × 23¾ in. (73 × 60.3 cm)
Private collection

At the Salon of 1787, Vigée Le Brun won general acclaim as a painter of childhood, having exhibited in that year three portraits of mothers accompanied by their children—including the famous portrait of Marie Antoinette (cat. 32), and that of the marquise de Rougé and the marquise de Pezay (cat. 33)—as well as one of herself holding her daughter, Julie (fig. 13). Also shown were the portrait of a little boy, known as “the young d’Espagnac” (1786, Wallace Collection, London), and those of two little girls, Caroline Lalive de La Briche (private collection) and again, her daughter, Julie. By this time, the artist had fixated on Jeanne Julie Louise Le Brun (1780–1819) as her preferred model. In the Louvre self-portrait, Julie seeks refuge in her mother’s arms; in a second portrait, she dozes on a Bible (private collection); and in a third, she offers viewers a reflection of her pretty face in a mirror. The composition with the mirror seemed to have particularly pleased the artist, who painted two versions of it, one on wood—the present work, and certainly the first, given the pentimenti that mark the composition—the other on canvas (fig. 36).

As Joseph Baillio has pointed out, the image, with an impossible perspective that reveals the subject both in profile and full face, may have been inspired by earlier works with which the artist was familiar, having seen them among the paintings her husband offered for sale or in one of the many collections she regularly visited. Undeniably, the most direct connection is to a canvas attributed to Jusepe de Ribera, in which the features of a philosopher, shown in

three-quarter profile, are revealed in a mirror (location unknown; see Baillio 1982a, p. 74, fig. 25). The artist may also have been acquainted with the beautiful composition by Nicolas Régnier dating to 1616, which represents a young woman at her toilette (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon). Such mirror-play also allowed François Boucher to paint Madame de Pompadour’s face and a reflection of the nape of her neck, in his famous portrait of 1756, shown at the Salon of 1757 (Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen,

Munich). One of the two versions of the portrait of Julie Le Brun with a mirror was exhibited at the Salon of 1787. Among the “Inscriptions to place under different paintings exhibited at the Musée du Louvre in 1787” (Deloynes 1881, vol. 15, no. 387, p. 11), we read: “It is most ingenious to display twice, in a single portrait, the same subject holding a toilet article in such a way that no one can object that the artist is repeating herself.”

XS



Fig. 36. Vigée Le Brun. *Julie Le Brun Looking in a Mirror*, 1787. Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 23¾ in. (73 × 59.5 cm). Private collection





36. *Alexandre Charles Emmanuel de Crussol-Florensac*, 1787

Oil on wood, 35³/₈ × 25¹/₂ in. (89.9 × 64.8 cm)

Signed and dated (upper right): *L^e E^het Vigée: Le Brun: P^{te} 1787*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.53)

Alexandre Charles Emmanuel de Crussol d'Uzès et de Florensac (1743–1815) was the younger son of Pierre Emmanuel de Crussol, marquis de Florensac and comte de l'Estranges, and marshal of Louis XV's armies. Choosing a military career like his father, Crussol de Florensac was assigned in 1773 as captain of the bodyguard to the comte d'Artois, a Bourbon prince and the future King Charles X. In 1780, he became *brigadier de cavalerie*, and was promoted to *maréchal-de-camp* in 1784, receiving on the same day from Louis XVI the insignia of a chevalier of the king's order—the Order of the Saint-Esprit—the most prestigious distinction in the kingdom of France.

In 1763 Crussol-Florensac was admitted to the Order of Malta as a chevalier, ultimately attaining the rank of *bailli grand croix*. Having accepted the obligation of celibacy imposed by the order, Crussol never married, though he did have a long affair with Sophie de Fuligny Damas, marquise de Grollier (see Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 184, no. 64, ill.). In addition to being one of the stars in the circle of the noble Polignac family, the courtier Crussol, along with the comte

d'Artois, was also quite a good amateur actor. On August 19, 1785, the *bailli* performed onstage at the queen's little theater at the Trianon, playing the role of Basile in Beaumarchais's *Le Barbier de Séville*, with Marie Antoinette as Rosine and d'Artois as Figaro (see Grimm 1877–82, vol. 14, p. 215).

Elected deputy of the nobility to the Estates General for the *prévôté* and *vicomté* of Paris in 1789, Crussol chose to emigrate two years later. He spent time in Switzerland, Koblenz, and Rome, before settling in Florence, where he represented the interests of the Bourbons. For most of that period, he was accompanied by Madame de Grollier. Crussol did not return to France until the Consulate. With the Restoration, Louis XVIII promoted him to lieutenant general and, in 1814, named him a peer of France.

This portrait is among the most dazzling of Vigée Le Brun's works. Crussol, forty-four at the time, displays the first marks of age: receding hairline and graying (powdered) hair, which contrasts with his ruddy complexion and still flaming-red eyebrows. The chevalier wears the town clothes of the Order of

the Saint-Esprit: a velvet mantle with a collar richly decorated with gold braid. Sewn on to the mantle in silver thread is the large eight-pointed cross, and below it the white satin cross, also with eight points, of the Knights Templar. Across his chest is the blue sash of the Order of the Saint-Esprit, to which is fastened the enameled silver cross of the Order of Malta and, to its right, a red ribbon of the military Order of Saint-Louis. The *bailli* also wears the large collar of the Order of the Holy Spirit. (On the costume of chevaliers and officers in the order, see Malécot et al. 1994).

Vigée Le Brun mentions this work in her list of sitters for 1788 (although the painting was done in 1787), immediately after the portrait of the marquise de Grollier, and explains in her *Souvenirs* that it was thanks to the payment for this portrait that she was able to leave France in 1789. On the lists she appended to her memoirs, the artist includes other portraits of Crussol and Madame de Grollier, produced in the late 1780s and after the Revolution. These may be replicas executed by her during the Restoration; their locations are unknown.

JB

37. *Marie Antoinette in a Blue Velvet Dress and White Skirt*, 1788

Oil on canvas, 106⁵/₈ × 76³/₄ in. (271 × 195 cm)

Signed and dated (center left, on column): *E. Vigée Le Brun* / 1788.

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 2097)

This work repeats the composition of *Marie Antoinette and Her Children* (cat. 32), the last portrait commissioned from Vigée Le Brun by the Bâtiments du Roi. It was doubtless painted without a sitting by the queen, probably on the artist's own initiative. Marie Antoinette's face, pose, and focus are almost identical. Seated and lifesize, she again rests her feet on a cushion; she wears a dress trimmed with sable, the same earrings, and her pouf headdress is adorned with an aigrette and ostrich feathers. Here too, the fall of the white skirt and the heaviness of the velvet contrast with the delicacy of the lace at the wrists and the wide, low neckline. The royal crown, displayed on a cushion with a fleur-de-lis motif, which was on top of the jewelry cabinet in the painting of 1787, is now set on the table. The columns and curtain—suggesting a palace setting—and the bouquet of flowers were inspired by the 1778 portrait sent to the court of Vienna (cat. 7). The book, stamped with the queen's coat of arms, clearly refers to Jean Marc Nattier's 1748 portrait of Marie Leszczyńska (Château de Versailles) holding the Gospels in her hand and also to Vigée Le Brun's portrait of *Marie Antoinette with a Book*, painted about 1784 (fig. 3).

The title traditionally given to the painting states that the queen wears a mantle, which is in fact inaccurate. In her *Souvenirs* (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 16–17), the artist explains that she had her “large portrait” of Marie Antoinette “in a blue velvet gown” (not in a mantle) brought to Saint Petersburg. That type of gown, which one slipped into through



Fig. 37. Vigée Le Brun. *Marie Antoinette*. Black chalk on cream paper, 9¹/₈ × 7¹/₂ in. (23.2 × 18.8 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 7807, Drawings 37)

the sleeves, was fastened in front, showing the chemise worn underneath.

The portrait gave rise to many copies, including an autograph replica commissioned by the comte d'Artois. The latter has the same dimensions as the original, but the necklace has disappeared and the headdress has increased in size. Now at the New Orleans Museum of Art, it once belonged to Charles, duc de Berry, second son of Charles X. A large pastel, judged by Xavier Salmon to be of mediocre quality, is the property of the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Houston,

and the Musée Condé, Chantilly, has a miniature of the face (oil on wood, in a gilded frame). The attribution of a black chalk drawing (fig. 37) with some variations in the costume has sometimes raised doubts, but is considered autograph by Joseph Baillio. Should we see this example as a preparatory study for the canvas painted for the king's brother or for the painting kept by the artist, or rather, as Baillio believes, as a *ricordo*? Macret, Le Vachez, and Schencker made engravings after the painting.

GF



38. *The Prince Henryk Lubomirski as Love of Glory*, 1787–88

Oil on wood, 41½ × 32⅝ in. (105.5 × 83 cm)

Paris, Salon, 1789, no. 78

Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (74.4)

Henryk Lubomirski (1777–1850) became the heir to one of the most prestigious Polish aristocratic families. Famous for his beauty as a child, in 1783 he was the subject of a veritable abduction perpetrated by Marshal-Princess Izabela Lubomirska. A distant relative, she regretted her lack of a male heir and reared him as her son. In autumn 1785, when her opposition to King Stanislaw August Poniatowski became too compromising, she left Poland, accompanied by her young protégé, for a grand tour of Europe. In November 1786 the journey took them to Paris, where they lived until 1791. The salon of the flamboyant Polish princess, initially located in a suite of apartments at the Palais Royal rented from the duc d'Orléans, soon emerged as one of the centers of high society.

In 1787 Lubomirska commissioned a portrait of the young prince from Vigée Le Brun. If we are to believe the *Liste des tableaux et portraits* compiled by the artist, the painting may have been preceded by a study in oil or pastel. On the leading edge of fashion, the child is represented *à la grecque* in the form of an allegorical portrait. The pose is taken from the famous *Crouching Venus* of the third century B.C., attributed to Doidalsas. The Hellenistic sculpture had been “translated” into bronze by Antoine Coysevox about 1685 (fig. 38). It was cast by the Keller brothers, and Vigée Le Brun was able to see it in the upper gardens of Marly. In 1795, Jacques Louis David made use of the same source to express the protagonist’s despair in his *Psyche Abandoned* (private collection).

The child is portrayed in a flowering Arcadian meadow, with, on the right, a patch of myrtle. His nudity is barely concealed by a large red stole embroidered with Neoclassical palmettes and lyres, a studio accessory that would be enlisted over the following decade to adorn the gowns of Countess von Bucquoi (cat. 53) and Princess Yusupova (cat. 64), eventually enveloping Countess Golovina (cat. 70). At his feet is an admirably carved quiver containing arrows with white and blue fletching that perhaps represents the heraldic colors of the illustrious Polish dynasty. Seemingly neglected by the protagonist, this traditional attribute of Cupid is missing a bow. Vigée Le Brun substitutes a woven wreath, combining laurel, the emblem of victory, and myrtle, the attribute of the goddess of love. The artist’s *Souvenirs* indicates that during the famous Greek supper, the same studio



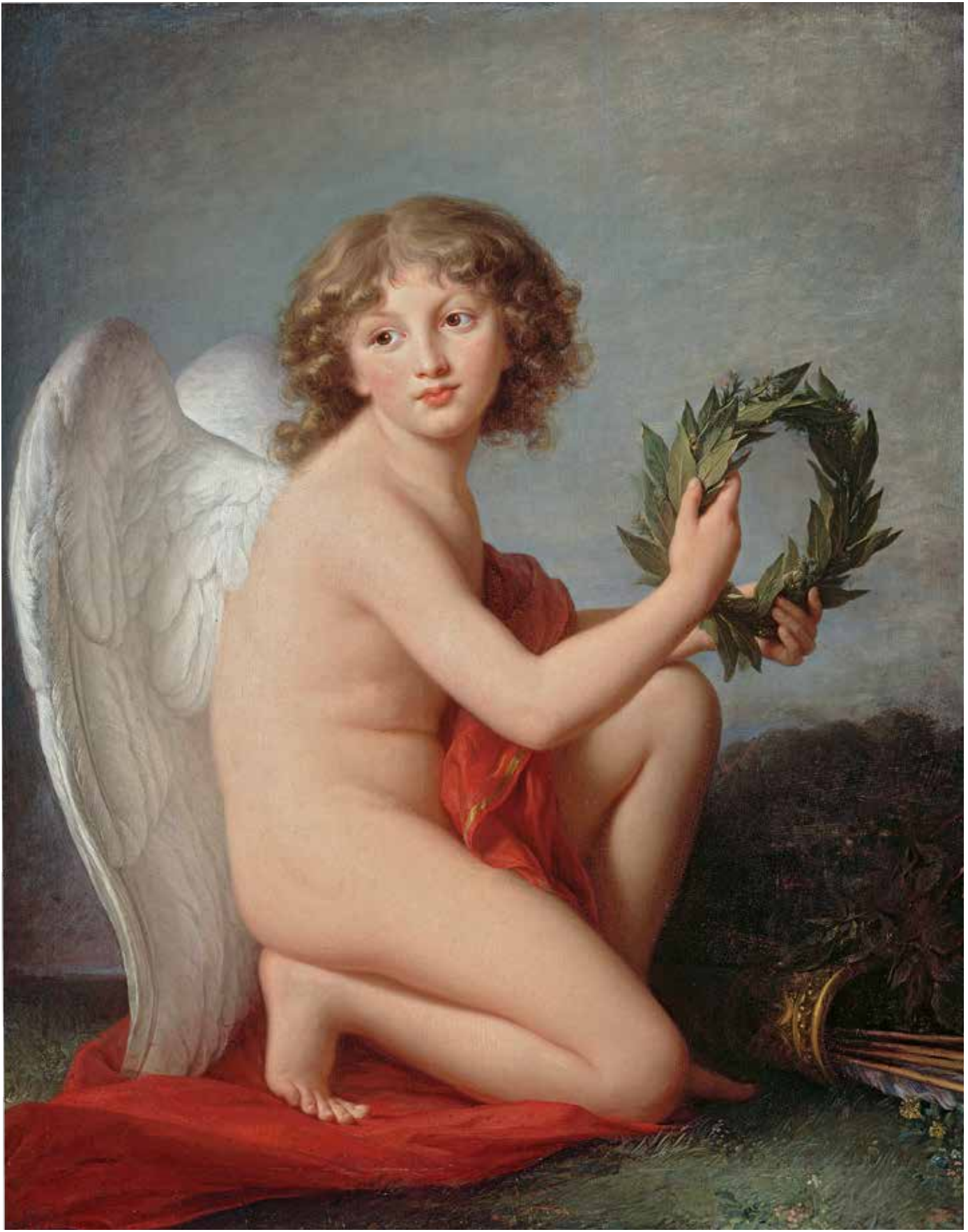
accessory crowned the poet Ponce Denis Ecouchard Le Brun (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 226–27).

This portrait had just been finished when it was hailed in a poem by a certain Bordeaux, published in the *Journal de Paris* on January 24, 1788, before being exhibited at the Salon of 1789. The considerable fee of 24,000 livres obtained by the artist did not fail to spark controversy. The marshal-princess, sparing no expense and honoring the Neoclassical theories of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, regarded Henryk as the incarnation of ideal beauty. A great patroness of the arts, she also entrusted portraits of her surrogate son to such preeminent artists as Angelica Kauffmann and Antonio Canova.

Vigée Le Brun met her generous Polish supporter again during her exile in Vienna between 1793 and 1795 when she painted the boy as the central figure in *Amphion and the Naiads Playing the Lyre* (private collection), a rare mythological portrait in her oeuvre. Finally, in 1814, when the prince had reached adulthood, she recalled his adolescent features in *The Genius of Alexander I* (State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg).

PL

Fig. 38. Antoine Coysevox (French, 1640–1724), *Crouching Venus*, ca. 1685. Bronze. Jardins du Musée National du Château de Versailles





39. *Comtesse de la Châtre*, 1789

Oil on canvas, 45 × 34½ in. (114.3 × 87.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Jessie Woolworth Donahue, 1954 (54.182)

Marie Charlotte Louise Perrette Aglaé Bontemps was born in 1762. Her father, who died young, was the last of several generations of his family to gain influence as *valets de chambre* to the French kings. The widowed Madame Bontemps appealed to her brother-in-law, Nicolas Beaujon, the king's banker, who provided his niece with a dowry, and it became possible to contract for her an advantageous early marriage to a powerful but rather crude older nobleman, Claude Louis de la Châtre, comte de Nançay, later comte de la Châtre. (The couple's only son, Alphonse Nicolas, was born in 1779 and died unmarried in 1802.) Aglaé inherited the enormous Beaujon fortune in 1786. Her first husband, a committed royalist, lieutenant general of the army, and commander of the Order of the Saint-Esprit, was obliged to emigrate in 1792.

Aglaé de la Châtre divorced in 1793, the year after the process was legalized in France. Her longtime companion was Arnail François, comte and later marquis de Jaucourt, whom she married on January 9, 1799. Jaucourt, born in 1757, had been at Versailles serving as colonel of the regiment of Condé Dragoons in 1789. Brought up a Protestant, he had become increasingly liberal, and as he was also courageous and independent, he sought a political career in republican France, but because of his background he fell under suspicion and was imprisoned in 1792. With the help of Madame de Staël and in company with Talleyrand, Jaucourt and Madame de la Châtre escaped to England. They returned to France seven years later, and he served



all of the subsequent monarchs, holding ministerial posts, and in 1814 becoming a peer of France. Childless, he adopted as his heir a member of another branch of his family. Aglaé de Jaucourt died in 1848 and her husband in 1852.

As Vigée Le Brun listed Madame de la Châtre among her sitters in 1789, the portrait was probably painted in the months immediately before the artist went into exile. It must have been commissioned by Jaucourt and was not publicly exhibited. It is evident that the sitter was a woman of style as well as wealth. The abundant figured fabric

of her dress is made of the very fine white muslin that Marie Antoinette brought into fashion. Aglaé wears a wide-brimmed straw hat bound with silk and with a deep crown extravagantly trimmed with silk bows of the sort popularized in England. The composition is natural, the lady close to the picture plane, leaning forward and gazing outward in wistful contact with her interlocutor. The twist of her body opposes the turn of her head and is emphasized by a sinuous curve of drapery. The pillow, book, and manicured hands form an elegant still life.

KB



40. *Self-Portrait in Traveling Costume*, 1789–90

Pastel on paper, 19³/₄ × 15³/₄ in. (50 × 40 cm)

Inscribed (on the reverse): 28. nov^{bre} 1816 / L'égué par M^r Menageot / a M^{me} Nigris— / Ce dessin représente M^{me} Le Brun / il est fait par elle-même

Private collection

This could be an image of “sweet melancholy,” nothing more, were it not for the moment it was executed. Like the mouth, sensually outlined and closed, the lovely faraway eyes are intended to unsettle. Once one knows that this pastel—in which the artist has undeniably made herself appear younger and more beautiful—was given to the painter François Guillaume Ménageot, then the director of the Académie de France in Rome, there is a great temptation to muse about the meaning of this token of affection. Furthermore, it retains a clear memory of the ambiguities Jean Baptiste Greuze loved and of the style of Rosalba Carriera, all luminous caresses and velvety skin. This pastel dates to the first months of Vigée Le Brun’s Roman exile, after she had left a country she believed was doomed to the worst fate. The artist

portrays herself in the simple clothing of a traveler. The muslin in which her pretty, curly hair is rolled up symbolizes her new station. Of the vanities of high society, she has retained only the most elementary coquetry. Was there any better response than simplicity to the slanderous pamphlets targeting her on the eve of the Revolution? In 1789 Calonne, another victim of that defamation campaign, advised his friend to “let them talk, they who have no other resource but to speak ill, and go on being what you were, secure in the certainty that you have no reason to reproach yourself” (quoted in Vigée Le Brun 2008, p. 36). The present self-portrait fully embraces that strategy. The sobriety of the browns and whites, broken up by black—well suited to magnify the damp eyes and pink lips—documents in its

way a moment of transition, which the work depicts as both painful and full of adventure.

Vigée Le Brun did not wait for her *Souvenirs* to bring out the romantic aspect of her nomadic existence. We have here ingenious proof that art may also serve to capture the vagaries of fate and to reconstruct an always-flattering “self-image.” As Katharine Baetjer and Marjorie Shelley note, pastel is the technique par excellence for travelers, and here, to quote Marshall McLuhan, the medium is the message. One last word: on her list of works dating to 1789 (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 337), the artist mentions a self-portrait in pastel (“1 My portrait in pastel.”). It is impossible to say categorically whether or not that is the pastel under discussion here.

SG

41. *The Duchesse de Polignac in Profile*, ca. 1789–90

Black and white chalk with stumping on gray-beige paper, 16³/₄ × 10¹/₂ in. (42.2 × 26.9 cm)

Private collection

Vigée Le Brun's admiration for Gabrielle Yolande Claude Martine, duchesse de Polignac (1749–1793) is well documented. In her *Souvenirs* (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 237–41) the artist describes her ravishing beauty, angelic sweetness, and solid mind. All who knew her intimately found it easy to understand why the queen had chosen the duchess as her *Amie*, since she truly was the queen's friend. By virtue of that title, she earned yet another, that of governess to the royal children. Immediately, the fury of all the women desiring that appointment assailed her, and a thousand calumnies were hurled at her. But what no courtier could believe was that Madame de Polignac had not coveted the position. She had accepted it out of respect for the queen's wishes and the king's entreaties. What she aspired to above all was her freedom, so much so that life at court did not suit her. Indolent and lazy, she would have been delighted to be left in peace, and the duties of her position appeared to her the heaviest of burdens.

Vigée Le Brun recalled:

One day as I was doing her profile at Versailles, not five minutes had gone by before our door opened; someone had come to ask for her orders and for a thousand things needed for the children. "Well!" she told me finally, looking overwhelmed, "every morning it's the same demands, I no longer have a moment to myself until dinnertime, and in the evening other trials await me. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 239–40)



At the time, the artist may have been executing one of the two extant profiles. It is tempting to think it was the pastel, which has remained in the sitter's family (Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 254, no. 111, ill.). The technique offered more freedom and was often used so as not to tire the model. That work must predate the Polignac family's emigration of July 16–17, 1789, as the hairstyle, the hat, and the chemise dress correspond to fashions

before the Revolution. This profile, in black-and-white chalk, may have been directly inspired by the pastel. The face is practically identical. But the costume seems to be slightly later, recalling that in Vigée Le Brun's *Self-Portrait in Traveling Costume* (cat. 40) and also that in the portrait of the comtesse de Narbonne Lara (private collection), both of which date to the early 1790s. Baillio has proposed the date of 1790.

XS

42. *Self-Portrait*, 1790

Oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 31⁷/₈ in. (100 × 81 cm)

Galleria degli Uffizi, Corridoio Vasariano, Florence (1890, n. 1905)

In mid-November 1789, slightly more than a month after she had left Paris, Vigée Le Brun arrived in Italy, which would become a land of refuge. In Florence, she received authorization to visit the Palazzo Pitti and the Galleria degli Uffizi, probably in the company of the director of the collections of the grand dukes of Tuscany, Giuseppe Pelli, or his assistant, Giovanni Fabbroni. At the Uffizi she admired the collection of self-portraits first assembled by Prince Leopoldo de' Medici from 1664 onward. Among the portraits of women on display, she was especially drawn to the self-portrait that her contemporary Angelica Kauffmann had painted two years earlier (fig. 22). The Uffizi authorities asked Vigée Le Brun to add her own image to the prestigious assemblage: in addition to being flattered, she saw the commission as a chance to surpass the Swiss artist. This face-off between the two painters by means of their Florentine self-portraits did not escape the notice of their contemporaries. Goethe, for example, who favored his friend Angelica, compared the two works in a well-known passage (Goethe 1805).

The genesis of the painting is well documented. Vigée Le Brun arrived in Rome in mid-December and took an apartment at the Palazzo Mancini, headquarters of the Académie de France, thanks to her friend François Guillaume Ménageot, director of the institution. The artist wasted no time setting to work—"Immediately after my arrival in Rome, I did my portrait for the Florence gallery. I painted myself with a palette in hand, in front of a canvas on which I am drawing the queen in white chalk"



(Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 38). The comte d’Espinchal, a French émigré, saw the painting in her studio and spoke of it enthusiastically (Espinchal 1912, pp. 80–81).

Indeed, the painting in the Uffizi—conceived as a double portrait—is a homage to Marie Antoinette, thus demonstrating the artist’s loyalty to the ancien régime. The painter’s elegant costume, a black silk gown, was not chosen by chance: its rather official aspect reminds the viewer of the artist’s rank. As a member of the Académie royale, she was a painter of the king of France. The artist represented herself slightly more than half-length, holding in her left hand a palette and paint-stained brushes, in front of a fairly dark ground. Adopting her aesthetic from examples provided by Italian, and especially Bolognese, painting, she is shown seated in front of a canvas, on which she is sketching a large bust portrait of the queen of France, sister of Pietro Leopoldo, at the time grand duke of Tuscany.

Looking toward the viewer, she wears the affable smile that had characterized earlier self-portraits. The beauty of her features is expressed in subtle gradations of light and shadow, rendered with colored glazes and softened through the skillful use of a badger brush. The gown and the large linen and lace ruff are painted in an equally adept manner, but here the technique is varied, as thicker patches are rendered with more substantial brushstrokes. The limited range of colors is highlighted by the saturated scarlet of the gold-striped sash, which, tied in the back, falls over the skirt.

Over her naturally curly brown hair she wears a turban improvised from a muslin scarf, reminiscent of the turbans worn by Rembrandt in a number of his self-portraits.

It took two and a half months for the artist to complete the painting, and the result far surpassed what the Florentines expected. According to Ménageot, “The painting Mme Le Brun has just finished is a complete success; with one voice, all of Rome is in awe of her talent and situates that portrait among the ranks of the most beautiful works” (*Correspondance des directeurs de l’Académie de France*, vol. 15, p. 403, doc. 9065). With unconcealed delight, Vigée Le Brun herself reported her success to Hubert Robert and Alexandre Théodore Brongniart, and to her Paris circle of friends and admirers:

Since I don’t doubt your concern for me, my friends, you shall all know that my painting for Florence has had the greatest success . . . So much so that never in my life have I been so encouraged. I revel in it all the more, in that the Romans (simply put) almost never accord anything to our school; but ultimately, for me they have what they have never had, the greatest enthusiasm. They call me Mme Van Dyck, Mme Rubens, and other, loftier names. (Papiers Tripier Le Franc, INHA, file 2, subfile 1, Aut. C521.D2.sdo1. 18618-28625)

Having completed her work, Vigée Le Brun set off for Naples in April 1790, likely taking her self-portrait with her. In 1791, commissioned by Lord Bristol,

a British aristocrat living there, she painted a replica, substituting a portrait of her daughter, Julie, for that of the queen of France (National Trust, Ickworth House, Bury St. Edmunds). A year later, she was again in Rome (March 1791–April 1792), and from there she arranged to send the self-portrait to Florence (Filza 1791, Uffizi archives, doc. nos. 31 and 38).

On April 14, 1792, Vigée Le Brun left Rome in the hope of being able to return to Paris. During a stop in Florence, she viewed her self-portrait at the Uffizi and was displeased to find it hung high and too close to other works (autograph letter to Giovanni Fabbroni, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Ms. B.F.113). No doubt the French espionage network in Italy had reported the royalist associations of “la femme Le Brun” to the Committee of Surveillance in Paris. Painting in the pontifical city a portrait featuring the despised “Autrichienne,” which, moreover, was meant for the collection of a member of the queen’s family, must have been interpreted as an anti-Revolutionary act. When Dominique Vivant Denon made an etching of the work (fig. 24), he took care to replace the royal image with that of Raphael’s *Bindo Altoviti* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), a painting considered at the time to be a self-portrait of the great master from Urbino.

The artist would recall the Uffizi picture in 1800, when she painted a self-portrait as her diploma piece for the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg (cat. 72).

JB





43. *Countess Ekaterina Vasilievna Skavronskaya*, 1790

Oil on canvas, 53¹/₈ × 37³/₈ in. (135 × 95 cm)

Signed and dated (at left, above the sofa): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / a Naples en 1790*

Institut de France, Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris (MJAP-P 578)

Ekaterina Vasilievna, née Engelhardt (1761–1829), was the daughter of the Smolensk landowner Vasily Andreyevich Engelhardt and Elena Alexandrovna Potemkina, sister of Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin, favorite andmorganatic husband of Empress Catherine II. In 1776, Ekaterina and her sisters were brought to Saint Petersburg to live in the imperial palace. According to contemporaries, Prince Potemkin especially favored the Engelhardt sisters. The poet and memoirist Prince Ivan Mikhailovich Dolgorukov, first cousin of Ekaterina's future husband, Count Pavel Martynovich Skavronsky, wrote about this in his *Temple of My Heart*: "His love interests were paid with monies from the Imperial treasury and with various other blandishments . . . Of all the sisters [Ekaterina] was the prettiest, and her uncle fell in love with her" (Dolgorukov 1997, p. 202).

In 1781 she married Count Skavronsky, the marriage having been arranged by Potemkin. Pavel Skavronsky belonged to a noble family tracing its roots to Catherine I, wife of Peter the Great. In his *Remarkable Eccentrics and Originals*, Mikhail Pyliaev devoted a chapter to Pavel Skavronsky, noting that he spent all his time composing operas and singing, and that in his home even the servants spoke with him in *recitativo secco* (Pyliaev 1990, pp. 452–55). In 1785, not

without Prince Potemkin's influence, Skavronsky was appointed Russian plenipotentiary in Naples. His young wife, who in 1786 became a lady-in-waiting to the empress, stayed behind in Saint Petersburg; only upon learning of her husband's ill health did she travel to Italy. After his death in 1793 she returned to Russia, and in 1798 married Count Giulio Litta, ambassador of the Knights of Malta in Russia (fig. 41).

In her *Souvenirs*, Vigée Le Brun mentions that in 1790, upon her arrival in Naples from Rome, Count Skavronsky, whose home was next door to the hotel in which she was staying, invited her to dinner. There she met his wife, who

was as sweet and pretty as an angel. I remember her telling me that in order to go to sleep she had a slave under her bed who told her the same story every night. She was utterly idle all day, she had no education, and her conversation was quite empty. But in spite of all that, thanks to her lovely face and her angelic sweetness, she had an incomparable charm. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 84)

The artist also noted that she had spent many pleasant evenings in the couple's company. In Naples she painted three portraits of Skavronskaya: the

present knee-length portrait of the countess and two in bust-length (locations unknown).

As Joseph Baillio has pointed out, in the portrait of Skavronskaya, Vigée Le Brun revisited the composition of her portrait of the duchesse d'Orléans (Orléans collection), which had enjoyed success at the Salon of 1789 and which she also repeated in her portrait of Madame d'Aguesseau de Fresnes (1789, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.). Here the artist adjusted the position of the head and left arm; the countess is looking at an oval case, presumably containing a miniature portrait of her husband, the lid of which is engraved with the initials of their first names, *C* and *P*, Catherine and Paul. (In Vigée Le Brun's portrait of her sister Tatyana Vasilievna Yusupova [cat. 64] the artist has inserted Ekaterina's monogram, *CS*, carved into the bark of a tree.) The present painting is executed in a restrained palette, with rich and diverse hues of blue and green.

Florence Gétreau (2011, pp. 232, 385, no. 105, ill.) has identified a small autograph drawing of the composition in graphite with color notations in the artist's own hand (Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris) as a preliminary study for this painting, while Baillio considers it a *ricordo*.

AS

44. *Maria Luisa di Borbone, Princess of the Two Sicilies*, 1790

Oil on canvas, 46⁷/₈ × 32¹/₄ in. (119 × 82 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun a Naples 1790*

Museo di Capodimonte, Naples (OA 7228)

Having left France for Rome in 1789, Vigée Le Brun was drawn to Naples by accounts of its beauty and warm climate (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 82). The independent kingdom was ruled by Ferdinand IV (1751–1825), who was descended from the Spanish Bourbon line, and his Habsburg consort Maria Carolina (1752–1814). The queen welcomed the artist warmly, as a close friend of her sister Marie Antoinette. It appears that in the summer of 1790, having visited Vienna to arrange dynastic marriages for their two eldest daughters, the king and queen issued an invitation to Vigée Le Brun to come back to Naples for the purpose of painting the Prince Royal and his three elder sisters (Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 225–27, nos. 92–95, ill.). The present work shows the second

oldest princess, Maria Luisa Amalia Teresa (1773–1802), who was seventeen on July 27, 1790.

Vigée Le Brun forgoes the royal portrait tradition in which the sitter's rank is formally indicated. Here Maria Luisa is dressed in a sumptuous green satin gown that is accented with muslin and finely embroidered tulle. She looks up from her desk with a chalk holder in hand, tilting her drawing toward the viewer and providing a glimpse of her still-life sketch. Indeed, the princess appears to have been interrupted in the middle of her task, emphasizing a sense of intimacy and spontaneity, while highlighting her natural elegance.

Queen Maria Carolina, who had been raised at the Austrian court, recognized the importance of the arts in the educa-

tion of her children. Together with her sisters, Maria Luisa received painting lessons from Jacob Philipp Hackert, a German artist and painter to the court of Naples: “He was often called upon in the evening [by the royal family] to give lectures on art and other related subjects” (Goethe 1962, p. 197). Perhaps Vigée Le Brun chose to show the sitter drawing in order to make the project more palatable, because she described the princess as “very ugly, and [she] made such grimaces that I did not want to finish her picture” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 118). These comments suggest that the artist glossed over the young woman's Habsburg traits, her prominent nose, mouth, and chin, to impart an air of poise and grace.

AKP



45. *Madame Adélaïde de France*, 1791

Oil on canvas, oval, 31¹/₈ × 26³/₄ in. (79 × 68 cm)

Signed (lower right): *L E Vigée Le Brun / A Rome*

Musée Jeanne d'Aboville, La Fère, Aisne (MJA 124)

46. *Madame Victoire de France*, 1791

Oil on canvas, oval, 30³/₄ × 26³/₈ in. (78.1 × 67 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *E. Vigée Le Brun / à Rome 1791*

Phoenix Art Museum, Museum Purchase

with funds provided by an anonymous New York foundation, in memory of Mr. Donald D. Harrington (1974.36)

Of the ten children born to Louis XV and Marie Leszczyńska, only Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire de France survived the Revolution. Marie Adélaïde was the sixth child, born on March 23, 1732, at Versailles. Victoire Louise Marie Thérèse, next in age, was born there on May 11, 1733. As one of the four youngest girls, Victoire was sent in 1738 to Fontevraud Abbey to be raised by the nuns. When she returned to court ten years later she grew close to Adélaïde, and both were influenced by their formal, devout mother. Adélaïde interested herself in palace



politics to her disadvantage; Victoire by contrast was admired for her kind and gracious manner. After Louis XVI took the throne, his aunts, who were unpopular with Marie Antoinette, were often at their own châteaux, holding court in an extravagant, old-fashioned style reminiscent of their father's reign.

Fig. 39. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard (French, 1749–1803). *Madame Adélaïde de France*, ca. 1787. Pastel, 28³/₄ × 23¹/₈ in. (73 × 58.8 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon

On October 6, 1789, the day after the march on Versailles, Adélaïde and Victoire left the palace with the king and queen and other members of the royal family; they settled at Bellevue, from whence they went into exile. Departing with a large party, Mesdames traveled to Savoy and crossed the Alps at Mont Cénis in midwinter. They arrived in Rome on April 16 and were lodged in the palace of the former French ambassador to the Vatican, where for five years they lived a quiet and increasingly impoverished life. On July 2, 1791,

Madame Adélaïde received Vigée Le Brun for a sitting, and the artist reported in her memoirs that the sisters had just heard of the flight of Louis XVI from the Tuileries. By the time the papal armies were defeated by Napoleon, Mesdames had taken shelter with the queen of Naples, and finally, in December 1798, the two elderly women departed to meet a ship that would deliver them to Austrian territory. On May 19, 1799, they disembarked at Trieste, where Victoire died on June 7 and Adélaïde on February 20, 1800.

Toward the end of the ancien régime, Mesdames had engaged as their court painter Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, who with Vigée Le Brun had been admitted in 1783 to the Académie royale. At the Salon of 1787 Labille-Guiard exhibited a state portrait of Adélaïde for which there is a preliminary study in pastel (fig. 39), and a comparable pastel study of Victoire, whose portrait in oil would be shown in 1789. Vigée Le Brun's paintings and Labille-Guiard's pastels may be read as pairs. Both suggest the way in which the royal women were locked together as intimates by their isolated upbringing and unmarried state. While Labille-Guiard's work is bound up in the conventions of court art, Vigée Le Brun's portraits are private in nature, and suggest similarity between the two women and gentleness of character in both. She presents them in more or less identical



dark dresses with fichus, lace collars, and butterfly caps. Adélaïde, once steely in her determination, looks withdrawn, while Victoire appears much as before. Madame Adélaïde had explained how they wished to be received in Rome:

“We are simply Mesdames de Joigny and de Rambouillet, two unhappy strangers who are coming to have the right to practice their religion” (Stryiński 1911, p. 274).

KB

47. *Countess Anna Potocka*, 1791

Oil on canvas, 55⁷/₈ × 49⁵/₈ in. (142 × 126 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right, on stone): *L E Vigée Le Brun / a Rome / 1791*

Private collection

Countess Anna Potocka (1758–1814), daughter of a landowner from Galicia, was the widow of a Lithuanian marshal, Prince Joseph Sanguszko, who had died in 1781. Her second husband was Prince Casimir Nestor Sapieha, general of artillery, whom she divorced after three years. At the time this portrait was painted, the seductive aristocrat was living in Rome and married to the Polish count Kajetan Potocki. The artist wrote in her *Souvenirs*: “She came to see me with her husband, and as soon as he had left, she told me quite coolly: ‘This is my third husband; but I believe I’ll take back the first one, who suits me better even though he is a drunk’” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 39). Since the “drunk” had died ten years earlier following a hunting accident, it seems that Vigée Le Brun here mistakenly conveyed the remembrances of her fickle sitter.

This composition, one of the artist’s first Roman portraits, was begun during her initial visit to the Eternal

City, between December 1789 and March 1790, and was completed the following year. The pose anticipates one of the painter’s precepts, declared much later in her *Conseils sur la peinture du portrait* in the *Souvenirs*: “Women must be comfortable; they must have something to lean on” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 355). In the *Souvenirs*, she recalls, “I painted this Polish woman in a very picturesque manner; she is leaning on a rock covered with moss, and near her waterfalls are pouring down” (ibid., vol. 2, p. 39); the artist would use a similar scheme five years later in Russia for *Countess Anna Ivanovna Tolstaya* (cat. 61). This is the first portrait in the artist’s oeuvre in which, under the influence of Angelica Kauffmann, she granted such significance to the landscape. Shortly after her arrival in Rome, she took part in an excursion to Tivoli in the company of painters François Guillaume Ménageot and Simon Clément Denis. Pastel drawings created *en plein air* during that expedition seem

to have been the source for the dramatic background of this portrait. An impressive theater of cascades allows the sitter to take her place in front of an opening that evokes Neptune’s Grotto. Vigée Le Brun’s interest here is to integrate the figure into the landscape, rather than capture exact topography, as Ingres later would do in his Roman portraits. The diagonal line tracing the outline of the figure replicates the movement of the upper waterfall.

Joseph Baillio points out that this portrait was reproduced in an anonymous copy (National Museum, Wrocław, Poland) and as a miniature, dated 1803 and signed *J. Bechon* (location unknown). These tokens were probably intended for her large circle of admirers. After the dissolution of her marriage to Potocki, the indomitable Polish countess was married in 1803 to Charles Eugene, prince of Lorraine (an Austrian marshal related to the Habsburg dynasty).

PL



48. *Hyacinthe Gabrielle Roland*, 1791

Oil on canvas, 39 × 29½ in. (99.1 × 74.9 cm)

Signed and dated (at left): *L. Vigée Le Brun / Roma 1791*

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Mildred Anna Williams Collection, Bequest Fund of Henry S. Williams in memory of H. K. S. Williams (1991.29)

In a remarkable case of disproportion, one of Vigée Le Brun's greatest successes and one of her most luscious paintings inspired only one short and rather dry sentence in her *Souvenirs*: "Then I painted Mlle Roland, mistress at the time of Lord Wellesley, who was not long in marrying her" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 39). Proprieties undoubtedly dictated such coolness, which, most fortunately, is belied by the painting. Hyacinthe Gabrielle Roland (1760?–1816), of uncertain paternity but of a stunning beauty, bewitched Richard Wellesley, Earl of Mornington, and with him produced three sons and two daughters between 1787 and 1794, when their marriage allowed him to legitimize their

progeny. Such a union was not a matter of course, but it improved the prospects of the elder brother of the future duke of Wellington. In marrying Hyacinthe, perhaps a former actress at the Palais Royal, Wellesley opened the way for his brother to enter the upper aristocracy in a country that had little taste for misalliances. The artist must have thought it a mismatch as well, but without necessarily disapproving. Her life had already brought with it so many incongruities.

According to her *Souvenirs*, this was one of the very first portraits she painted "immediately after [my] arrival in Rome" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 38). As many have noted, Vigée Le Brun was fascinated by courtesans

and free-spirited women, whose magnetism and winning personalities she was adept at capturing. Hyacinthe is depicted in motion, a reminder of the stage where her beauty had shone, and a sign of her passion, capable of breaking through formidable social barriers. As Joseph Baillio has rightly noted, the picture was inspired by Rubens's masterpiece, *Helena Fourment (The Little Fur)* (ca. 1636–38, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), which was engraved in the eighteenth century by Franz van Stampart and A. J. de Prenner.

The subject's pose recalls, but in reverse, that of Madame Molé-Reymond (fig. 9), an actress at the Comédie-Italienne.

SG





49. *Giovanni Paisiello*, 1791

Oil on canvas, 51⁹/₁₆ × 38³/₄ in. (131 × 98.5 cm)

Dated and inscribed (lower left, on the sheet lying on the books): *Rondo de Nina / A mei ben quando verrai / musica / Del Sig' Giovanni Paisiello*; (and on the score): *Te*

Deum / Messa in Musica / in occasione del felice viaggio / delle Loro Maestà delle Sicile / 1791

Paris, Salon, 1791, no. 772

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon,

on deposit from the Musée du Louvre (MV 5877)

Giovanni Paisiello (1741–1816) was educated in Taranto by the Jesuits, who, noticing his gift as a singer, sent him to the Conservatorio di Sant'Onofrio in Naples. A prolific artist, rival of Niccolò Piccinni and Domenico Cimarosa, he was a master of opera buffa but also composed masses and chamber music. Paisiello was celebrated in Milan, Turin, and Florence, and while he was the choirmaster of Empress Catherine II in Saint Petersburg, he wrote an oratorio for Stanislaw Poniatowski. Having returned to Naples, still as a choirmaster, he served Ferdinand IV, husband of Maria Carolina, one of Marie Antoinette's sisters. It was at that time that he met Vigée Le Brun, who in her *Souvenirs* recalls the posing sessions, which began in December 1790: "Even as he was sitting for me, he was composing a piece of music, which was to be for the queen's return, and I was delighted by the circumstances, which allowed me to capture the great musician's features at the moment of inspiration" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 118–19).

Represented lifesize, in three-quarter profile and half-length, Paisiello is wearing a brown frock coat, a red vest, and black breeches, with a white scarf

tied around his neck. He is composing on the harpsichord, his mouth half open, his eyes raised to the sky, the tension in his body conveying inspiration. He is working on the *Te Deum* for four voices and orchestra, commissioned by Ferdinand IV to celebrate the new dynastic alliances between his kingdom and Austria. On the instrument are handwritten scores, one of which, *Nina o sia la pazza per amore*, alludes to the lighter side of his work.

Vigée Le Brun's image of artistic inspiration is neither new nor unique. Joseph Siffred Duplessis had used a similar composition and pose for his portrait of Gluck (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)—exhibited at the Salon of 1775—which the young Louise Vigée had found so alluring. Antoine Vestier's portrait of François Joseph Gossec, shown at the following Salon, repeats similar imagery, as do other paintings by Vigée Le Brun: *Life Study of Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl* (cat. 50); *Angelica Catalani*, Paisiello's soprano and interpreter (1806, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth); and *Madame de Staël as Corinne at Cape Miseno* (cat. 80).

Having praised the painting to d'Angiviller, François Guillaume Ménageot, director of the Académie de

France in Rome, sent it to the Salon of 1791, with his own *Meleager*. Visitors remarked on the nobility of the composition, the correctness of the drawing, the force of harmony, the delicacy of tone, and the "sublime expression." Jacques Louis David expressed his admiration.

During his career, Paisiello experienced the ups and downs of an age rich in political upheaval. After the Neapolitan revolution of 1799 and the exile of Ferdinand IV, he was named musician of the nation by the Parthenopean Republic, but when his former master returned, he was not called back. In 1802, First Consul Bonaparte summoned him to Paris to reorganize his private chapel, and Paisiello composed the *Te Deum* for the imperial coronation of 1804. After returning to Naples, he placed himself in the service of King Joseph Bonaparte between 1806 and 1808, and finally, from 1808 to 1815, in that of Joachim and Caroline Murat. Ferdinand IV's return from exile put an end to the honors: the composer lost his position as director of the conservatory and died the following year.

At least two replicas of this portrait have survived. Held in private collections, they are considered studio works.

GF



50. *Life Study of Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl*, 1792

Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 22½ in. (73 × 57.2 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / a Rome 1792*

Private collection

Emma Lyon (1765–1815), symbol of a resounding victory over fate, came from a very modest background, from which her supreme beauty allowed her to break free. A domestic servant, she moved from one position to another and from one man's arms to another's. As Emma Hart, she won over Charles Francis Greville, second son of the Earl of Warwick and a nephew of Sir William Hamilton. She rapidly acquired a veneer of culture and agreed to pose for the painter George Romney. By 1784 Greville seems to have abandoned her to his uncle. Hamilton, English ambassador to Naples since 1764, had her portrait done by Sir Joshua Reynolds and took her to Italy, but it was not until September 1791, during a trip to England, that they married, eliciting a comment from Horace Walpole: "So Sir William has actually married his gallery of statues!" (Walpole 1857–59, vol. 9, no. 2557). On the way back, the Hamiltons stopped in Venice, where Dominique Vivant Denon met with the ambassador to Naples, but above all, sketched Emma's lines and volumes in a suite of engravings at once sensitive and ironic.

Emma, of an altogether Greek beauty, quickly became famous for her "attitudes," tableaux vivants that she performed in scanty clothing before a swooning audience, which felt itself

suddenly transported back to antiquity. The comtesse de Boigne spoke of Emma's unique talent, "the description of which appears silly, but which delighted all the spectators and excited the artists" (Boigne 1989, vol. 1, pp. 90–91). Medea and Niobe were among the most acclaimed of her "improvisation[s] in action." Vigée Le Brun's first portrait of Emma (fig. 6) alludes to these private theatrical performances, which reminded the artist of the Paris of the 1780s. The picture depicts the beauty, all smiles, lying on a panther skin, personifying both the drunkenness of a bacchante and, according to the artist, the abandoned Ariadne. That merging of opposites, well suited to the model, was intentional: "I am also painting a very beautiful woman. Mme Hart . . .," wrote Vigée Le Brun to Madame Du Barry on July 2, 1790. "I did a large painting of her as a light-hearted Ariadne, her face lending itself to the two possibilities" (quoted in Nolhac 1908, doc. repr. in facsimile opp. p. 98).

For the duc de Brissac, lover of the comtesse Du Barry (both died during the Reign of Terror), Vigée Le Brun painted Emma lifesize and three-quarter length, as a turbaned sibyl, with a scroll, eyes raised to the sky, whose mysteries she attempts to penetrate. The picture—so similar to Domenichino's

painting of a sibyl (fig. 23) that it must have been directly inspired by it—remained with the artist as a result of the death of Brissac in the massacres of September 1792. The original or a replica (perhaps the painting sold at Sotheby's, New York, January 11, 1996, no. 155; see Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, fig. 42) was exhibited at the Salon of 1798 as a preview of the work she was doing while abroad.

The pentimenti in the present canvas confirm that the picture is autograph and preliminary to the large composition commissioned by the duc de Brissac. Ersy Contogouris interprets the Greek words legible on the parchment, γειγνα and ουρανός, which refer to celestial power, as a kind of self-promotion. The Cumaean Sibyl was an unlikely role for Emma, and Vigée Le Brun may have diverted the painting toward more personal aims, calling attention to her own divine inspiration as an artist. That would explain the use she would make subsequently of the larger version, taking it along with her on all her travels until 1805 and selling it only belatedly to the duc de Berry. Nowhere does one sense, in either canvas, the mixed feelings the *Souvenirs* manifest toward Emma's mocking personality and "vulgarity."

SG

51. *Julie Le Brun as a Bather*, 1792

Oil on canvas, 28³/₄ × 21⁷/₈ in. (73 × 55.5 cm)

Private collection

In a format similar to that of *Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl* (1792, private collection; see life study, cat. 50), Vigée Le Brun painted her daughter as if frightened at the approach of an unseen intruder. At the time, a girl was viewed as a woman at about the age of twelve or thirteen, as we are reminded by the early marriage of the duchesse de Guiche (cats. 20, 57). Joseph Baillio has identified the iconographic source for this painting as Jean Baptiste Santerre's *Susannah* (1704, Musée du Louvre). Carlo Antonio Porporati's engraving (fig. 40) after Santerre's masterpiece, his *morceau de réception* for the Académie royale in 1773, circulated throughout Europe and is mentioned by Vigée Le Brun in her *Souvenirs*. In the eighteenth century, the theme of Susannah spied upon by the Elders while bathing was secularized and came to express more ambivalent sentiments.

While Vigée Le Brun was in Turin staying with Porporati, she transposed the *Susannah* composition into a new image of Julie, altogether less innocent than her previous ones. The commission dated back to the ancien régime. Jean Baptiste Greuze had served as an intermediary for the great Russian collector Prince Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov, who sought to acquire works from the most important painters in Paris, including David, Vincent, Fragonard, and Vigée Le Brun. As she had been unable to work on the picture before her hasty departure, the fawning Greuze complained to the Russian prince on November 21, 1789:



Fig. 40. Carlo Antonio Porporati. *Susannah at Her Bath*, 1773. Engraving. Harvard Art Museums / Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Gift of Belinda L. Randall from the collection of John Witt Randall (R3020)

“Your commission was met with such indifference that one had to be as attached to you as I am to have taken an interest in it, and in fact I am the only one. . . . Mme Le Brun has not begun it, her husband told me she would do it in Rome, where she is at the moment” (Lang 2004, pp. 125–36). Greuze wrote to Yusupov

a second time on April 10, 1790: “Mme Le Brun is still in Italy, her husband has assured me that she will work on your painting” (see *ibid.*). This was not an empty promise. In 1792, while on a diplomatic mission in Italy, Yusupov took possession of his picture (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 191).

SG





52. *Isabella Teotochi Marini*, 1792

Oil on paper, laid down on canvas, 19 × 13⁷/₈ in. (48.3 × 35.2 cm)

Signed, dated, and inscribed (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / pour son ami De Non / a Venise 1792*

Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment

Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey (1950.243)

Shortly after arriving in Venice on May 19, 1792, Vigée Le Brun reestablished contact with an old acquaintance, Dominique Vivant Denon—a former diplomat, a successful engraver, and, like her, a member of the Académie royale—and painted in a few sessions one of her masterpieces, destined for a future she could not have anticipated. Her *Souvenirs* sums up the matter in a brief mention, Venetian in its potential double meaning: “M. Denon had also asked me to do a portrait of his friend, Mme Marini, and I took great pleasure in painting that pretty woman, considering the infinite richness of her physiognomy” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 371). Whether Vigée Le Brun felt she was painting plain features in a flattering light or equaling the brilliance of nature, the result is magnificent, with a carefree vigor and sensual charm. The tight focus and supple brushwork emphasize the beauty of this young brunette, whose breasts rebel against needless veils. Vigée Le Brun’s genius lay in knowing how to use a looser style

for a gift to a friend—in the service of a relationship she knew to be secret and for a canvas that would fan the ardor of its owner. Vivant Denon’s superb *Lettres à Bettine*, a masterpiece of complicity and of a lover’s jealousy, confirms his visceral attachment to this painting. To him, it seemed to keep intact the spark of the original *coup de foudre*.

The affair dated back to autumn 1788. Isabella Teotochi (1760–1837), born in Corfu and twenty-eight years old at the time, had married the wealthy Carlo Antonio Marin. She divorced him in 1795 to marry Giuseppe Albrizzi. Fourteen years older than she when they met, Dominique Vivant Denon had a reputation as a man of adventure, graced with impressive literary and artistic gifts. The Frenchman was being carefully watched, but intrepid, quickly slipped into her circle and her heart. Such a passion was only waiting for the image that could capture it.

Denon would engrave Isabella’s portrait and publish it in 1792. Under the

title *L’Originale e il ritratto*, contemporaries were invited to read a selection of poetry and prose celebrating her beauty and wit. Denon himself found in Vigée Le Brun’s portrait a combination of “Greek finesse, Italian passion, and French amiability” (Rosenberg 1999, p. 447). Forced to leave Venice in 1793, probably for political reasons, he would not rest until “his” painting was back in France, where David very quickly gave it a boost. In April 1794, when Isabella learned that Robespierre’s friend, “the foremost painter in Europe,” would take sittings from Denon, she wrote: “We will [thus] have the two most beautiful portraits of the century” (*ibid.*). The cherished work would return to him in April 1796.

Denon immediately announced that he would exhibit the portrait at the Salon in the company of the ingenious portrait Jean Baptiste Isabey had done of him. But he did nothing of the kind, preferring to reserve for himself the enjoyment of the canvas until his death.

SG

53. *Countess von Bucquoi*, 1793

Oil on canvas, 53½ × 39 in. (135.9 × 99.1 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun / a Vienne 1793*

Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The William Hood Dunwoody Fund (78.7)

This composition was commissioned in 1793 by Prince Wenzel Paar, who, taking advantage of Vigée Le Brun's exile in Vienna, asked her for a portrait of his sister Maria Theresia (1746–1818), wife of Count Johann Josef von Bucquoi. The request came in the wake of the considerable success of *Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl* (1792, private collection; see life study, cat. 50), when it was displayed at the palace of the prince of Kaunitz-Rietberg. The artist later remembered the warm welcome she received in Vienna and the care with which Prince Paar showed the present portrait:

I found the canvas in his salon, and since the woodwork was painted white, which is lethal to a painting, he had had a large green drapery placed around the entire frame and falling underneath. For the evening, moreover, he had a candelabra bearing several candles and a reflector arranged so that all the light shone

only on the portrait. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 220)

The painter proved extremely sensitive to “that kind of gallantry,” which attests to a truly museological concern on the part of her patron.

As Joseph Baillio points out, the artist makes use here of the pose adopted in 1791 for Queen Maria Carolina of Naples (painting destroyed in 1940), itself derived from the attitude conferred on the duchesse d'Orléans two years earlier (Orléans collection). The countess is set against an autumnal landscape that appears to combine the mountainous banks marking the course of the Danube with memories of the Marble Falls of Terni, which the artist had visited a year earlier, upon leaving Rome in spring 1792. The cloudy atmosphere may evoke the fog in which Vigée Le Brun studied that natural locale rich in rock formations, as seen here in the middle ground. She even admitted to having got hold of “a few little petrified pieces,” attesting to a keen interest in geology.

The countess, considered by Vigée Le Brun to be “kind and good,” is placed within a welcoming natural setting. The artist integrates the figure into the landscape by setting the L-shaped line of her body against the vertical trees on the left and the diagonal segment of rock on which the countess's left elbow rests. She wears a superb turban of white satin, which, in addition to recalling Domenichino, confers on her the status of a Danubian sibyl. Her purple silk dress is enhanced by a red embroidered stole, the studio accessory that will reappear in Russia at the end of the same decade, ennobling the gown of Princess Yusupova (cat. 64) and draping Countess Golovina (cat. 70). Nevertheless, this sitter, posing beside the water and in a natural autumnal setting, exudes a certain languor, if not a touch of melancholy indifference, perhaps anticipating the elegiac portrait of Christine Boyer done seven years later by Antoine Jean Gros (Musée du Louvre).

PL



54. *The Princess von und zu Liechtenstein as Iris*, 1793

Oil on canvas, oval, 25³/₄ × 21¹/₈ in. (65.4 × 53.6 cm)
Private collection

Upon her arrival from Italy, Vigée Le Brun rented a house in the suburbs of Vienna with Count and Countess Bystry. Some months later, she decided to move into an apartment in the imperial capital. There she kept on permanent display the portrait *Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl* (private collection; see life study, cat. 50) painted in Naples and Rome between 1791 and 1792. She reports that art lovers came to her home in droves to see the painting, and that as a result, she received numerous commissions (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 219–20). The present small portrait of Princess Karoline Felicitas Engelberte von und zu Liechtenstein (1768–1831) was an offshoot of one of her important Viennese commissions—that from Prince Alois I von und zu Liechtenstein, who in 1792 or early 1793 requested two monumental canvases. One represented his wife, née Countess von Manderscheidt-Blankenheim, and the other her sister, Maria Josepha Hermenegilde, wife of Prince Nicholas II Esterházy.

In the spring of 1793 the artist rented a small house in Hietzing in an area near

Vienna and close to the park at Schönbrunn, bringing with her the large, full-length portrait of the princess of Liechtenstein as Iris in order to finish it. She explains in her *Souvenirs*:

That young princess was very shapely; her pretty face had a sweet and heavenly expression, which gave me the idea to represent her as Iris. She was painted full-length, soaring into the air. Her scarf, in the colors of the rainbow, fluttered about her. You can well imagine that I painted her barefoot; but when that painting was placed in the prince's gallery, her husband and the heads of the family were very scandalized to see the princess shown without shoes, and the prince told me he had a pretty pair put under the portrait, telling the grandparents that the shoes had just slipped out and fallen onto the floor. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 232)

The anecdote is telling as it suggests that it was the portraitist, and not the prince, who chose the iconography for

the works he commissioned. It also indicates that the artist's Viennese clientele may have been more attuned to the conventions of a "modern-style" portrait than to a mythic one. Since 1790, the year in which she painted *Emma Hart as Ariadne* (fig. 6), Vigée Le Brun had produced many allegorical portraits, taking guises for some of her subjects from the mythological repertoire. In this way she returned to a genre that, decades earlier, had ensured the success of Jean Marc Nattier and François Hubert Drouais. Her inclination toward mythology was not only an effort to ennoble the art of the portrait by appealing to the antique ideal, it also corresponded to the taste for all things Greek that still marked fashions at the time. It may also have reflected the character of some of her sitters. The artist has given the attractive and buoyant young wife of Prince Alois the attributes of Iris, the Greek goddess who personifies the rainbow, providing a link between earth and sky. The success of the full-length portrait (1793, Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna) led the prince to commission the present bust-length version as well.

XS





55. *Count Grigory Ivanovich Chernyshev*, ca. 1793

Oil on canvas, 22 × 17³/₈ in. (56 × 44 cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 7459)

Grigory Chernyshev (1762–1831) was the son of Count Ivan Grigorievich Chernyshev and Anna Grigorievna Islenieva. He found himself in service at the imperial court at a very young age, receiving his first title, that of gentleman of the bedchamber, at fourteen. He ended his career at court in the post of Oberschenk, and he held the imperial Order of Saint Alexander Nevsky. He was the last representative of his generation and inherited not only what remained of his father's largely squandered wealth but also his uncle's fortune, which came to him intact. Chernyshev was accustomed to living in grand style, and though the government held his property in trust

for a protracted period of time, this did not prevent him from leading a life of comfortable idleness.

According to the recollections of his contemporaries, he was a gentle person, who wrote poetry and plays in French, and loved society, theater, and amusements of all kinds. He lived for long periods on the family estate near Orel and was known for his love of surprises: he would hold receptions in the garden pavilions, where he would serve the guests himself, dressed as a cook.

The portrait is not dated but in the artist's memoirs appears in a list of orders executed in Vienna in 1793. Most likely, Vigée Le Brun met Count Chernyshev at one of the innumerable

balls or musical evenings hosted by the Russian ambassador to Vienna, Count Andrey Kirillovich Razumovsky, or at one of the theatrical performances put on at the home of Baron Grigory Alexandrovich Stroganov (cat. 56).

Chernyshev's son Zakhar took part in the uprising of the Decembrists in Saint Petersburg in 1825, for which he was stripped of the title of count, together with all rights, and exiled to Siberia. His title and property went to the eldest of his six daughters, Sofia. For this reason she took the name Chernysheva-Kruglikova—her own name plus that of her husband. Her descendants owned the portrait until their property was nationalized.

ED

56. *Baron Grigory Alexandrovich Stroganov*, 1793

Oil on canvas, oval, 36¼ × 26 in. (92 × 66 cm)

Signed and dated (at left): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun / à Vienne 1793*

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 5658)

Grigory Alexandrovich Stroganov (1770–1857) was the son of Alexander Nikolayevich Stroganov and Elizaveta Alexandrovna Zagryazhskaya. As a young man he served in the military, which he left in 1795 with the rank of captain, and a year later he entered government service, becoming a diplomat. For five years beginning in 1805 he served as minister plenipotentiary in Spain. In 1808 he was named a privy counselor and then served as envoy to Constantinople and to Stockholm, and in 1821 he was promoted to actual privy counselor. Stroganov received the title of count in 1826 and became a member of the state council. He finished his career as grand chamberlain of the imperial court.

Vigée Le Brun met Baron and Baroness Stroganov soon after arriving in Vienna. At the time Stroganov was still in military service and held the rank of gentleman of the bedchamber. According to her *Souvenirs* the couple soon ordered portraits from her. The baron entertained the public in the Austrian capital in grand style, with theatrical performances, celebrations, and dinners, and he enchanted the artist. She writes: “He possessed a superior charm for livening up society. . . I have known few men more affable and more merry,” and she recounts in detail how he once played a trick in a gallery of wax figures by pretending to be one of them (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 210–11).

The companion piece represents Baroness Anna Sergeevna Stroganova



arranging flowers in a vase (private collection). Vigée Le Brun mentions two portraits of the baron executed

in Vienna: one *grand buste* (location unknown), and another, this one, that includes his hands.

ED

57. *Duchesse de Guiche*, 1794

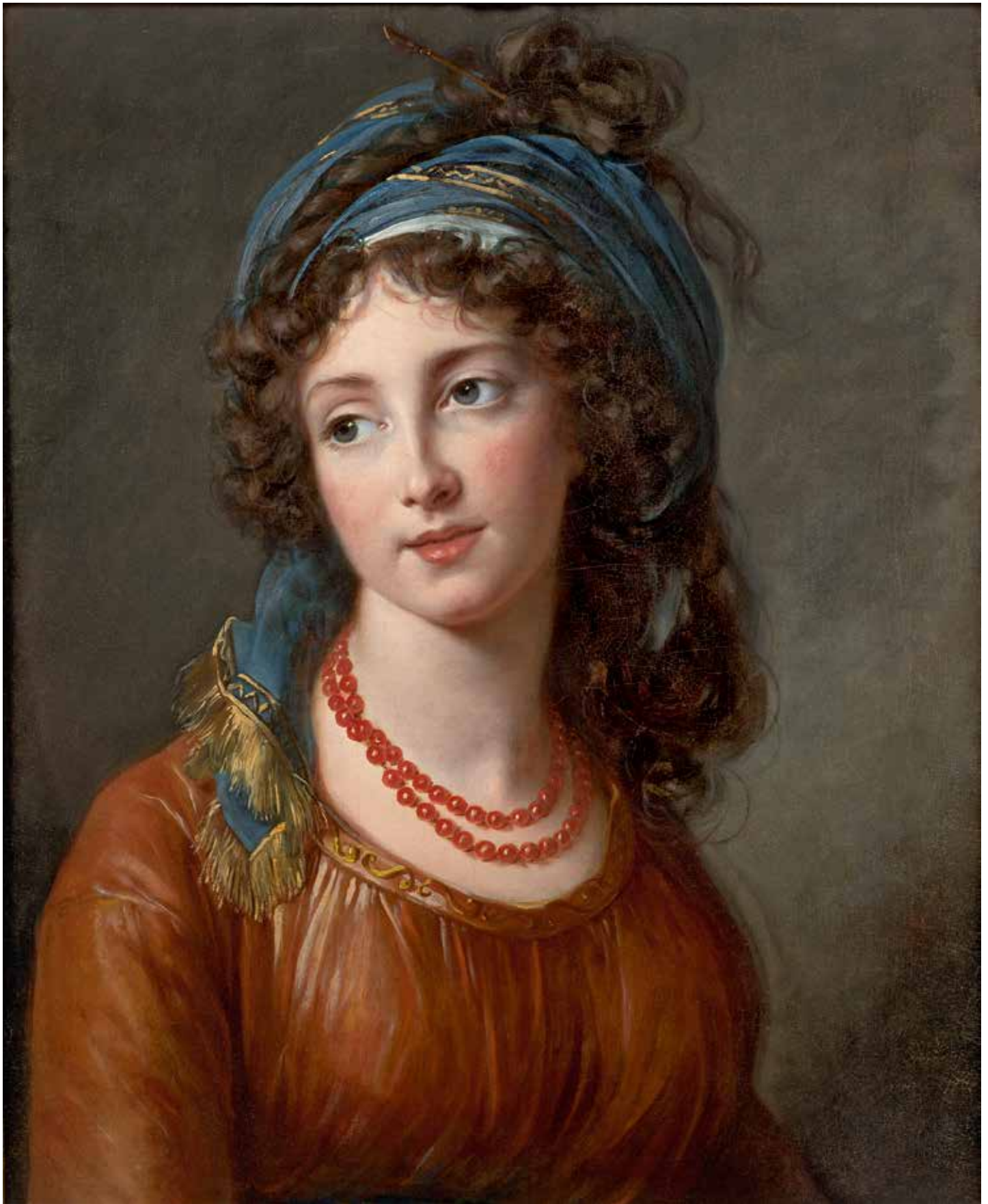
Oil on canvas, 22½ × 18⅞ in. (57 × 46 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *Vigée/Le Brun à/Vienne 1794*

Private collection

With this portrait of the twenty-six-year-old aristocrat, Aglaé de Polignac (1768–1803)—whom Vigée Le Brun had watched grow up and blossom (cat. 20)—the artist outdid herself, capturing both the happiness of being beautiful and the unhappiness of having seen the world of one’s childhood vanish in the blink of an eye. Emanating from the painting is a tender melancholy that clouds the young woman’s eyes, blue like her turban, which contrasts sharply with the bright red of the gown and necklace. (This headdress would reappear in 1797, in the portrait of Princess Natalya Ivanovna Kurakina [Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City], to whom Vigée Le Brun dedicated the first part of her *Souvenirs*.) The prince de Ligne speaks in his memoirs “of the colors . . . that Mme Le Brun hazards in her paintings” (quoted in Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 279 n. 7). It seems that nothing could dull the palette of exile, not even the permanent mourning of sorts that the émigré community grappled with in remembering its defeat. In Paris the winter of 1793–94 had seen nothing but unjust imprisonments and executions. The Convention, no longer able to stem the violence it had unleashed, was swept away by its own bloody logic. On October 16, 1793, Marie Antoinette was beheaded, a pointless murder. In Vienna on December 9, her great friend—the duchesse Jules de Polignac, mother of Aglaé—died, her face disfigured by illness. Her longtime friend and presumed lover, the comte de Vaudreuil, immediately wrote to the comte d’Artois: “Yesterday I lost a friend of thirty years, the object and





confidante of all my sorrows. The one through whom and for whom I lived, who possessed all charms, all qualities, and all virtues" (Vaudreuil 1889, vol. 2, pp. 165–66). Vigée Le Brun then painted a portrait "in memoriam," erasing in a single stroke the physical ravages of four calamitous years. The portrait of the duchesse de Guiche, only daughter of the countess, is in a sense another duty of memory that dates from that historic turning point.

Vigée Le Brun's lists include six portraits of the duchess before 1789, in both oil and pastel (cat. 20). Only the present work is listed for the Vienna period: "The duchesse de Guiche, half-length, in blue turban." Born at the Château de Versailles, Aglaé was married at the age of twelve to Antoine Louis Marie, duc de Guiche and later duc de Gramont. This

captain of the king's guard, from Béarn, had just been assigned to the queen's service. The royal family attended the wedding and provided a dowry. Then came the Revolution, which forced the duchess, her parents, and her brothers onto the highways of Europe. Switzerland and Italy were merely way stations on the road to Austria. They mixed easily in good society, Viennese as well as Polish and Russian. Vienna was a Babel where French was spoken, a bastion against the Revolution, the refuge of memory, the continuation of a vanished world, and a consolation for it. Vigée Le Brun would spend the worst days of the Reign of Terror there, buffeted by the bad news from France.

The duchess, a loyal royalist, would be called to England in 1801 by the comte d'Artois, where she entered the service of

Marie Joséphine Louise de Savoie, wife of the exiled Louis XVIII. The count then dispatched her to France, hoping that the right message, delivered to Josephine Bonaparte—a born aristocrat—by this charming and beautiful woman, would persuade her husband to restore the Bourbon monarchy. According to the journal of Gaspard Gourgaud, officer and companion of Napoleon, Josephine opened the doors of the Château de Malmaison to the duchesse de Guiche. But Bonaparte quickly had the comte d'Artois's agent expelled from France. The unfortunate duchess would die in 1803, after her return to Great Britain, in a house fire. Her body would be repatriated to Béarn in 1825 at the request of Charles X, successor to Louis XVIII on the restored French throne.

SG



58. *The Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna Arranging Flowers*, 1795

Oil on canvas, 103³/₈ × 78³/₄ in. (262.5 × 200 cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 1283)

Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna (1779–1826) was born Luise of Baden and married, in 1793, Alexander Pavlovich, the future emperor Alexander I of Russia. Later she was known as Empress Elizabeth. The couple's two daughters died in early childhood. The present portrait was painted in 1795 as a commission from Catherine II, Alexander's grandmother. The grand duchess is shown in court dress with the ribbon of the Order of Saint Catherine over her shoulder. In her memoirs Vigée Le Brun writes in some detail about working on this and other portraits of Elizabeth Alexeyevna, whom she found most sympathetic:

As soon as I finished the portraits of the young grand duchesses, the empress commissioned from me one of Grand Duchess Elisabeth, who had recently married Alexander. . . .

In fact, I always wanted to do a history painting of her and Alexander, since both have such noble and regular features. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 298–99)

The artist never had the opportunity to paint such a picture; however, she recalled her work on this full-dress portrait of the grand duchess:

I painted her full length in ceremonial dress, arranging flowers near a basket that was filled with them. I went to her home for the sittings and was led into her *divan* [the name for enormous salons with a large divan running completely around the periphery], draped in light blue velvet, trimmed with large silver



flounces. . . . The grand duchess was not long in appearing . . . it was Psyche once more, and her manner, so sweet, so gracious, combined with that charming face, made her all the more beloved. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 299)

Elizabeth Alexeyevna's ceremonial attire is embellished with sumptuous jewelry fashioned from both pearls and sapphires. At the time, gifts bestowed by the emperors were without fail depicted in such portraits. Lillia Konstantinovna Kuznetsova, a scholar of Western European jewelers at the Russian court, has



identified some of the pieces shown here. Elizabeth wears jewels given to her by Catherine II on two of her name days, in 1795 and 1796. In documents in the Hermitage archives they are referred to as the “pearl set” (1795) and the “set with blue sapphires,” and both were made by Yakov Duval in the Saint Petersburg studio of Duval and Sons. In addition to a pearl necklace and bracelets, here the grand duchess wears a tiara with sapphires and matching sapphire earrings, while the bodice of her dress has sewn to it individual stones

(“chatons”) of approximately twenty carats, which the empress presented to her on the eve of her name day on September 4, 1796 (together with a pair of bracelets *en esclavage*). The grand duchess described the more modest pearl bracelets and necklace from the first gift when writing in 1795 to her mother, Amalie of Hesse-Darmstadt, Landgravine of Baden: “Tomorrow is my feast day, the day of St. Elizabeth . . . The Empress has had the kindness to give me a set, all made of pearls: it is enchanting and gives me the greatest pleasure, since I love pearls more

than anything, even diamonds” (Nikolai Mikhailovich 1908–9, vol. 1, p. 214).

The portrait left the studio of Vigée Le Brun in 1795, a year before the “set with blue sapphires” was made and presented. It is therefore likely that the grand duchess initially posed wearing the pearl jewels and that the sapphires were painted in later. In her memoirs Vigée Le Brun notes that she also executed two bust-length and two half-length portraits of Elizabeth Alexeyevna (cat. 62).

ED

59. *Grand Duchesses Alexandra Pavlovna and Elena Pavlovna*, 1796

Oil on canvas, 39 × 39 in. (99 × 99 cm)

Signed and dated (at right): *L.E.V. Le Brun 1796*

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 7747)

In the autumn of 1795 Vigée Le Brun received her first important imperial commission: Count Alexander Sergeyeovich Stroganov officially conveyed to her the desire of Catherine II to have a portrait of her granddaughters. Alexandra Pavlovna (1783–1801) was the eldest daughter of Paul I and Maria Fyodorovna. In 1799 she married Archduke Joseph of Austria. Elena Pavlovna (1784–1803), Paul I's second daughter, married Friedrich Ludwig of Mecklenburg-Schwerin the same year. The artist was delighted by their beauty and originality and describes both girls, whom she imagines to be thirteen or fourteen years old, in her *Souvenirs*: “Their complexion especially was so lovely and delicate that one might have thought they lived on ambrosia” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 294).

Meanwhile, their “heavenly faces” have completely different expressions: Alexandra is distinguished by her classical Greek beauty and very much resembles her elder brother, the future Emperor Alexander I, while the face of the younger girl, Elena, is much more delicate and refined. In the portrait, Elena holds a medallion depicting Catherine II. Vigée Le Brun describes in detail her work on the double portrait: “I had them pose holding and

looking at the portrait of the empress; their costumes were slightly Greek but very modest.” She later states that she was surprised to discover from Platon Zubov, confidant of Catherine II, that the empress was displeased with the costumes. Vigée Le Brun quickly replaced the tunics with long-sleeved dresses, the grand duchesses' usual attire, but these changes greatly pained her: “Nevertheless, I had ruined my entire painting, not to mention the fact that the pretty arms, which I had done the best I could, were no longer visible.” She writes further that after some time, Paul I, who had ascended the throne, inquired as to why she had changed his daughters' attire for the portrait: it seemed that the rumors about Catherine's displeasure were unsubstantiated and could only be explained by Prince Zubov's ill will.

There exists, however, a letter from Catherine, addressed to her friend the critic Melchior Grimm, in Paris, in which she indeed expresses her extreme displeasure with the portrait:

Madame Le Brun has these figures hunker down before you on a settee; twists the neck of the younger one, makes them look like two *moa*[?] warming themselves in the sun, or, if you prefer, like two naughty

little Savoyard girls, their hair done up like bacchantes with clusters of grapes, and dresses them in big red and violet tunics; in a word, not only is there no resemblance, but the two sisters are so disfigured that there are people who ask which is the elder and which the younger. (*Archives de l'Art Français* 17 [1932], p. 199)

X-radiography does not confirm that changes were made to this canvas. Evidently, Vigée Le Brun painted it anew and subsequently distorted the truth in her own favor, by reporting only insignificant changes to the costumes. She likely repainted the composition in its entirety. The artist was paid 3,000 rubles for the picture.

It was thought that Vigée Le Brun's own reiteration of the portrait was held in the Romanov Gallery of the Winter Palace. However, as Inna Nemilova established, the Winter Palace canvas is a copy by the well-known Russian artist Vladimir Borovikovsky, who painted individual portraits of the grand duchesses on more than one occasion (State Hermitage Museum and State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg; see Nemilova 1986, p. 414).

ED



60. Countess Ekaterina Vasilievna Skavronskaya, 1796

Oil on canvas, 31½ × 26 in. (80 × 66 cm)

Signed and dated (at left): *E. Louise Vigée Le Brun / à S^t Petersbourg / 1796*

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (RF 1966-5)

This portrait, painted in Saint Petersburg, is the only one in a French museum dating to Vigée Le Brun's Russian period. In 1796, Countess Ekaterina Vasilievna Skavronskaya had been a widow for three years, and the provenance suggests that the picture was intended for her younger sister, Tatyana (cat. 64), the wife of Prince Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov. A sense of immediacy is conveyed by the subject's glance. In this intimate likeness, the painter focuses on the warm, cushioned ambience of her everyday existence, her charm, and the soft, sensual qualities of her body. In comparison with the 1790 portrait (cat. 43), little stress is placed on the trappings of luxury. The background is dark and undefined; the costume, like the range of colors, is of the utmost simplicity; and the contours of the body and hair respond to the curvilinear rhythms of the shawl enveloping the arms and hands.

This picture is a singularly good illustration of the technical instructions that Vigée Le Brun would later publish in her *Souvenirs*:

The first light area is at the top of the forehead, close to the hair line. It stops just short of the eyebrows and creates the recession of the temple, which often displays a blue vein, especially in delicate complexions. After this light area is a whole flesh tone which gradates toward the middle. The light reaffirms itself weakly in a half tone on this same bone structure, softly blending in half tones and reaching into the



Fig. 41. Vigée Le Brun. *Count Giulio Renato Litta Wearing the Insignia of the Orders of St. Alexander Nevsky and St. George the Triumphant Martyr*, 1797. Oil on canvas, 37 × 28¾ in. (94 × 73 cm). Signed. Civica Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan, Legato Morando 1945 (on deposit at Palazzo Morando [GAM 7376])

shadow which also gives shape to the frontal bone. After this shadow there is a reflection, more or less golden, depending upon the color of the hair. Under the eyebrow, the tone is made somewhat warmer.

The hair must be laid on broadly and should not stand out. The best way would be to paint it with glazes, the canvas producing transparent effects in the shadow and in the areas of full color. The highlights of the hair only show up on the salient parts of the head. Curls capture the light in the middle and are slightly

intercepted by soft wisps of hair which break up their uniformity. The fringes of the hair (like metal) take on the color of the background, and this tends to make the receding parts of the head turn. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 359–60)

At about the same time, Vigée Le Brun painted Giulio Litta, representative of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem at the Romanov court and a naval commander of the Russian fleet (fig. 41). Skavronskaya fell in love with Litta in 1797. She had originally met him in Naples, where Vigée Le Brun had painted each of them for the first time. Litta received a dispensation from Pope Pius VI in 1798 that allowed him to marry the fabulously wealthy lady-in-waiting to Tsarina Maria Fyodorovna. In 1809, Louisa Adams, wife of the American minister to Russia, John Quincy Adams, was introduced at the Winter Palace to a by then very stout Countess Litta, covered in diamonds (see O'Brien 2010, p. 25). She died on February 7, 1829, and was buried in the Alexander Nevsky Monastery of the Holy Spirit.

According to rumor, Giulio Litta had a relationship with his stepdaughter, Maria Pavlovna von Pahlen, the result of which was the birth in 1803 of Yulia Pavlovna von Pahlen, who resembled him physically (see Ritzarev 2006, pp. 331–34). Yulia eventually married Nicolai Alexandrovich Samoilov, the youngest son of Countess Ekaterina Samoilova. See cat. 66 for a portrait of his mother and siblings.

JB





61. *Countess Anna Ivanovna Tolstaya*, 1796

Oil on canvas, 54 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 41 in. (137.7 × 104 cm)

Signed and dated (on the rock): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun / a St Petersburg 1796*

Private collection, Canada, on loan to the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

Anna Ivanovna (1774–1825), the daughter of Prince Ivan Baryatinsky, a former ambassador of Catherine II to the court of Louis XVI, was married in 1787 to Count Nikolai Alexandrovich Tolstoy, a renowned collector of books and prints and an intimate of the future Tsar Alexander I. The countess was so well known for her tall stature that her friends called her “La Longue.” Vigée Le Brun pointed out that there was a bond between Anna Ivanovna and Countess Golovina, whose portrait she painted during the same years (cat. 70): “She had an intimate friend in Countess Tolstaya who was beautiful and kind but much less animated [than she]; and perhaps that contrast in their characters had formed and cemented their liaison” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 323–24).

Like her companion, Countess Tolstaya converted to Catholicism under the joint influence of the Jesuit community and of a French emigrée, the princesse de Tarente Countess Tolstaya and Countess Golovina moved to Paris at the time of the Restoration, and remained there until their deaths. Joseph Baillio has drawn attention to a letter from the princesse de Tarente, in Paris, to Countess Golovina, dated April 25, 1802: “If La Longue wants to make me happy, have her arrange to have her portrait by Mme Le Brun copied, or the one she gave you, making it whiter, or finally, a portrait of her in miniature.” We do not know whether the sitter granted the wish of her influential French friend.

By commissioning her portrait from Vigée Le Brun, the countess perpetuated a family preference for women painters.

Her mother, Princess Ekaterina Petrovna Baryatinskaya, was one of Angelica Kauffmann’s major patrons, and she owned, among other works, the famous *Self-Portrait Hesitating between the Arts of Music and Painting* (State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow). In 1791, in Rome, she commissioned a large family portrait from Kauffmann in which Countess Tolstaya leans on the shoulder of her husband, who, appropriately, holds a book in his hand (fig. 42).

The present work appears on the list *Mes portraits faits à Petersbourg* as “Countess Tolstaya to the knees, leaning on a rock near a waterfall.” The young woman is in three-quarter view, wearing a fashionable, high-waisted muslin dress that does justice to this “White Queen”—Countess Tolstaya’s second nickname, bestowed by her intimate circle. The artist characteristically enhanced her sitter’s costume with a generous stole of pale yellow bordered with red, marking an unusual shift in tone. The medallion portrait around the countess’s neck may depict her late father and is similar to the one her mother holds in the family portrait by Kauffmann.

Vigée Le Brun here adapted the pose used in 1791 for *Queen Maria Carolina of Naples* (destroyed in 1940). Following the presentation in *Countess von Bucquoi* (cat. 53), Anna Ivanovna takes her place in a natural setting that provides a seat, where, in accordance with her *Conseils sur la peinture du portrait* in the *Souvenirs*, she, too, finds “something to lean on.”

In her persistent concern to integrate the figure into the landscape, the artist has taken great care in tracing the diag-



Fig. 42. Angelica Kauffmann. *The Baryatinsky Family*, 1791. Oil on canvas, 9 ft. 7 in. × 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (292 × 200 cm). The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

onal line of the sitter’s back, which replicates the morphology of the rock. The countess is placed in front of an opening that recalls Neptune’s Grotto as well as the background chosen during Vigée Le Brun’s early days in Rome for *Countess Anna Potocka* (cat. 47). Although the memory of an excursion to Tivoli still suffuses this Saint Petersburg work, the aquatic theater of the falls has calmed down. The background is much less dramatic, perhaps alluding to the sitter’s more reserved personality. Vigée Le Brun would invoke such scenery one last time in 1820, in the portrait of Tatyana Borisovna Potemkina (cat. 85).

PL

62. *Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna*, 1797

Oil on canvas, 30³/₄ × 26³/₈ in. (78 × 67 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun 1797*
Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg (WO B 8012)

Among her subjects in Russia, Vigée Le Brun lists five portraits of Elizabeth Alexeyevna (born Luise of Baden) (1779–1826) including the full-length ceremonial portrait of 1795 (cat. 58) and two half-length replicas. In addition, in 1797 the artist produced “two half-length portraits,” of which this is the prime, signed and dated version. Vigée Le Brun mentions it in her memoirs: “When I had finished her large portrait, she had me do another one for her mother, in which I painted her resting against a cushion and wearing a diaphanous violet shawl” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 300).

The painting is documented in letters from the sitter to her mother published by Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich. In the first letter, sent from Moscow on May 8, 1797, Elizabeth wrote that she could not send her “a single portrait, either for my sisters or for Papa, or the one by Mme Le Brun.” According to the second letter, drafted at Pavlovsk Palace on July 10, the sittings were delayed: “Unfortunately my portrait by Mme Le Brun has not been done, because I was not feeling well and I had no place here to be painted, so that, to my great sorrow, you won’t have it for a month or

two; we are promised another opportunity, and if there is not one, I will quite simply send it by the post.” The third, sent from Petersburg on November 29, announced that the work would soon be completed: “My portrait by Mme Le Brun will be finished: I would simply like to know how to send it to you.” Yet the painting did not leave Russia for Karlsruhe for another year, as we learn from a letter of February 5, 1799: “By the way, the person responsible for sending you my portrait by Mme Le Brun says he had news of it from Frankfurt nearly two weeks ago; I don’t understand why it has not yet arrived in [K]arlsruhe.”

This portrait matches the description of the grand duchess that Vigée Le Brun gave in her memoirs (speaking of her first contact with the grand duchess at Tsarskoye Selo, shortly after the artist had arrived in Saint Petersburg):

[Elizabeth Alexeyevna] was seventeen at most: her features were fine and regular, her face a perfect oval; her beautiful complexion was not animated but had a paleness altogether in harmony with the expression on her face, which had

an angelic sweetness. Her ash blond hair fell loose onto her neck and forehead. She was dressed in a white tunic, fastened with a belt tied negligently around her waist, which was thin and supple as a nymph’s. As I just painted her, she was standing out against the background of her apartment, adorned with columns . . . in a manner so delightful that I exclaimed: It’s Psyche! It was Princess Elizabeth, wife of Alexander. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 262–63)

Here the grand duchess wears a piece of muslin that twists around her curly hair at the top and is drawn under her chin. A thin gold chain is wrapped three times around her neck. She rests against a red velvet cushion trimmed with gold fringe and wears a muslin dress under a sheer violet shawl.

The version of this painting once in the Winter Palace and now at the State Hermitage Museum is the autograph replica. Among a fairly large number of copies is one in the Musée Fabre in Montpellier; the most interesting, a miniature done by Charles de Chamisso, is now at the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

JB



63. *Stanislaw August Poniatowski, formerly King of Poland*, 1797

Oil on canvas, oval, 38⁷/₈ × 30³/₄ in. (98.7 × 78 cm)

Paris, Salon, 1802, no. 916

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, on deposit from the Musée du Louvre (MV 5878)

Stanislaw Poniatowski (1732–98) was the last king of Poland (r. 1764–95). His kingdom was dismembered owing to the territorial ambitions of Russia in 1772, of Austria in 1793, and of Prussia in 1795. Exiled to compulsory residence in Saint Petersburg, the former monarch visited Vigée Le Brun at her atelier on March 19, 1797. (The artist had lived in the capital of the tsars since July 25, 1795 and at the time was renting a suite in a house on the main square of the Winter Palace.)

Shown half-length and in three-quarter view, the king, though deposed, appears in all his splendor. Dressed in a red velvet mantle trimmed with ermine, he wears the blue ribbon of the Polish Order of the White Eagle. Combined with the illusionist mastery required to depict the fabrics (velvet, fur, moiré, lawn) are a few traits that had been characteristic of the painter's style

since her stay in Italy between 1789 and 1793. The play of color, here uniting vibrations of red and white, had in fact become more daring and the technique rougher. The shape of the canvas, originally rectangular, was modified to an oval by the artist.

Vigée Le Brun describes Poniatowski: "His handsome face expressed gentleness and kindness. The sound of his voice was penetrating, and his bearing had an infinite dignity without any affectation. He conversed with a very particular charm, possessing a great love and knowledge of literature" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 30). The artist belonged to his inner circle: "I rarely missed the little suppers of the king of Poland. Lord Withworth, English ambassador to Russia, and the marquis de Rivière also attended very faithfully. The three of us preferred these intimate gatherings to large crowds of people; for a charming

conversation always began after supper, and the king especially knew how to enliven it with a host of anecdotes of great interest" (ibid., p. 32). She also saw him on the eve of his death, in 1798, less than a year after their first meeting.

A second portrait of the sitter is mentioned in the painter's *Souvenirs*, in which she notes that "Mme Ménicheck, the niece of the king of Poland. . . had me do a portrait of her daughter . . . and also one of her uncle, the king of Poland, costumed as Henry IV" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 36). Poniatowski himself, who "loved the arts with such passion that . . . he would incessantly visit the superior artists" (ibid., pp. 30–31), also commissioned a portrait of himself from Johann Baptist von Lampi the Elder in about 1788 (State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg), and another from Marcello Bacciarelli in 1793 (private collection).

GF



64. *Princess Tatyana Vasilevna Yusupova*, 1797

Oil on canvas, 55½ × 41 in. (141 × 104 cm)

Signed and dated (on tree trunk): *L. E. Vigée / Le Brun 1797 / a St. Petersbourg*

Tokyo Fuji Art Museum (W 68)

Vigée Le Brun painted this portrait of Tatyana Vasilevna Yusupova (née Engelhardt, 1769–1841), the younger sister of Ekaterina Skavronskaya (cats. 43, 60), in Saint Petersburg in 1797. Tatyana enjoyed the patronage of Catherine II and was a maid of honor at the imperial court. Like her sisters, she received a large inheritance upon the death of her uncle, Prince Grigory Potemkin, in 1791. While still very young she married a distant relative, Lieutenant General Mikhail Sergeevich Potemkin, but was widowed in 1791 and left with two small children, Aleksandr and Ekaterina. In 1793, the empress arranged a second marriage for her to the brilliant Petersburg grandee and collector Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov. The collection assembled at his Arkhangelskoye estate, near Moscow, is astonishing for the breadth and quality of the works, a testament to his flawless taste and knowledge of contemporary European art. He visited Paris and was personally acquainted with many French painters, including Vigée Le Brun. Under Paul I, Prince Yusupov was named an actual privy counselor and appointed head of the Collegium of Manufacturing. He was also in charge of the court

theater, and the Hermitage Museum was placed under his authority. In 1794 the couple's son Boris was born, the only heir to the Yusupov fortune. Their marriage was not happy, and although they did not divorce, they lived apart, Yusupov in Moscow and his wife in Saint Petersburg. She hosted a literary salon at her house on the English Embankment, which such well-known Russian poets as Pushkin, Derzhavin, Zhukovsky, and Krylov frequented. But her main occupation was raising her children.

In Vigée Le Brun's *Souvenirs*, in a list of works created in Russia, the artist mentions the portrait of Princess Yusupova, a portrait of her son (*Boris Yusupov as Cupid*, Chernigov Regional Art Museum, Ukraine), and one of her daughters by her first marriage, Ekaterina Mikhailovna Potemkina (location unknown). Moreover, "the portrait of Julie Le Brun bathing" (cat. 51), painted by Vigée Le Brun in Turin in 1792, had been commissioned by her husband.

Tatyana Yusupova is portrayed against a landscape, the background dense with foliage. She wears a white tunic in the "Neo-Grecian" style and a red shawl decorated with gold palmettes;

her head is wreathed with roses intertwined with a diaphanous scarf. She sits, leaning on a marble pedestal, holding a second wreath in her left hand, perhaps intended for her sister, Ekaterina Skavronskaya, whose initials CS (Vigée Le Brun referred to her as "Catherine") are shown on the trunk of a tree. Princess Yusupova is presented as a Russian vestal virgin in the manner of Joseph Marie Vien.

The painting most likely went first to the palace on the Fontanka River in Saint Petersburg where the couple lived until 1810. When she left her husband, Tatyana moved to the house on the English Embankment that Catherine II had given her as a wedding gift. In 1830, all of her property and her husband's collection were transported to a palace on the Moika River, the family seat until 1917. As Marina Krasnobaeva has demonstrated, in 1869, a nephew of Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov commissioned a copy of the portrait from the Russian artist Gerasim Kadunov (Arkhangelskoye Estate Museum) for the Villa Tatiana in Switzerland, which belonged to the Princes Yusupov (Krasnobaeva and Sharnova 2011, pp. 210–11).

AS





65. *Princess Ekaterina Ilyinichna Golenishcheva-Kutuzova*, 1797

Oil on canvas, 32¼ × 26¾ in. (82 × 68 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun / St Petersburg 1797*

The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (2793)

On April 27, 1778, Ekaterina Ilyinichna Bibikova (1754–1824), the daughter of Lieutenant General Ilya Alexandrovich Bibikov and Varvara Nikitichna Shishkova, married Colonel Mikhail Illarionovich Golenishchev-Kutuzov (1745–1813). Ekaterina Golenishcheva-Kutuzova held a prominent position at court: Paul I awarded her the Order of Saint Catherine, the Small Cross, on the day of his coronation in 1797, and Alexander I named her a lady-in-waiting. She was passionate about theater and literature and maintained a lively correspondence with Germaine de Staël, whose letters to her from 1812 and 1813 were published in the journal *Russian Antiquity* (*Russkaia Starina*) (no. 5 [1872], pp. 698–705).

The celebrated Mikhail Kutuzov became commander in chief of the Russian army during the War of 1812 and was promoted to general field marshal after the Battle of Borodino. Madame de Staël wrote of Field Marshal Prince Kutuzov's death in 1813: "A great misfortune has befallen you, Princess,

and all of Europe with you . . . Field Marshal Kutuzov saved Russia and nothing in the future will compare with the last year of his life. . . ." After the death of her husband, Golenishcheva-Kutuzova received a life pension from Alexander I and all of the field marshal's foreign property. She traveled widely in Europe; Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres made several drawings of her in Rome in 1815–16 (see Naef 1977).

The present portrait, painted by Vigée Le Brun in Saint Petersburg, is included in the list of works she created in Russia as "1 Madame Koutousoff. Buste." The artist also executed a portrait of Golenishcheva-Kutuzova's daughter Darya Opochinina (1801, private collection).

In 2006 the Moscow canvas was restored, and its bright coloration is now evident. The artist depicts the sitter at waist-length against a pale sky with pink clouds. Her long face, deftly drawn, seems to shine from within—an effect of the light blue shadows beneath the sitter's eyes and on her forehead. One

can see changes that the artist made during the course of her work, altering the line of the subject's lips, the shape and outline of her face. With the red shawl, blue dress, and white collar, Vigée Le Brun employs a favorite color combination: tucked into the shawl are the red ribbon and badge of the Order of Saint Catherine, an honor bestowed on women who served the sovereign. Members of the order were instructed to wear this decoration "on the left side near the heart" on a ribbon inscribed with the motto: "For Love and the Fatherland."

The Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg holds a copy of this portrait by Charles de Chamisso. A variant painting in the collection of Baron Eduard Alexandrowitsch von Falz-Fein of Liechtenstein is considered the work of Vigée Le Brun, but judging from photographs, this seems doubtful. It belonged, like the work in the State Pushkin Museum, to Nikolai Nikolayevich Tuchkov. The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg has a miniature of her by Ludwig Guttenbrunn.

AS

66. *The Countess Ekaterina Sergeyeвна Samoilova with Two of Her Children*, 1797

Oil on canvas, 90 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 70 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (229 × 178 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *Vigee Le Brun Petersbourg 1797*

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 9626)

Ekaterina Sergeyeвна Samoilova (1763–1830) was the daughter of Prince Sergey Alexeyevich Trubetskoy and Princess Elena Vasilievna Nesvitskaya. She married a well-known public figure of Catherine II's time, Count Alexander Nikolayevich Samoilov, general procurator, and nephew of the empress's morganatic husband, Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin. In 1782 she became a maid of honor at Catherine's court.

Samoilova combined beauty with a doubtful reputation, since, as was the case with several of Potemkin's nieces, she was the object of his particular affections and with her husband even accompanied him on the Turkish campaign. The prince de Ligne, who was with the Russian army near Ochakovo, also fell victim to the charms of the twenty-five-year-old Samoilova and dedicated poems to her. In the present portrait she is depicted with her two oldest children, Grigory Alexandrovich, who later became Knight Commander of the Order of Malta and was killed in 1811 during the war with Turkey, and Elena Alexandrovna, whose married name was Donets-Zakharzhevskaya.

The further history of this portrait, however, is connected to the younger daughter of Count and Countess Samoilov, Sofia, who was born in 1799. She married Count Alexey Alexeyevich Bobrinsky (1800–1868), the son of Alexey Grigorievich Bobrinsky (he in turn was the illegitimate son of Catherine II by her favorite, Count



Grigory Grigorievich Orlov). The portrait, together with the remainder of the collection, passed to Alexey Alexandrovich Bobrinsky, a well-known

archaeologist, who emigrated to France after the October Revolution of 1917 and died in Grasse in 1927.

ED



67. *Princess Anna Alexandrovna Golitsyna*, ca. 1797

Oil on canvas, 53½ × 39½ in. (135.9 × 100.3 cm)

The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Mary Frick Jacobs Collection (BMA 1938.192)

During her prolonged stay in Russia, Vigée Le Brun had the opportunity to portray various members of the Golitsyn family. Anna Alexandrovna Golitsyna (1763–1842) was one of the brightest figures in that prestigious dynasty. The daughter of the tsarevich of Georgia, she was first married to Alexander Alexandrovich Litsyn. Widowed in 1789, she married Prince Boris Andreyevich Golitsyn the next year. The couple would have eight children.

“Princess Boris,” in possession of one of the largest fortunes in the empire, hosted an influential salon in the imperial capital. In 1798, after Tsar Paul I came to power, her husband was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general, but he soon fell into disgrace. In 1800, therefore, the family was forced to retire to their lands at Sima in the remote province of Vladimir. Regaining favor with the regime upon the accession of Alexander I, the princess

moved back to Saint Petersburg with her family in the spring of 1801. In the *Souvenirs*, Vigée Le Brun relates that her subject—despite her presumed convictions—at the time welcomed to her table General Duroc, in his capacity as Bonaparte’s emissary.

About 1797, having achieved hegemony over Saint Petersburg high society, the princess commissioned a portrait of herself from Vigée Le Brun, whose fees were reputed in Russia to have reached stratospheric levels. Listed by the artist in *Mes portraits faits à Petersbourg* as “Princess Bauris Galitzin almost full-length, to the knees,” the subject is shown in three-quarter profile. In a palatial setting, this grande dame is seated against a neutral ground, with light entering from the upper left. Dynamically posed, her body turns to her proper left while she faces right.

Consistent with the artist’s *Conseils sur la peinture du portrait*, the princess

leans on a very large cushion, the weight of her left arm forming a deep depression. “Princess Boris” is dressed in a chemise and a short-sleeved silk peignoir of Empire fashion. This “at home” attire, worn by an aristocrat in the privacy of her palace, nonetheless appears in the context of a monumental portrait. Her costume rivals the chemise dress donned by Marie Antoinette in her portrait (cat. 16), to the great dismay of the critics at the Salon of 1783. The peignoir is distinguished by a range of colors alternately lush and audacious, but harmoniously complementary. The crimson headpiece, decorated with a panache of feathers, is a combination turban—evoking the sibyls of Domenichino—and *bayadère’s* aigrette. This accessory, the Orientalism of which undoubtedly alludes to the sitter’s Georgian origins, may be considered the most original attribute the artist ever bestowed on one of her sitters.

PL



68. *Portrait of a Young Woman*, ca. 1797

Oil on canvas, 32³/₈ × 27³/₄ in. (82.2 × 70.5 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Robert Dawson Evans Collection (17.3256)

In 1977, a copy of the present painting with a landscape of trees in the background was sold at Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York (October 28–29, 1977, no. 249) as a portrait of Irina Ivanovna Vorontsova (1768–1848). Noticing that the sitter was the same as that for the Boston picture, and that the copy reportedly came from the Vorontsov collection at Alupka, in the Crimea, Joseph Baillio proposed that this might be one of the two bust portraits depicting “La Comtesse de Worandsoff” that are listed by Vigée Le Brun among the works she made during her stay in Saint Petersburg (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 346). This suggested identification has awaited confirmation.

According to Aisulu Shukurova, curator of paintings at the Gatchina Palace Museum, another portrait of Irina Ivanovna Vorontsova by Vigée Le Brun (1797, oil on canvas, 25¹/₄ × 29⁷/₈ in.) appeared as number 40807 in the museum’s records for 1938–39. The description corresponds perfectly with reproductions in Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich’s *Portraits Russes* (1905–9, vol. 4, no. 107; see fig. 43) and in Nikolenko (1967, no. 14): the sitter is shown leaning on an open book by Racine. Both the painting and an oval copy were lost during World War II, but the copy was returned to the museum in 2011.

Although there is a general similarity in the sitter’s expression in the Boston painting and in the photographs and the copy of the Gatchina portrait, there are significant differences of appearance. The shapes of the eyebrows and the nose are not the same; in the copy, Irina Vorontsova has blue eyes, while in the

portrait from Boston, her eyes are hazel. As Baillio noted, the Boston picture is closely related to Vigée Le Brun’s portrait of Grand Duchess Anna Fyodorovna (State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow), also painted in Saint Petersburg in 1797. This association probably led Angela Demutsky to introduce a second hypothesis: that the young woman represented could instead be Countess Ekaterina Artemievna Vorontsova (1780–1836), maid of honor to the grand duchess. However, the documented likenesses of Ekaterina Artemievna—the 1825 portrait of her with Princess Elena Mikhailovna Golitsyna (State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow), a watercolor by Alexander Pavlovich Bryullov, and a miniature published by Nikolai Mikhailovich (1905–9, vol. 3, no. 67)—do not support this hypothesis either.

In the Boston portrait and in that of the grand duchess, Vigée Le Brun reversed the pose of Madame Molé-Reymond (fig. 9), painted in 1786, but repeated neither the costume nor the color scheme. The sitter here is also in motion, as suggested by her posture and flowing hair. She is shown against a cloudy sky, her arms crossed and her torso tightly wrapped in a dark shawl. She wears a green dress and a straw bonnet adorned with a feather. The palette is restrained except for a few bright red accents in details of the costume and accessories. Sadly, the sitter for this charming portrait from the artist’s stay in Russia must for the present remain unidentified.

AS



Fig. 43. After Vigée Le Brun. Irina Ivanovna Vorontsova, 1797. Photolithograph. Published in Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 4, no. 107





69. *Ivan Ivanovich Shuvalov*, ca. 1797–1800

Oil on canvas, 33 × 24 in. (83.8 × 61 cm)

North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, Purchased with funds from the State of North Carolina (52.9.224)

This portrait of an elderly gentleman has consistently been identified as Ivan Ivanovich Shuvalov (1727–1797), a Russian born into the minor nobility who flourished during the reign of Empress Elizabeth. He has pale blue eyes and a slightly ruddy complexion. His attire consists of a black velvet coat lined with sable or mink over a vest of lustrous orange; the white stock around his neck is tied in a bow. He wears moiré silk sashes of the Romanov Empire and two badges adorn his left breast. On stylistic grounds, the work can only date from the second half of the 1790s.

One of the foremost intellectuals and art patrons in Russia during the Enlightenment, Shuvalov was born in Moscow on November 1, 1727. His Machiavellian first cousins, Alexander and Peter Shuvalov, effectively governed Russia for a decade after the coup d'état that brought Peter the Great's daughter to the throne as Empress Elizabeth. The Shuvalovs introduced the handsome young Ivan into her entourage as a page.

As the imperial paramour—some people referred to him maliciously as “Monsieur Pompadour”—he served as the sovereign's gentleman of the bedchamber, aide-de-camp, privy counselor, and, finally, grand chamberlain. But he lacked the rapaciousness of his kinsmen and refused the title of count when it was offered, although some writers attribute it to him. He was, however, promoted in 1755 to the rank of lieutenant general. The bookish Ivan was drawn

to intellectual pursuits and promoted the arts and sciences. He helped establish the University of Moscow and the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg. He remained in a position of influence until the empress's death in 1762.

Following the assassination of Peter III and the accession to the throne of his widow, Catherine the

Great, Ivan and his cousins traveled abroad. He spent fourteen years in England, France, and Italy, assembling collections of art and books. In 1775, two years before his definitive return to Russia, he was made a senior privy counselor, and, once again, grand chancellor.

An inveterate bachelor, he spent the final years of his life in a mansion



Fig. 44. Elisabeth Louise Vigée. *Ivan Ivanovich Shuvalov*. Oil on copper, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.1 × 19.4 cm). Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{le} Vigée 1775*. Radishchev State Art Museum, Saratov (619)



near the Nevsky Prospect in Saint Petersburg, mostly in the company of his sister Princess Prascovya Ivanovna Golitsyna and her daughter, Countess Varvara Nikolayevna Golovina (cat. 70). He died on November 14, 1797, and was buried in the Church of the Annunciation in the convent of the Alexander Nevsky Monastery.

Earlier paintings of Ivan Shuvalov done from life show that he had a cleft chin. This portrait's impeccable provenance—its first recorded owner was Varvara Golovina—and the considerable number of copies of the work, each of which bears Ivan's name, make it difficult to question the identification of the sitter. But Vigée Le Brun painted Shuvalov's chin without the slightest hint of an indentation, so the portrait is probably posthumous.

In her memoirs, the artist mentions a portrait of "comte Schouvaloff" painted in Paris in 1775:

I did the portrait of Count Schouvaloff, the Grand Chamberlain. The latter was then, I believe, sixty years old [he was forty-eight], and had been the lover of Elizabeth II. He combined courteous manners with obliging politeness, and as he was a fine man, he was sought out by the best society. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 21)

The portrait of Shuvalov to which she refers must be the small copper panel, signed and dated, depicting him in a red jacket with a lynx lining and collar and the insignia of two chivalric orders (fig. 44), a work that appears to

have been at one time in the Russian Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow (where the subject was misidentified as Prince Alexander Alexeyevich Vyazemsky) and is now in the Radishchev State Art Museum, Saratov (see Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 4, no. 6). This hypothesis is confirmed by the existence of a small, knee-length portrait of Shuvalov seated beside a table on which he holds a framed profile portrait in relief of a woman, the reverse of which bears an inscription: *Télos* [or *Délos*] *pinxit* / 1776. The artist who painted it obviously based it on Vigée's 1775 portrait of Shuvalov in Saratov. Andrea Busiri Vici, who owned the painting, published and reproduced it in his study of Shuvalov's years in Rome (see Busiri Vici 1976).

JB

70. Countess Varvara Nikolayevna Golovina, ca. 1797–1800

Oil on canvas, octagonal, 32 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (83.5 × 66.7 cm)

The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham (80.1)

The daughter of Lieutenant-General Prince Nikolai Fyodorovich Golitsyn, Varvara Nikolayevna (1766–1821) spent her childhood on the paternal estate, Petrovska, near Moscow, and after her father's death moved with her mother to Saint Petersburg. Named lady-in-waiting to the imperial court in 1783, she quickly befriended Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna, wife of the future Emperor Alexander I. In spite of her mother's opposition, she married the seductive and fickle Count Nikolai Nikolayevich Golovin, heir of a family of Muscovite

boyars. During the reign of Paul I (1796–1801), she was forced to leave the capital. One of a number of eminent members of the Russian aristocracy who fell under the influence of the Jesuit community, she converted to Roman Catholicism. She moved to Paris during the Restoration and may have met her portraitist again before her death.

Although a slanderous rumor attributing a difficult disposition to the countess pursued her, Vigée Le Brun seems to have retained a sympathetic impression:

a charming woman full of wit and talent, which was often enough to keep us company, for she saw few people. She drew very well, and composed charming ballads, which she sang while accompanying herself on the piano. In addition, she was always on the lookout for the literary news from Europe, which, I believe, was known at her house as soon as it was in Paris. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 323–24)

This image of a highly cultivated woman is substantiated by Countess Golovina's memoirs, which were published under the title *Souvenirs de la Comtesse Golovine, née Princesse Galitzine 1766–1821* (Paris, 1910).

Joseph Baillio points out the following note in a small sketchbook (private collection) dating to the end of Vigée Le Brun's stay in Russia: "I reached [Moscow]/ Golovin 1000 [rubles]." This information may indicate that the portrait was made during the painter's time in Moscow, and specifically between October 1800 and March 1801, the period when the countess was banished from the imperial capital.

Appearing among *Mes portraits faits à Petersbourg* as "Countess Golowin, with a hand" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 346), this composition is rightly considered the most original work of the Russian period. The sitter is entirely cloaked in the large red stole with embroidered trim that appears in several other paintings since at least 1787 (cats. 38, 53, 64). However, Vigée Le Brun had never before made such radical use of it. Fully enveloped by the fabric, as if protecting herself from the rigors of the Russian winter, she may recall *La Frileuse (Winter)* (fig. 45), the famous marble by Jean Antoine Houdon. The innovative composition sets the half-length figure in an octagonal framing and against a neutral scumbled background, with a diagonal shaft of light cutting across from left to right. The unusual backdrop suits the countess's dynamic pose—her face is presented frontally, while her body, turning to the left, cleverly evokes the scheme of a portrait in motion, adopted in 1786 for *Madame Molé-Reymond* (fig. 9).



Fig. 45. Jean Antoine Houdon (French, 1741–1828), *La Frileuse (Winter)*, 1787. Bronze, 56 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (143.5 × 39.1 × 50.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Kate Trubee Davison, 1962 (62.55)

PL





71. *Julie Le Brun as Flora*, ca. 1799

Oil on canvas, 51 × 38½ in. (130.5 × 98 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, Rexford Stead Art Purchase Fund (1983.5)

As a token of her exclusive maternal love, Vigée Le Brun portrayed her only child, Jeanne Julie Louise (1780–1819), from early childhood onward (cats. 35, 51). The successive images stand as milestones in the history of a mother-child relationship that was as passionate as it was conflicted. This composition, representing the young woman at the age of nineteen, is a mythological portrait, a genre the artist had explored under the influence of Angelica Kauffmann during her stay in Rome at the beginning of the 1790s.

Flora's fate is recounted in Ovid's *Fasti* (*Book of Days*), in which a nymph called Chloris was pursued by the wind god Zephyr, who, as a wedding present, made her Flora, goddess of flowers. In Roman antiquity, Flora, who gave birth to spring, was frequently depicted holding a wreath. Vigée Le Brun follows the convention, often seen in sculpture, for example, in a Roman copy of an original from the fourth century B.C. (National Archaeological Museum, Naples). The portraitist breathes new life into the iconography, however, by gathering together a variety of blooms in a basket on the girl's head—successor to the bouquets, veritable still lifes, that adorned the straw hats of the duchesse de Polignac (cat. 11) and Madame de Verdun (fig. 2) at the start of the previous decade.

From the first, however, Flora was also associated with the theme of the courtesan, as exemplified by Bartolomeo Veneto's famous *Portrait of a Courtesan as Flora* (ca. 1520, Städtisches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt am Main). In bestowing this borrowed

identity on her daughter, Vigée Le Brun must have been aware of the tradition. In 1799 Julie was about to marry Gaëtan Bernard Nigris, the impecunious secretary of a theater director. In reaction to the approaching union, which she bitterly opposed, the artist may have been discreetly expressing all the hostility she felt toward a marriage with this Petersburg Zephyr. The same year, she would use the composition for *Princess Evdokia Ivanovna Golitsyna as Flora* (fig. 46), a portrait of the famous and eccentric "Princess of Midnight." As in *Portrait of a Young Woman* (cat. 68) two years earlier, Vigée Le Brun captures her subject in motion, here exposed to the winds of Zephyr. Julie wears a *robe à la grecque*, white and high-waisted. The elegant gown, in vogue among the artist's contemporaries, evokes that of Henriette de Verninac in the portrait painted by David the same

year (Musée du Louvre). Catherine II had abhorred the fashion and must have perceived it as the expression of an insidious Jacobinism, but the style found full acceptance during the reign of Paul I.

Like a figure in a frieze, Julie, portrayed in three-quarter view, stands against a freely sketched landscape, with a gloomy sky seemingly reflecting the mother's apprehensions. Joseph Baillio believes that the figure derives from the frescoes of young dancing girls discovered in the Villa of Cicero in Pompeii. These mural paintings, admired by Vigée Le Brun during her stay in Naples in the early 1790s, had also been diffused through engravings by Filippo Morghen, published in Naples in *Le pitture antiche d'Ercolano e contorni incise con qualche spiegazione* (1757–62). This publication constituted a true laboratory of Neoclassical art.

PL



Fig. 46. Vigée Le Brun. *Princess Evdokia Ivanovna Golitsyna as Flora*, 1799. Oil on canvas, 53½ × 38⅜ in. (136 × 97.5 cm). Signed and dated. Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City, Gift of Val A. Browning (1994.017.015)

72. *Self-Portrait*, 1800

Oil on canvas, 30⁷/₈ × 26³/₄ in. (78.5 × 68 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *Vigée Le Brun a Petersbourg 1800*

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 7586)

Before her departure from Russia, Vigée Le Brun was admitted as an honorary member to the Imperial Academy of Arts by its director, Count Alexander Sergeevich Stroganov. In the *Souvenirs* she describes in detail the gala celebration that took place on June 16, 1800, and which became, in her words, one of the

dearest memories of her travels. For the ceremony admitting her to the ranks of the academicians the artist ordered for herself the customary uniform: a riding habit, composed of a violet jacket, a yellow skirt, and a black hat with a feather. At the appointed time she arrived at the hall leading to a long gallery with

stands filled with people. In the distance Alexander Stroganov was seated at a table. She approached when he gave the sign. The count delivered a short address to her in the name of Alexander I and presented a diploma with the title of member of the Academy of Arts. The thunderous applause, which did not cease for some time, brought tears to her eyes and remained in her memory forever. She writes: "I immediately did my portrait for the Petersburg academy; in it I represented myself painting, my palette in hand" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 39).

Vigée Le Brun always thought kindly of the country that had taken her in and particularly of the Imperial Academy of Arts that had honored her so highly: in 1825 she arranged for "an annual bequest of 100 francs to strike a gold medal to be awarded to one of the students of the Academy studying painting" (Original document: Archives nationales de France, Minutier Central des Notaires, Etude Louis-Céleste Gossart, dossier CXVI, document 739).

In the self-portrait, Vigée Le Brun portrays herself at work on the portrait of Maria Fyodorovna, wife of Paul I, wearing the imperial headdress: a small crown covered in diamonds. This composition is a half-length variant (until the mid-1990s in a private collection in Moscow) of the full-length state portrait of Maria Fyodorovna, painted by the artist in 1799 (State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg). According to Pierre de Nolhac, Vigée Le Brun later told her friends that she considered this her best self-portrait (Nolhac 1908, p. 162).



ED





73. *The Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky in a Blue Mantle*, 1800

Oil on canvas, 30½ × 26¾ in. (77.5 × 68 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun a Petersbourg. 1800*

The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (4617)

In the chapters of the *Souvenirs* devoted to her time in Russia, Vigée Le Brun repeatedly refers to Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky (1767/1772–1825), the sitter for the present portrait and one in the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (cat. 77). Describing a ball at the court of Catherine II, she mentions dancing with “the young prince,” and she also writes that when spending the summer at a house on Kamenny Island lent to her by Count Stroganov, she often spent the evening with Countess Golovina, where Baryatinsky and the princesse de Tarente were staying. She writes, “We would chat or have readings until supper. In fact my time passed in the most agreeable manner possible” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 341–42).

Ivan Baryatinsky, son of Prince Ivan Sergeyevich Baryatinsky and Princess Ekaterina Petrovna Golshtein-Bek, was one of the most brilliant of the “golden youth”: his charming looks were matched by an excellent education. In 1780 he entered the military and became Prince Potemkin’s adjutant. He received the Order of Saint George, 4th class, for his role in the storming and capture of

Praga (a suburb of Warsaw) by General Aleksandr Suvorov’s forces in 1794. However, during the reign of Paul I, as a result of a clash with Fyodor Rostopchin, he was exiled from the court.

Vigée Le Brun painted this first portrait of the prince in 1800 in Saint Petersburg. In her *Souvenirs*, she speaks of the “tyranny” of Paul I and recounts the following story:

... every one was obliged [by Paul I] to wear powder. At the time when this regulation was made I was painting young Prince Baryatinsky’s portrait, and he had acceded to my request that he come without powder. One day he arrived pale as death. “What is the matter with you?” I asked him. “I have just met the Emperor,” he replied, all a-tremble. “I barely had time to hide in a doorway, but I am terribly afraid that he recognized me.” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 5)

In this work Vigée Le Brun repeats a composition that she had used for the two versions of her portrait of Adam

Casimir Czartoryski, painted in Vienna in 1793 (private collection; and formerly Hôtel Lambert, Paris). In the portrait held in a private collection, the Polish prince wears a red cloak, while in the portrait once at the Hôtel Lambert, he wears a blue one. As Joseph Baillio correctly proposed, the portrait of Louis Jean François Lagrenée the Elder (Château de Versailles) by Jean Laurent Mosnier, which Vigée Le Brun may have seen in the Salon of 1789, served as her source of inspiration (Baillio 1982a, p. 104). In the present painting, Vigée Le Brun shows Baryatinsky at half-length, draped in a blue cloak decorated with gold palmettes. As in the Czartoryski portrait once at the Hôtel Lambert, underneath Baryatinsky’s cloak is a red coat collar and a white neck cloth. Vigée Le Brun returned to the composition used for Baryatinsky’s portrait for her portrait of Prince Sergey Sergeyevich Gagarin (1801, private collection, Moscow).

A variation of this portrait of Prince Baryatinsky, most likely not by Vigée Le Brun, is in the Chigi collection at Castelfusano. Another fine copy is in a private collection in New York.

AS

74. *Varvara Ivanovna Ladamirskaya*, 1800

Oil on canvas, 25 × 21¾ in. (63.5 × 55.2 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée/Le Brun/1800/a Moscou*

Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio, Museum Purchase, Derby Fund (1963.019)

This portrait, no. 735 in the *Exhibition of Historical Portraits from the 16th to the 18th Century* held in Saint Petersburg in 1870, was described as “Varvara Ivanovna Naryshkina, née Ladamirskaya, wife of Ivan Dmitrievich Naryshkin. Portrait from waist up in a costume resembling an Ancient Greek one. Painted by Madame Le Brun in Moscow” (see Lushev 1870, p. 51). The painting is, nevertheless, missing from Vigée Le Brun’s list of works produced in Russia. Varvara Ivanovna Ladamirskaya (1785–1840) was an illegitimate daughter of Countess Ekaterina Petrovna Stroganova, née Trubetskaya, and Ivan Nikolayevich Rimsky-Korsakov. Ladamirsky, the last name of an extinct Polish noble family, was granted to the children of Rimsky-Korsakov and Stroganova by Emperor Paul I.

Returning from Paris in 1779, Ekaterina Petrovna fell in love with Rimsky-Korsakov, former favorite of Catherine II. In October, the countess separated from her husband, Count Alexander Sergeevich Stroganov, and with her young daughter, Sofia, born in Paris in 1778, followed Rimsky-Korsakov to Moscow. Count Stroganov granted her a house in Moscow while he remained in Saint Petersburg with their elder son, Pavel. Sergei Kuznetsov, expert in Stroganov family history, notes that in 1779 the count purchased a house near the Tverskaya Barrier in Moscow, while a building on the other

side of the thoroughfare was bought by Rimsky-Korsakov. Kuznetsov also points out that few people were aware that the couple had separated (Kuznetsov 2012, pp. 23–25). In the *Souvenirs*, in the chapter devoted to her stay in Moscow (from mid-1800 through February 1801), Vigée Le Brun writes:

In one of my first expeditions I called on the Countess Strogonoff, the wife of my good old friend . . . I spoke to her of the embarrassment I was in on account of lodgings. She at once told me she had a pretty house that was not occupied, and begged me to accept it, but because she would hear nothing of my paying a rent, I positively declined the offer. Seeing that her efforts were in vain, she sent for her daughter, who was very pretty, and asked me to paint this young person’s portrait in payment of rent, to which I agreed with pleasure. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 55–56)

Vigée Le Brun does not provide the name of this daughter, and Sofia’s death has been placed in 1774 (Kuptsov 2005) as well as after 1801 (Kuznetsov 2012). However, following the publication of Jean Louis Voille’s 1787 portrait of Countess Sofia Alexandrovna Stroganova (collection of Count S. P. Zubov, Buenos Aires) by Rudneva in 2009, it can reasonably be assumed that this is instead

Varvara Ivanovna, Stroganova’s illegitimate daughter. She must have inherited her memorable appearance with large, almond-shaped, hazel eyes from her father, Ivan Nikolayevich Rimsky-Korsakov (Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 1, no. 175).

The fifteen-year-old Varvara is represented in Neoclassical dress. Draped over her gathered white blouse is a red stole embroidered with gold ornament that is tied under the breast in a manner reminiscent of a chiton, and fastened on the shoulder with a pin. A red hair band adorns the young woman’s Greek-style coiffure. In her *Souvenirs*, Vigée Le Brun describes a ball at the Moscow house of Marshal Saltykov’s wife and observes that all the women were dressed in classicizing tunics resembling the one she had suggested that Elizabeth Alexeyevna wear at the ball of Empress Catherine II (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 60)—presumably something like that which Varvara Ivanovna wears here. This image of Stroganova’s daughter is reminiscent of the portrait of the still very young Countess Kageneck, painted by the artist in Vienna in 1792 (see Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 240, no. 103, ill.).

A copy of the portrait belonging to the descendants of Yurii Borisovich Shmarov, Moscow, was attributed by Iu. B. Shmarov to Vigée Le Brun (see Rykova 2002).

AS



75. *Luise von Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of Prussia*, 1802

Oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 32⁷/₈ in. (100 × 83.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *Vigée Le Brun* / 1802

H.R.H. Georg Friedrich, Prince of Prussia, Hohenzollern Castle

In late July 1801, Vigée Le Brun, having left Saint Petersburg, arrived in Berlin, capital of the kingdom of Prussia, after an exhausting journey. Three days later, she was summoned by Queen Luise to the Potsdam Palace to do her portrait. The artist already had a long history with the ruling house of Hohenzollern: she had made three portraits of Queen Luise's uncle Prince Heinrich of Prussia (known as Prince Henry; fig. 47) in Paris in 1782. Vigée Le Brun was enchanted by her (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 106).

Luise Auguste Wilhelmine Amalie von Mecklenburg-Strelitz, born in the Altes Palais in Hannover on March 10, 1776, was the daughter of Karl Ludwig Friedrich, grand duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and Friederike Karoline Luise of Hesse-Darmstadt. On December 24, 1793, she married Friedrich Wilhelm III, king of Prussia, eldest son of Friedrich Wilhelm II and Princess Friederike Luise of Hesse-Darmstadt. The couple would have nine children, eight of whom survived. The queen's beauty, as attested by her many portraits in painting and sculpture, was equaled only by her keen intelligence. An avid reader, she was partial to Goethe, Schiller, Herder, and Gibbon. She was also a shrewd politician who exerted great influence over her husband.

She behaved toward Vigée Le Brun more like a thoughtful hostess than a patron, showering attention on her. According to the artist, the queen wanted to provide her with lodgings at the royal palace, but Vigée Le Brun pre-



Fig. 47. Vigée Le Brun. *Prince Henry of Prussia*, 1782. Oil on wood, oval, 28³/₄ × 23¹/₈ in. (73 × 58.5 cm). Private collection

ferred to rent a room at a modest hotel. The queen sent her coffee, provided her with a loge at the theater, invited her to visit the Pfaueninsel and its castle in a carriage supplied by the court, and gave her two bracelets the artist had admired, which she kept until her death and which were mentioned in her postmortem inventory. When Vigée Le Brun finally took leave of the queen in December 1801, she did not suspect that Luise would die in 1810 at a tragically young age.

Vigée Le Brun returned to Paris with the pastel studies she had done from life: of the two depicting Queen Luise, the one used to do the portrait presented here now belongs to the Staat-

liche Museen zu Berlin (and is housed at Schloss Charlottenburg). The other, which is in the collection of the countess of Sutherland at Dunrobin Castle, Scotland, was lithographed in about 1837, to be used as the frontispiece for the third volume of Vigée Le Brun's *Souvenirs*.

This half-length portrait of the queen, who wears a diadem bearing the king's effigy, has remained in the Hohenzollern family. It is not known when the artist completed it or sent it to Berlin. One thing is certain, however: in 1807 Alexandre Tardieu published a burin engraving of it, in which he shows the queen *en petit buste*, not as she appears in the painting, and in which the ocular has been omitted. Was the engraver inspired by a replica that subsequently disappeared? Or did he see and draw the original in Berlin?

Regarding an awards assembly on June 24 and 25, 1802, at Madame Campan's school in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, the writer Fanny Burney stated: "We were afterwards joined by the famous Paintress Madame de Brun whose picture of the unhappy & meritorious Queen of Prussia is one of the most interesting of Portraits, & was exhibited at the Grand Saloon of painting a few years afterwards" (Burney 1972–, vol. 5, pp. 374–75). Did the English novelist see the portrait at Vigée Le Brun's home in Paris at about the same time? If that is the case, it was completed near the end of June 1802 at the latest. And if it did appear at the Salon of 1805, it was not mentioned in the exhibition handbook or by the critics.

JB





76. *Princess Antoni Henryk Radziwill*, 1802

Oil on canvas, 31³/₄ × 25¹/₄ in. (80.5 × 64 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L.E. Vigée/Le Brun/1802*

Private collection

Friederike Dorothea Luise Philippine of Prussia was born on May 24, 1770, in the Ordenspalais, because her putative father, Prince August Ferdinand of Prussia, younger brother of Frederick the Great, had since 1763 been grand master of the Protestant Order of Saint John. Her mother, Anna Elisabeth Luise, was the daughter of the margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt and Sophia Dorothea of Prussia. According to certain historians, however, her real father was her mother's lover, the cartographer Friedrich Wilhelm Carl von Schmettau. Luise was the favorite of one of her uncles, Prince Heinrich of Prussia, a friend of Vigée Le Brun's, who painted his portrait several times in the early 1780s, when he was in Paris (fig. 47).

In Berlin on March 17, 1796, Luise married Prince Antoni Henryk Radziwill, duke of Nesvizh and Olyka. Born in Vilnius, the groom, a son of Prince Michal Hieronim Radziwill, belonged to an ancient and powerful Polish dynasty whose enormous fortune came from landholdings in Poland, Lithuania, Ruthenia, Prussia, Bohemia, and Russia. A talented musician (see Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 110), he studied at the University of Göttingen and entered the service of the king of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm II, his wife's cousin.

It was a happy marriage, and the couple would have five children, raised in the Catholic faith. The Radziwills entertained at their sumptuous Berlin palace. After the Battle of Jena in 1806, the family fled Berlin for Königsberg, where they frequented a circle fiercely opposed to Napoleon's hegemonic

policies, which included the princess of Courland, Baron Friedrich vom Stein, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and the great military strategist Carl von Clausewitz, personalities who would all play a role at the Congress of Vienna. In 1816, after her husband was elevated to the rank of grand duke of Posen (Poznan), Luise moved to that city. She died in Berlin on December 7, 1836.

During her more than three-month stay in Berlin, Vigée Le Brun made pastel studies from life of Luise Radziwill, her father, and one of her two brothers, Ludwig Ferdinand or Friedrich Wilhelm Heinrich August. Although the pastels depicting her father and brother have not been found, that of Princess Radziwill (fig. 48) reappeared on the art market (Christie's, London, April 14, 1992, no. 168).



On the list of her Prussian sitters at the end of volume II of her *Souvenirs*, Vigée Le Brun mentions these pastels with an imprecision that leads to confusion. In addition, in a handwritten note composed shortly before she left Prussia, the artist indicated: "Am taking with me the 3 portraits of the Ferdinand family, Mme the princess Radziville the prince august and prince Ferdinand" (letter from Mme Le Brun dated December 18, 1801 in the library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, Krakow).

In this composition, the beautiful sitter is presented in a painted trompe l'oeil stone oculus. Her hair is adorned with a golden arrow, a piece of jewelry found in other portraits of the time, for example in the striking likeness of Madeleine Pasteur painted by Antoine Jean Gros about 1796 (Musée du Louvre). The black velvet gown, with a Van Dyck collar, is girded with a red sash.

JB

Fig. 48. Vigée Le Brun, *Study for the Portrait of Princess Antoni Henryk Radziwill*, 1801. Pastel on paper, 23¹/₄ × 16⁷/₈ in. (59 × 42 cm). Location unknown

77. *Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky*, 1803–5

Oil on canvas, 34¼ × 26⅞ in. (87 × 67 cm)

The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (839)

In 1801, Alexander I conferred upon Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky (1767/1772–1825) the title of actual chamberlain. In the same year Baryatinsky entered the service of the College of Foreign Affairs and was attached to the mission in London, where he married an Englishwoman, Frances Dutton, daughter of James Naper Dutton, 1st Baron Sherborne. Prince Baryatinsky was named privy counselor in 1804. After his wife's death in 1807, their daughter, Elisabeth, was brought up in the home of Lord Sherborne. In 1808 the prince took a new posting as extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary to Munich, and in 1813 he married Countess Maria Fyodorovna von Keller, with whom he had seven children (four boys and three girls) and spent the rest of his life.

The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts holds a Vigée Le Brun pastel of the prince, which may date to the reign of

Paul I, as well as this painting dating to her stay in London, where she had gone after the signing of the Treaty of Amiens. In a list of works compiled by the artist, two portraits of Prince Baryatinsky are mentioned. The one belonging to the State Tretyakov Gallery (cat. 73) figures among works executed in Russia as “1 Le jeune prince Bariatinski. Grand buste.” The present painting is referred to simply as “1 Le prince Bariatinski” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 348–49). In London, the prince was a frequent visitor to Vigée Le Brun's studio, where her clients also included Lord Byron and the future King George IV.

The portrait presents Baryatinsky at half-length against an illuminated brown background. The sitter's beautifully modeled and illuminated face contrasts with his brown tailcoat and the dark background. The yellow waistcoat and the white cambric cloth tied around the prince's neck are painted with a broad

and relaxed brush, bringing the painting to life. Monochromatic backgrounds such as this first appear in Vigée Le Brun's work in the 1790s. The color composition here, as well as the distribution of light and shadow on the canvas, recalls the earth tones in portraits by Van Dyck and Rembrandt. In 1781 and again in 1805, Vigée Le Brun traveled to the Netherlands and Flanders, her second trip immediately following Baryatinsky's departure from England. The artist often returned to her early works, but in this portrait one senses new currents: the sitter's calm gaze, directed straight at the viewer, and the natural and intimate presentation. Vigée Le Brun clearly delights in his youthful beauty.

After the conclusion of his diplomatic career in 1812, Prince Baryatinsky settled on his estate in Maryino in Kursk Province and devoted himself to agriculture. The palace at Maryino housed the large art collection that he assembled.

AS





78. *Lady Ossulston*, 1806

Pastel on paper, laid down on canvas, 18 × 13¼ in. (45.8 × 33.6 cm)

Inscribed (on a handwritten label on the reverse of the frame in which the painting was sold in 2009): *Par mde Le Brun/Corisande de Gramont/Countess of Tankerville/Done in 1806*
Private collection

As a small child, Corisande Armandine Sophie Léonie Hélène de Gramont lived a life of wealth and privilege at Versailles. Born in 1782, she was the granddaughter of Yolande de Polastron, duchesse de Polignac (cats. 11, 41) and the daughter of Aglaé de Polignac (cat. 57) and Antoine Louis Marie de Gramont, duc de Guiche and later duc de Gramont. Because they were intimates of Marie Antoinette, they were all obliged to flee France immediately after the fall of the Bastille in 1789. Aglaé and her family eventually took refuge in Britain, where she died in a fire at Holyrood Castle, Edinburgh, in 1803. Refugees from the Revolution were often largely dependent on the charity of their acquaintances abroad, and thereafter Corisande was cared for by her grandmother's great friend, the fashionable and intrepid Georgiana,

duchess of Devonshire, wife of the 5th duke. It is likely that the Devonshires not only offered the girl their protection but also arranged her marriage, which took place at Devonshire House, London, on July 28, 1806. According to an inscription on an old paper label affixed to the reverse of the frame in which the pastel was sold, Corisande's portrait dates to that year, and the commission must have been occasioned by her wedding. However, either the sittings took place in 1805, before the artist's departure from London, or the pastel was painted from memory in Paris. A slender and apparently reticent young woman with fair skin, large dark eyes, and dark hair, Corisande de Gramont, Lady Ossulston, is dressed in white with a transparent gray gauze scarf, in modern Neoclassical style.

The penniless Corisande made a good marriage, as the thirty-year-old Charles Augustus Bennet, Lord Ossulston was heir to the 4th earl of Tankerville, whom he would succeed in 1822. From 1803 until his father's death, Lord Ossulston sat successively as a member of Parliament for Steyning, Knaresborough, and Berwick. He was named to the Privy Council in 1806 and in 1806–7 served as Treasurer of the Household. He died in 1859. The couple had a son, Charles, born in 1810, who became the 6th earl, and two daughters, one of whom, Lady Corisande Emma Bennet, married the 3rd earl of Malmesbury. Evidently the earl and countess of Tankerville lived a rather quiet and uneventful life at Mount Felix, the family estate at Walton-on-Thames, where the sitter died on January 23, 1865.

KB

79. *Caroline Murat, later Queen of Naples, and Her Daughter*, 1807

Oil on canvas, 85¼ × 56½ in. (216.5 × 143.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun 1807*

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 4712)

At the age of eighteen, Caroline Bonaparte (1782–1839) married Joachim Murat (1767–1815), her brother's aide-de-camp during the Italian campaign. The four children of the marriage included Letizia, who was born in Paris on April 26, 1802, and who appears with her mother in this portrait. The empire made the youngest of Napoleon's sisters an imperial princess. The battle of Austerlitz (1805), in which her husband distinguished himself, followed by the Treaty of Pressburg, resulting in Germany's reorganization, earned her the title of Grand Duchess of Berg and Clèves. The couple moved into the Palais de l'Élysée in Paris, where they led a life of luxury. Then, by imperial decree of July 15, 1808, Murat was named to the throne of Naples. For four years, Caroline ruled beside her husband—or sometimes by herself. After Waterloo, when Murat, in his absence, was dispossessed of his kingdom, he descended on Calabria at the command of 250 men, planning to take Naples back from Ferdinand and Maria Carolina, who had recently returned from their Sicilian exile. Captured and summarily convicted, he was executed on his rival's order. His widow initially retired to Trieste, taking the name "comtesse de Lipona," but was soon living in Austria, and finally in Florence, with the Neapolitan general Francesco Macdonald, whom she secretly married

in 1830. She died in the Tuscan capital in 1839 and was buried in a private chapel in the church of the Ognissanti.

But the empire was still young in 1806, when Napoleon decided to create the Gallery of Diana at the Palais des Tuileries, for which he commissioned this portrait. Dominique Vivant Denon, director of the Musée du Louvre, proposed a list of artists to replace François Gérard, who was overburdened with commissions at the time. The princess, though annoyed she could not have the court painter, chose Vigée Le Brun.

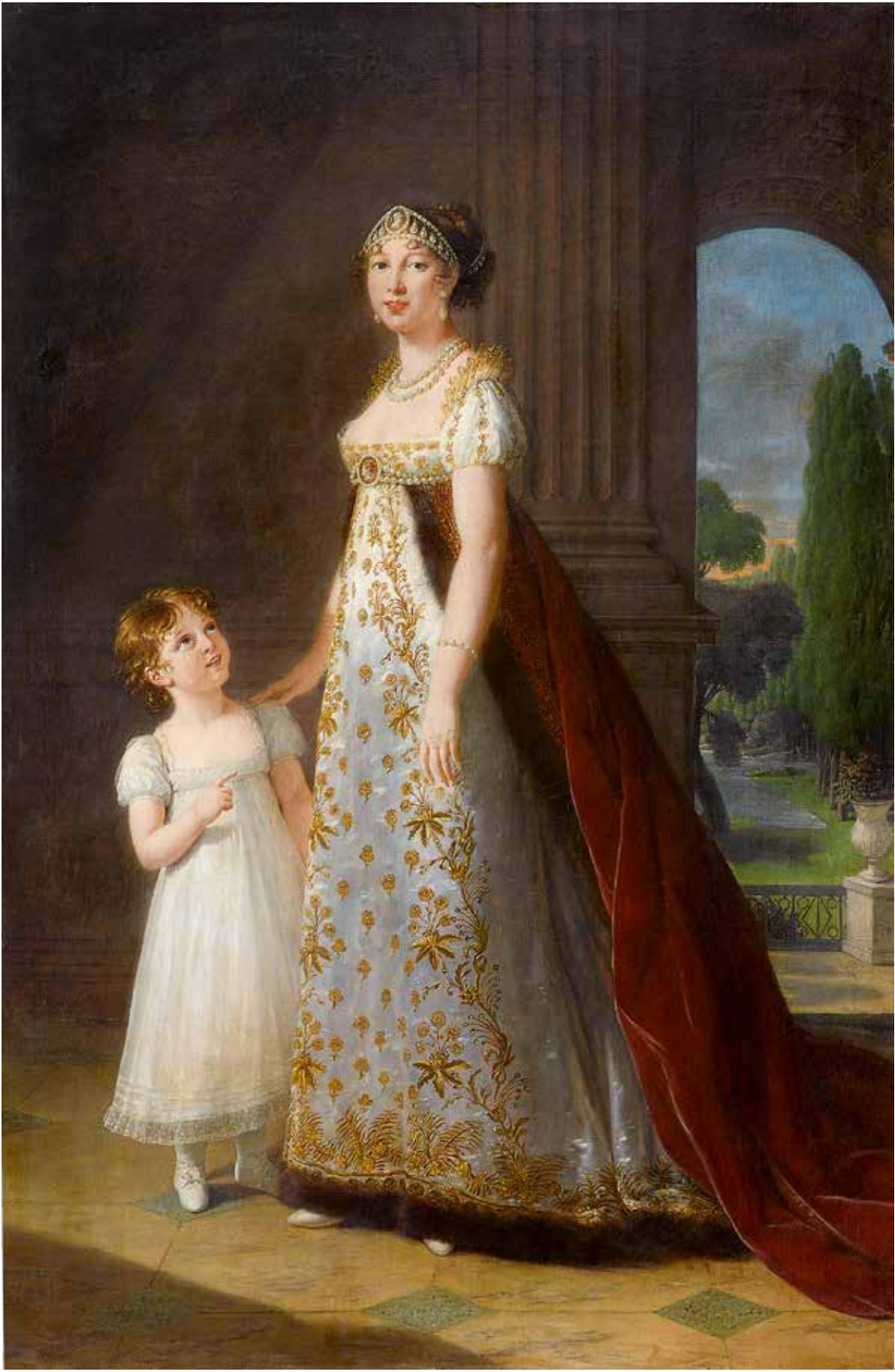
In her *Souvenirs* the artist reports on the posing sessions and parvenu caprices of the model, who constantly imposed changes in the composition:

It would be impossible for me to describe all the vexations, all the torments I had to endure while I was doing that portrait. First of all, at the initial session, I saw Mme Murat arriving with two lady's maids, who were supposed to fix her hair while I painted her. But when I observed that it would therefore be impossible for me to capture her features, she agreed to send her two maids away. Secondly, she was constantly missing the appointments she had made with me. . . . In addition, the interval between the sessions was so long that she had

sometimes changed her hairstyle . . . so that I was obliged to scrape off the hair I had painted around the face, just as I had to erase a headband of pearls and replace them with cameos. The same thing happened with the gowns. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 227–28)

In this *portrait d'apparat*, or state portrait, Caroline Murat is portrayed when Grand Duchess of Berg and Clèves, in her most elaborate finery. The richness of the embroidered gown, the diadem, and the belt adorned with pearls and cameos contrasts with the simple attire and naturalness of Letizia, who points toward her mother with a gesture that seems to combine admiration and tenderness. Both are standing in the foreground, with the architecture of the palace behind them; an opening provides a vista of the grounds. The influence of English portraiture, with which the artist was familiar, is evident in this compositional device. During her three-year stay in England, Vigée Le Brun spent time in the company of the great portraitist Sir Joshua Reynolds, the first director of the Royal Academy. In these early days of the new century, despite a less delicate palette, Vigée Le Brun's manner retained the grace and sweetness for which she was known.

GF





80. *Madame de Staël as Corinne at Cape Miseno*, 1807–9

Oil on canvas, 55 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 46 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (140 × 118 cm)
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Genève,
Gift of Madame Necker-de Saussure, 1841 (1841-0003)

In September 1807, Vigée Le Brun stayed for a week in Coppet at the invitation of Germaine de Staël (1766–1817). The daughter of Jacques Necker, minister of state to Louis XVI, Madame de Staël was a novelist and essayist as influential as she was famous. At the time, she had been banished from French territory by Napoleon and was constrained to live by Lake Geneva in the family château. The widow of Baron de Staël-Holstein, King Gustav III of Sweden's former ambassador to the court of France, she had had a turbulent love affair with the writer and liberal politician Benjamin Constant. Initially favorable to Revolutionary ideas, she would eventually defend the notion of a constitutional monarchy.

Before arriving in Coppet, Vigée Le Brun had taken care to read Madame de Staël's *Corinne, or Italy*, which had just been published. Upon receiving the portrait commission, the artist proposed to depict her hostess in the guise of the heroine, a poet in a wild quest for independence. By means of the novel, strewn with autobiographical allusions, Germaine de Staël sparked a debate about women's condition. The painting depicts the moment when Corinne becomes aware of her tragic fate, at a performance of improvisational poetry at Cape Miseno, near Naples. Corinne wants to be heard one last time by her lover, Oswald, Lord Nelvil, who would reject her in favor of her English half-sister, Lucile. "That desire led her to find in the very agitation of her soul the inspiration she needed" (book 13, chap. 4). Thus Vigée Le Brun exalts the quest for inspiration, a theme embodied by Giovanni

Paisiello at the beginning of the previous decade (cat. 49). The artist relates in her memoirs, "To maintain the expression I wanted to give to [Madame de Staël's] face, I asked her to recite tragic verses (to which I hardly listened), so occupied was I painting her with an inspired look" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 262–63). In the background, however, instead of Cape Miseno extending into the Bay of Naples, Germaine de Staël requested the Temple of Tivoli and the waterfalls, thereby inexplicably substituting the Roman countryside for the Gulf of Baiae.

The painting, begun in Switzerland, was not completed until 1809 in Paris and then sent to Coppet in July. Although she maintained the customary civilities in her correspondence with the artist, Germaine de Staël was clearly displeased

with her portrait. She even refused to let it appear at the Salon and gave up the idea of having it reproduced by the engraver Johann Gotthard von Müller, citing as her excuse financial difficulties after a "considerable legal trial." Her friend Prosper de Barante requested a version "toning down its rustic inspiration" (Barante 1929, p. 344 [letter dated July 27, 1809]). The portrait now held at Coppet, painted by Firmin Massot, seems instead to respond to the requirement of flattering the sitter (fig. 49). This literary source of inspiration later enjoyed renewed favor as a result of François Gérard's *Corinne at Cape Miseno* (1819–22, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon), which gives the heroine the features of the beautiful Madame Récamier and confers the grandness of history painting on the scene.

PL



Fig. 49. Firmin Massot (Swiss, 1766–1849), *Madame de Staël as Corinne*, ca. 1809. Oil on wood, 24 × 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (61 × 52 cm). Château de Coppet

81. *Festival of the Shepherds at Unspunnen, August 17, 1808*, 1808–9

Oil on canvas, 33¹/₈ × 44⁷/₈ in. (84 × 114 cm)

Gottfried Keller-Stiftung, Bundesamt für Kultur, Bern,
on deposit at the Kunstmuseum Bern (G 0843)

Vigée Le Brun visited Switzerland for the second time in the summer of 1808. Her participation in the Festival of the Shepherds at Unspunnen on August 17 would have been the high point of her stay. The purpose of the festivities was to foster in the various cantons a sense of belonging to the Swiss Confederation. The event, first celebrated in 1805, was largely inspired by the French Feast of Federation of July 14, 1790, commemorating the first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, which had exalted unity and love of country. The artist attended the festival of August 17 at Unspunnen in the company of many French guests, including Madame de Staël, who describes that day in her famous work *De l'Allemagne*.

It was owing to excursions in the Roman countryside in the early 1790s that Vigée Le Brun began to devote herself regularly to studies of nature, generally limited to pastels. The present painting, which belonged to Talleyrand, is rightly considered her most ambitious foray into the landscape genre. As

such, it has a special status in the artist's oeuvre and is a continuation of the Rousseauist idylls from the eighteenth century, which depicted popular celebrations in communion with nature.

The success enjoyed by these festivities gave rise to an extensive iconography in the graphic arts, as attested, for instance, by an engraving by Franz Niklaus König (Kunstmuseum Bern, from the Gottfried Keller-Stiftung), which reveals inaccuracies in Vigée Le Brun's rendering of the topography of the Bernese Oberland. For example, the mountain in the middle ground is a pure invention on the artist's part. Also note, on the right on top of the hillock, the miniaturized depictions of the alpenhorns, which are brandished like bugles, even though such instruments are between five and fourteen feet long.

More than the celebration itself, the artist chose to illustrate its end, specifically the moment when "the crowd dispersed. . . . After the Festival, Mme de Staël went for a walk with the duc

de Montmorency; as for me, I settled down in the field to paint the site and the assembled groups. The comte de Grammont held my pastel box" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 294–95). This letter, which the artist sent to the comtesse Vincent Potocka, describes the foreground: Madame de Staël, in the center and seen from behind, gives her arm to one of her admirers.

For the somewhat sketchy representation of the traditional costumes, Vigée Le Brun seems to have turned to the works of Franz Niklaus König (1765–1832). She confides in a letter to her friend that "his costumes of the Swiss are of a dual interest, because of the way he grouped them, which makes them superior to those that many others have done before him" (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 289–90). It is, then, essentially the arrangement of the figures that illustrates her debt to the works of the Bernese artist, as confirmed by a comparison with a number of the drawings in his *Der grosse König* album of 1801 (Kunstmuseum Bern).

PL



82. *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1808–9

Oil on canvas, 16¼ × 13 in. (41.3 × 33 cm)
Private collection

In 1808, during her second stay in Switzerland, Vigée Le Brun was able to attend the Festival of the Shepherds in Unspunnen on August 17, the source for her most ambitious landscape (cat. 81). The representation of traditional costumes and the arrangement of the figures are greatly indebted to the work of Franz Niklaus König, the Bernese painter and engraver at whose home she stayed for the occasion.

The painter recalled that “M. and Mme König did not want to accept a blessed thing for the two weeks I spent in their house: ‘We were so happy to have you!’ they told me” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 289 n. 1). She explained: “The only expression of gratitude I was able to get M. and Mme König to accept was my portrait in oil, which I sent to them from Paris.” This composition conveys that gratitude, and appeared on the list of *Portraits depuis mon retour à Paris* among the “4 Portraits

of me, for my friends” (ibid., p. 351). The work retains its original frame, with a cartouche inscribed: *Portrait de Madame L.E.V. Le Brun Peint par Elle-Memme Pour Mons^r F.N. Koenig son Ami en MDCCCIX* (Portrait of Madame L.E.V. Le Brun Painted by Herself for Monsieur F.N. Koenig her Friend in MDCCCIX). This final self-portrait thus anticipates in its way the German tradition of the *Freundschaftsbilder* (friendship picture), which, in the Nazarene movement, would be exemplified by Johann Friedrich Overbeck.

The painting recalls the one for the Imperial Academy of Arts (cat. 72), but here, eight years later, the artist takes a more intimate approach, eradicating any allegorical attributes. Represented in bust-length against a uniformly dark ground, the figure is turned to the right, while her face, in three-quarter profile, is directed toward the beholder. The light enters from the sitter’s proper

right, casting the far left side of her face into shadow, absorbed by the background.

The slightly open mouth, as if the sitter is about to speak, and the hint of a smile evoke the rhetoric at work in *Self-Portrait with Cerise Ribbons* (cat. 12). Nevertheless, the seductive relationship that the artist maintained with the beholder in the 1780s has changed now, later in life, to sympathy and esteem for the recipient. Her hair is pinned up, with a few stray, disarranged locks falling on her forehead. This Empire hairstyle is worn during the same decade by elegant ladies portrayed in François Gérard’s paintings. Favoring simplicity, the artist eschews jewelry and covers her shoulder with an unassuming red shawl, similar to the studio accessory that in earlier times had adorned a number of her illustrious models, from Prince Lubomirski (cat. 38) to Countess Golovina (cat. 70).

PL



83. *Baronne de Thellusson*, ca. 1814

Oil on canvas, 31½ × 24⅞ in. (80 × 63 cm)
Private collection

Jeanne Rosalie de Reghat, baronne de Thellusson (1770–1852) was the daughter of Marie Jauney and Pierre de Reghat, provincial war commissioner and owner of the château de Reghat at Maisons-Alfort, southeast of Paris. Her first husband, comte Honoré Théodore de Lascaris de Vintimille, whom she married in 1787, was lieutenant commander of the royal Italian regiment in France. When the Revolution broke out, Vintimille emigrated and his wife was able to obtain a divorce in 1793. This dissolution did not prevent her from being arrested the following year, tried, and sentenced to death. The fall of Robespierre and his accomplices saved her in extremis from the guillotine. The sitter was remarried in 1796 to Pierre Germain de Thellusson, baron de Coppet (1767–1831), with whom she had three daughters.

She is portrayed slightly more than half-length here, in an Empire dress of dark velvet, trimmed at the neckline, around the waist, and at the wrists with mink or sable. Her torso shown in left profile, she turns her head and looks intently toward the viewer with her gray eyes, as though surprised to be interrupted while writing. Her dark brown hair is arranged in curls falling over her forehead on either side of a central part, and the curls crowning the top of her head are held in place by an ornamental comb. Madame de Thellusson, being something of a woman of letters (*Recueil de poésies, par madame de T . . .*, published by Pillet in Paris in 1818, is commonly attributed to her), is seated at a table covered with a Prussian blue velvet cloth, on which are scattered the pages



of a letter or manuscript. In her right hand she holds a pen; in her left, a page she has been looking over. The neutral

ground is rendered with what is known as Davidian *frottis*.

JB

84. *Boy with a Flintlock Rifle*, 1817

Oil on canvas, 21³/₄ × 18¹/₄ in. (55.2 × 46.4 cm)

Signed and dated (on the barrel of the gun):

Vigée Le Brun 1817

National Museum of Women in the Arts,
Washington, D.C., Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina
Holladay (1986.343)

This boy with dark, curly cropped hair has not been identified. He could be eight or ten and so perhaps was born toward the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century. His open collar is of linen trimmed with lace, and he wears a gentleman's jacket or coat with large buttons. The sturdy, functional flintlock gun, which is of the period and has a short barrel, could have been his first weapon. The mottled background of the painting is lighter toward the bottom, suggesting the out of doors. Vigée Le Brun does not record any portraits of children painted after her return from England in 1805, and therefore the sitter for this 1817 portrait remains unidentified. She mentions only one hunting portrait, or *portrait en chasseur*, which was painted during her stay there and represented an adult member of the Biron de Courlande family. Although in 1635 Don Balthasar Carlos of Spain sat for Velázquez wearing hunting costume (Museo del Prado, Madrid), images of children with firearms are quite rare.

Children occupied a special place in the late eighteenth-century return to nature, and their portraits reflect a growing interest not only in their inherent qualities but also in their upbringing. Vigée Le Brun's daughter Julie when very young may have inspired her to paint the magnificent Raphaelesque family portraits of 1786 and 1789 (Musée du Louvre), and many of the artist's finest pictures of children, by themselves or with their



mothers, date to the late 1780s. In addition to painting Marie Antoinette with her sons and daughter (cat. 32), Vigée Le Brun took sittings for portraits of younger members of the royal families of Naples and Russia. As she painted more women than men, so she also painted many girls and few boys. Her

portrait of the heir to the throne of Naples (Museo di Capodimonte, Naples) shows him at twelve: he, too, is dressed as an adult and with a similar wide, open lace collar.

This painting formed part of the founding gift in 1986 to the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

KB

85. *Tatyana Borisovna Potemkina*, 1820

Oil on canvas, 41³/₄ × 31⁷/₈ in. (106 × 81 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): . . . *Brun* / 1820
Private collection

This portrait, recently brought to light, was known only from a list the artist drew up of individuals she portrayed after her return to Paris: “The young Princess Potemski, to the knees” (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 351). In fact, the model is Madame Potemkina, born Tatyana Borisovna Golitsyna (1797–1869), daughter of Prince Boris Andreyevich Golitsyn and his wife, Anna Alexandrovna, “Princess Bauris Galitzin,” painted by the artist about 1797 (cat. 67).

In 1815 Tatyana Borisovna married Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Mikhailovich Potemkin, son of Mikhail Sergeyevich Potemkin and Tatyana Vasilievna Engelhardt (cat. 64). Suffering from lung disease, the young woman left her country on doctors’ orders to seek treatment abroad. She was accompanied by her husband and by her governess, Marie Hyacinthe Albertine de Noiseville. The travelers spent time in England,

France, Switzerland, and Italy. It was during that trip that Tatyana Borisovna posed for Vigée Le Brun, who already knew Madame de Noiseville well, as she was apparently the illegitimate daughter of Vigée Le Brun’s great friend and patron the comte de Vaudreuil (cat. 21) and they had met again in Russia.

The genesis of this work is supported by a fascinating document: a letter that the Irish novelist Maria Edgeworth sent to family members on July 7, 1820 (Colvin 1979, p. 181). Passing through Paris with two of her half-sisters, Edgeworth recounted a visit to Vigée Le Brun’s apartment:

Madame Lebrun is painting a beautiful portrait of the Princess Potemkin and she has been so good as to come in from the country and stay for a day in Paris expressly to show it to us together with her other pictures.

Fanny [the writer’s half-sister] appreciated them very much, especially that of Lady Hamilton as a bacchante. . . .

For this Romantically inspired likeness, Vigée Le Brun recalled a Neoclassical formula she had used successfully in certain works produced in Italy, Austria, and Russia between 1791 and 1800 (in particular cat. 61). Framed by a natural setting, Tatyana, dressed in an ultramarine silk or satin dress, is comfortably seated on a grassy mound beside a waterfall. Her head tilting slightly, a smile on her lips, she seems to be gazing directly at the beholder.

With her health restored, Tatyana returned to Saint Petersburg, where she devoted herself to charitable work until the end of her life. She died in Berlin on July 6, 1869, and was interred in the Golitsyn crypt of the Coastal Monastery Church of Saint Sergius at Strelna.

JB



86. *Count Emmanuel Nikolayevich Tolstoy*, 1823

Oil on canvas, 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (92.5 × 72.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / 1823*

Paris, Salon, 1824, no. 1057

Private collection

Emmanuel Nikolayevich (1802–1825) was the son of Count Nikolai Alexandrovich Tolstoy—grand marshal of the imperial court under Alexander I—and Countess Anna Ivanovna Tolstaya (cat. 61). Nicknamed “Lily,” he grew up in Saint Petersburg in the company of an older sister and brother, Ekaterina Nikolayevna and Alexander Nikolayevich. With the Bourbon Restoration, he followed his mother to Paris, where they both died the same year; he was barely twenty-three.

This late work bears witness to the long-lasting bonds Vigée Le Brun cultivated with the families of her patrons. Her relationships with members of the Russian aristocracy who had settled in London or Paris sometimes endured more than a generation. Hence, twenty-seven years after painting Anna Ivanovna Tolstaya in Saint Petersburg, the portraitist depicted the beautiful countess’s younger son. Sensitive to the sitter’s resemblance to his mother, she seems to have focused particularly on the young man’s shapely mouth, the touching resurgence of a hereditary trait, thus pointing to a kind of dynastic continuity. Notably, Vigée Le Brun also had done several portrait busts of the count’s uncle, Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky (cats. 73, 77).

Two years before he died, Emmanuel Nikolayevich is portrayed half-length, his torso in three-quarter profile to the left, his head facing the beholder, his eyes turned to his right. The figure is set against a neutral ground bifurcated by light. That technique, of which the painter had made good use in the portrait of Countess Golovina about twenty-three years earlier (cat. 70), gives the sitter’s posture a lithe and expansive animation. He is dressed in a loose-fitting black mantle enhanced by a vibrant red velvet stole. The figure’s pose as well as the composition’s color scheme recalls Ingres’s portrait of Count Guriev, done two years earlier (fig. 50). Furthermore, the attention to volume, combined with the schematization of form, suggests Vigée Le Brun’s keen observation of works by the master of Montauban.

This portrait appeared at the Salon of 1824 with more than seven other submissions, including the portrait of the duchesse de Berry (cat. 87), and “several” others exhibited under the same number. That year, Delacroix displayed *The Massacre at Chios* (Musée du Louvre), a manifesto that signaled a new age and the advent of the Romantic era as well as the long swan song of Vigée Le Brun’s career.

PL



Fig. 50. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (French, 1780–1867). *Count Nikolay Guriev*, 1821. Oil on canvas, 42 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 33 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (107 × 86 cm). The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 5678)





87. *The Duchesse de Berry in a Blue Velvet Dress*, 1824

Oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 29¹/₂ in. (100 × 75 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L. E. Vigée/Le Brun/ . . . 4*

Paris, Salon, 1824, no. 1055

Private collection

Diverted by the breaking wave of Romanticism, for which the Salon of 1824 marked a historic date, the press passed over the submissions of “Mme Lebrun” in silence, both her portrait of the comte de Coëtlosquet (see Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 320, no. 150, ill.) and that of Marie-Caroline, duchesse de Berry (1798–1870). Nonetheless, the present painting was a notable commission with obvious political resonance, so haunted was the Restoration by the memory of the brutal deaths of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. In appealing to Vigée Le Brun, the Crown rekindled the glory of the ancien régime. Moreover, this commission came on the heels of other significant works. At the Salon of 1822, the illustrious François Gérard had exhibited his large court portrait of Marie-Caroline accompanied by her daughter and her son, the duc de Bordeaux, born in 1820 (Château de Versailles). At the time, it was important to remind the public that the duchess had given birth to the Bourbon heir, thus averting a dynastic catastrophe. Maria Carolina Ferdinanda Luisa di Napoli e di Sicilia, princesse de Bourbon-Naples, was born in Caserta, near Naples. In 1816, when she was seventeen, she married the second son of the future Charles X, Charles-Ferdinand d’Artois, duc de Berry. Destined for the throne, he would be assassinated two years later by Louis Pierre Louvel, a fanatic convinced

that the house of Bourbon must be extinguished. The birth of the duc de Berry’s posthumous son, Henri, duc de Bordeaux, later comte de Chambord, had dashed the hopes of the liberal camp and increased the aura acquired by the mother of this “miracle child.”

Marie-Caroline arrived in France determined to play a decisive role in fashion, literature, and the arts. The wide-ranging collection of books and paintings that she assembled with her husband made her something of a tastemaker. The portrait suggests the exaltation of the young princess, who identified with Sir Walter Scott’s heroines.

Vigée Le Brun, who had been using staging for effect since 1789, chose a threatening sky and a muslin scarf swept away by the winds of adventure, which would drive the duchess on her mad mission to restore the Bourbons (in the form of her son Henri, with herself as regent) to the French throne in 1832. Knowing that Marie-Caroline had launched the fashion for pointed bodices (known as *bodices à la châtelaine*) in 1820, Vigée Le Brun presented her in a troubadour-style dress. Although the least sympathetic contemporary witnesses agreed on the princess’s vitality, they were not afraid to mention her less than graceful features. Of her protruding eyes, overly long face, and very small mouth—Thomas Lawrence was the only other artist able to idealize them—there

remains almost nothing. Granted, Vigée Le Brun’s manner was beginning to lose its suppleness and smoothness, but the picture is not unworthy of the portraitist of Marie Antoinette.

The sittings, to which the duchess submitted with youthful ardor, oblivious to proper etiquette, are mentioned in the painter’s *Souvenirs*:

When the duchess granted me a session, I became very irritated with the large number of people who came by to visit. She realized this and was good enough to say: “Why didn’t you ask me to pose in your atelier?” Which she did for the last two sessions. I admit I could not find myself the object of such sweet kindness without comparing the hours I devoted to that amiable princess to the sad hours Mme Murat had made me spend. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 327–28) (cat. 79)

The account given in the *Souvenirs* also tells us that Vigée Le Brun made two portraits of the duchesse de Berry: “In one, she is dressed in a red velvet gown, in the other, a blue velvet gown. I don’t know what happened to those portraits” (Vigée Le Brun, vol. 3, p. 328). Actually, both were part of the inheritance of the children from the princess’s second marriage, to Ettore Carlo Lucchesi Palli, in 1833.

SG

88. Augustin Pajou (French, 1730–1809)

Madame Vigée Le Brun, 1783

Terracotta, H. 21⁷/₈ in. (55.5 cm); H. with base 27³/₄ in. (70.5 cm); W. 17¹/₂ in. (44.5 cm); D. 8¹/₄ in. (21 cm)

Signed and dated (on the reverse): *Pajou f. 1783*

Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 218

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Sculptures (RF 2909)

Augustin Pajou joined the workshop of Jean Baptiste II Lemoyne at the age of fourteen. In 1748 he won the Prix de Rome and was enrolled at the Ecole royale des élèves protégés. He arrived at the Académie de France in Rome in 1752 and remained there for four years. Upon his return to France, he was admitted to the Académie royale in 1760. Pajou made portraits in terracotta, marble, and bronze, as well as statues and groups with historical and religious subjects. He produced bas-reliefs and heads to decorate the first loges of the new Opéra at the Château de Versailles, which was inaugurated to celebrate the marriage of the dauphin, Louis Auguste, to Marie Antoinette of Austria. At the Salon of 1769, Pajou exhibited *Allegory of Queen Marie Leszczyńska*, then executed busts in terracotta and marble of the young Louis XVI. Between 1770 and 1773, he sculpted a marble bust of the comtesse

Du Barry, which had an enchanting beauty but was rather cold in its classicism. During the Revolution, Pajou was named a member of the commission charged with the conservation of public monuments. His statues *Blaise Pascal* and *Psyche abandonnée* are at the Musée du Louvre, and the Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle at the Jardin des Plantes in Paris possesses the magisterial statue of the naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon.

Vigée Le Brun went through a metamorphosis after her adolescent years, as evidenced by her self-portraits from the 1780s. Pajou sent this bust to the Salon of 1783, when she was at a high point of her career. No one has discussed the terracotta bust better than Guilhem Scherf:

At the beginning of the 1770s, he was just starting out as a portraitist of women and was attentive to the

externals—to the minute, almost obsessive description of locks of hair, of each ringlet. With *Mme Vigée-Le Brun*, he freed himself from such constraints. She preferred to wear simple, unaffected outfits and successfully endeavored to have her sitters do the same. Pajou entered into a similar quest for simplicity: the painter's hair is pulled back informally, treated as a solid mass. The drapery is typical of Pajou: numerous folds are formed by the ribbon that bunches and crumples the fabric between the breasts; they are rendered by an abundance of small puckers and hollows that give life to the surface, a permanent element of Pajou's aesthetics. (Draper and Scherf 1997, p. 257)

Without question, Pajou used this bust to make a now-lost marble version, which was exhibited at the Salon of 1785.

JB





89. Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun (French, 1748–1813)

Self-Portrait, 1795

Oil on canvas, 51½ × 39 in. (131 × 99 cm)

Inscribed (on title page of volume on which sitter leans): . . . *Par J.B. LEB* . . . /

TOME SECO . . . / 179 . . .

Private collection

The Salon of 1795, held a year after Robespierre's death, provided a condensed image of the aspirations of French society. It made a large place for paintings of mourning—the pinnacle in that respect being François Gérard's *Belisarius* (J. Paul Getty Museum)—and for portraits of notables reconciled to the happiness of being alive and the desire to move forward. Jacques Louis David, eager to have his Revolutionary excesses forgotten, hoped that his dashing portraits of the Sériziats (Musée du Louvre) would provide him with safe conduct in the new times. Conversely, Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun (1748–1813; fig. 51), who could only foresee a better fate as a result of the political break, exhibited his beautiful *Self-Portrait*, which is free of republican austerity. A page had been turned. In addition to the negative effects of the Revolution on the art market, of which he had become king over the course of twenty years, Vigée Le Brun's husband had faced various difficulties since 1792. His attempts to have his wife's name removed from the list of émigrés had failed, and he had been obliged to seek a divorce, which he obtained on June 3, 1794.

The divorce put an end to an eighteen-year union that, though emotionally unsatisfying and expensive, was, all in all, advantageous to Vigée Le Brun's career. She describes her husband as of average height and well formed; always elegantly dressed, he had charm and knew how to use it. Vigée Le Brun made at least one portrait of her husband,



Fig. 51. Louis Léopold Boilly (French, 1761–1845). *Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun*, ca. 1790. Black chalk and stumping with white chalk on paper, 7/8 × 4/5 in. (2.2 × 2.1 cm). Private collection

lending his features to the guitarist in the painting titled *Spanish Concert* of 1777 (see Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 122, no. 27, ill.); he did not have to strain his talents to play the charmer.

His “Revolutionary years” should not be cast in too negative a light. Hyperactive, he did not neglect either the art trade or his role as personal adviser to collectors, two functions at which he had shone under Louis XVI. The opening of the Louvre to the public and the Republic's arts policy roused him to take a stand as a concerned citizen. In the foreground of the *Self-Portrait* of 1795 is the brochure Le Brun had published in January 1793: *Observations sur le Muséum National*, in which he confirmed his desire to be associated with the fate of the Louvre. He argued for its pedagogical role and for the need to appoint real experts. With the support of David, he had been laying siege to the Ministry of the Interior in an attempt

to obtain a professional position in the museum, which was in need of reform. At this point Le Brun could believe in his chances. Hence the *Self-Portrait* depicts a powdered notable and scholar of universal knowledge, consistent with the social valorization of the art of collecting, which the dealer Le Brun, more than others, had served. Nothing alludes directly to the “shopkeeper” or “second-hand goods dealer,” as he was called by his enemies.

Beyond its inclusion of an Egyptian figure, metaphor for boundless knowledge and wisdom, the composition belongs to the tradition of the academic portrait: the insistent reference to Largillière's portrait of Charles Le Brun (1683–86, Musée du Louvre), a relative of the subject, makes sense in several respects. Le Brun's right hand rests on the second of three volumes of *Galerie des peintres flamands, hollandais et allemands*, his magnum opus as the great connoisseur of the northern schools, while with his left hand he firmly clasps a palette and brushes, attracting our notice to the canvas on his easel. Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun had been trained by Boucher and Deshayes during Louis XV's reign, before giving up his career in favor of the art market. In 1795, when his former wife had just moved to Russia for six years, did he harbor the ambition to join the new Institut de France? A letter written by him, dated 25 Brumaire, year XI, reminds us that, under the Consulate, he had not given up his status as a creator.

SG



90. Alexis-Joseph Pérignon (French, 1806–1882)

Marie Antoinette Gathering the Brushes of Madame Vigée Le Brun, 1784, ca. 1859

Oil on canvas, 53¹/₈ × 39¹/₄ in. (134.9 × 99.7 cm)

Signed (lower right): *Pérignon*

Paris, Salon, 1859, no. 2382

New Orleans Museum of Art, Gift of Joseph Baillio (2010.150)

Alexis-Joseph Pérignon, a native of Paris, was trained in the studio of his father, Alexis Nicolas le Jeune, a pupil of Anne Louis Girodet. Pérignon also studied with the history and portrait painter Antoine Jean Gros. He lived in Saint Petersburg between 1852 and 1853 and was director of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Dijon and curator of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in that city. He exhibited his work at the Salon from 1834 until 1881 and under the Second Empire was recognized as a distinguished history, genre, and portrait painter.

Pérignon was inspired by a passage in Vigée Le Brun's *Souvenirs* concerning an event that must have occurred in 1784, during her second pregnancy:

One day I happened to miss the appointment [Marie Antoinette] had given me for a sitting; I had suddenly become unwell. The next day I hastened to Versailles to offer my excuses. The Queen was not expecting me; she had had her horses harnessed to go out driving, and her carriage was the first thing I saw on entering the palace yard. I nevertheless went upstairs to speak with the chamberlains on duty. One of them, M. Campan, received me with a stiff and haughty manner, and bellowed at me in his stentorian voice, "It was yesterday, madame, that Her Majesty expected you, and

I am very sure she is going out driving, and I am very sure she will give you no sitting to-day!" Upon my reply that I had simply come to take Her Majesty's orders for another day, he went to the Queen, who at once had me conducted to her room. She was finishing her toilette, and was holding a book in her hand, hearing her daughter repeat a lesson. My heart was beating violently, for I knew that I was in the wrong. But the Queen looked up at me and said most amiably, "I was waiting for you all the morning yesterday; what happened to you?" "I am sorry to say, Your Majesty," I replied, "I was so ill that I was unable to comply with Your Majesty's orders. I am here to receive others, and then I will immediately withdraw." "No, no! Do not go!" exclaimed the Queen. "I do not want you to have made your journey for nothing!" She canceled the order for her carriage and gave me a sitting. I remember that, in my confusion and my eagerness to make a fitting response to her kind words, I opened my paint-box so excitedly that I spilled my brushes on the floor. I stooped down to pick them up. "Never mind, never mind," said the Queen, and despite my protests she insisted on gathering them all up herself. (Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 68–70)

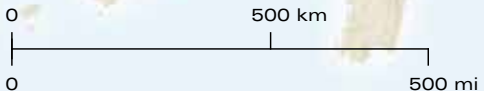
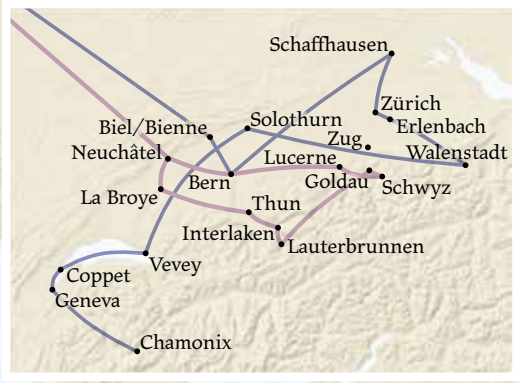
Pérignon re-creates the scene, recalling Pliny, and the tale of Emperor Charles V picking up the fallen paintbrush of his portraitist Titian, as recounted by Carlo Ridolfi.

There is an anachronism in the composition. Behind the kneeling Marie Antoinette, who prevents the pregnant artist from picking up the brushes and the paint box that have fallen off the velvet-covered stool, he represents the full-length, seated portrait of her in a blue velvet dress (cat. 37), which was actually painted in 1788—four years later. In all likelihood, the portrait she was working on at Versailles in 1784 was *Marie Antoinette with a Book* (fig. 3).

Pérignon's painting, featured in the Salon of 1859 at the Palais des Champs-Élysées, would have had a particular fascination for the Spanish-born consort of Napoleon III, Empress Eugénie, who actually modeled herself on the queen, as can be seen in The Metropolitan Museum of Art's 1854 portrait of her standing in a garden. Pérignon, who at the time was living both in Dijon and in a house in the rue de Penthièvre in Paris, contributed that year fourteen paintings to the official exhibition, two history compositions—one a biblical subject (a *Holy Family* that was purchased by the imperial government) and the other an eighteenth-century subject (the present work)—along with twelve portraits whose sitters were identified only with their initials.

JB

Travels of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun



Chronology of the Life of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun

- 1750 Marriage in Paris of the portraitist Louis Vigée (1715–1767), a member of the Académie de Saint-Luc, and Jeanne Maissin (1728–1800; cat. 2).
- 1755 Their daughter, Elisabeth Louise Vigée, is born in Paris in the rue Coquillière on April 16.
- 1758 Her brother, Louis Jean Baptiste Etienne (cat. 1), is born on December 2 in the rue Coq Héron.
- 1760 She is enrolled in the boarding school of the couvent de la Trinité, faubourg Saint-Antoine.
- 1766 Mademoiselle Vigée returns home and attends drawing classes given by her father in his studio.
- 1767 Louis Vigée dies on May 9 at home in the rue de Cléry. In December, his widow contracts to marry the jeweler Jacques François Le Sèvre (cat. 3). Thereafter the family moves to Le Sèvre's lodgings above his shop in the rue Saint-Honoré facing the Palais Royal. Mademoiselle Vigée visits public and private art collections, chaperoned by her mother.
- 1770s She establishes herself as a portrait painter.
- 1774 Her studio is seized by officers of the court of the Châtelet because she is painting professionally without a license, and consequently she seeks admission to the Académie de Saint-Luc. Before her induction she is permitted to exhibit in the Salon of the guild (cat. 4). About this time her family leases an apartment in the Hôtel de Lubert in the rue de Cléry, then occupied by the painter and art dealer Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun (1748–1813; cat. 89), who allows her to copy paintings from his stock.
- 1776 On January 11, Elisabeth Louise Vigée marries Le Brun. Her first royal commission is for portraits of Louis XVI's brother, the comte de Provence (lost).
- 1778 Le Brun and his wife contract to purchase the Hôtel de Lubert. Vigée Le Brun paints her first portrait from life of Marie Antoinette (cat. 7).
- 1780 The couple's daughter, Jeanne Julie Louise Le Brun (cats. 35, 71), is born on February 12.
- 1781 She accompanies her husband to Holland and Flanders and in Antwerp, having admired Rubens's *Presumed Portrait of Susanna Lunden (The Straw Hat)*, in the Van Havre collection (now in the National Gallery, London) (see fig. 34), is inspired to paint her *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (fig. 4).
- 1781–83 She exhibits at the Salon de la Correspondance (see cat. 6).
- 1783 Owing to the direct intervention of the queen, on May 31 the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture accords Vigée Le Brun full membership. As her reception piece, she offers *Peace Bringing Back Abundance* (cat. 9). In August she exhibits at the Salon of the Académie royale (cats. 9, 16–18).
- 1784 Her second child dies in infancy. Her brother Etienne marries Suzanne Rivière (cat. 30).
- 1785 She sends paintings to the Salon (cats. 25–29). The reviews are for the most part enthusiastic. She receives an official commission for *Marie Antoinette and Her Children* (cat. 32).
- 1786 She becomes the target of a fierce defamation campaign in the press. Construction of the Hôtel Le Brun in the rue du Gros Chenet.
- 1787 She participates in the Salon (cats. 32–35) and her entries are highly praised.
- 1788 She gives her famous *souper grec* (Greek supper), probably in her apartment in the Hôtel Le Brun.
- 1789 She exhibits at the Salon to critical acclaim (cat. 38). The night of October 6, after the invasion of Versailles by Paris mobs, she leaves for Italy with her daughter and a governess. She stops at Lyon, Turin, Parma, Bologna (where she is elected a member of the academy), and Florence. In mid-November she takes up temporary residence at the Académie de France in Rome.
- 1790 For the grand-ducal collection at the Uffizi in Florence, Vigée Le Brun paints a self-portrait (cat. 42) and exhibits it in Rome with huge success. She is elected a member of the Accademia di San Luca, and as her diploma piece paints another self-portrait (still in situ). At Tivoli, she begins the practice of making pastel landscape sketches. In April, she leaves for Naples and receives a number of important commissions, including a request for portraits of the children of Queen Maria Carolina (cat. 44). During the summer she returns to Rome but leaves again for Naples in December to resume work on portrait commissions.
- 1791 By March, she is once again in Rome (cats. 45, 46) but will soon embark upon a third trip to Naples. In September she exhibits her portrait of Paisiello (cat. 49) at the Paris Salon, now open to all.
- 1792 On April 14, she leaves Rome, traveling to Spoleto, Foligno, Florence, Siena, Parma, Mantua, Venice (cat. 52), Verona, and Turin (cat. 51) (where she is joined by Auguste Rivière, her sister-in-law's brother, an artist and sometime diplomat; he will be her traveling companion for nine years and will copy many of her portraits on a small scale). In Paris, her name is added to the list of émigrés, and as a consequence she loses her rights as a French citizen. The Le Brun properties are scheduled to be confiscated. Le Brun requests that

- the Assemblée Législative remove his wife's name from the list, but his petition is denied. In Milan the Austrian ambassador convinces her to go to Vienna, where she rents a house on the outskirts before moving into the heart of the city.
- 1793 Le Brun publishes a defense of his wife's conduct, the *Précis historique de la vie de la citoyenne Lebrun, peintre*. He is arrested and briefly imprisoned, and a month later, Etienne Vigée is incarcerated. In Vienna, Vigée Le Brun is lavishly patronized by the Austrian, Russian, and Polish nobility (cats. 53–57).
- 1794 To protect himself and his property, Le Brun sues for divorce on the grounds of desertion. On June 3 a decree of divorce is issued.
- 1795 On April 19, Vigée Le Brun leaves Vienna for Russia. She rents an apartment near the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg. Patronized by the imperial family and the local and foreign nobility, she will amass a considerable fortune there (see, for example, cats. 58–63).
- 1798 She sends two paintings to the Paris Salon.
- 1799 In Paris, at a session of the Directoire, a deputation presents a petition in her favor signed by 255 artists, writers, and scientists. In Saint Petersburg, Julie Le Brun marries Gaëtan Nigris.
- 1800 In early April Vigée Le Brun's mother dies in the village of Neuilly. On June 5, her name is struck from the list of émigrés. On June 16, she is received by the Imperial Academy of Arts, Saint Petersburg. She departs for Moscow in mid-October (cat. 74).
- 1801 She returns to Saint Petersburg in the spring, soon followed by Rivière, then leaves for Germany. In Berlin she is patronized by the Hohenzollern family (cats. 75, 76) and becomes a member of the Preussische Akademie der Künste.
- 1802 She arrives in Paris on January 18 to reside in the Hôtel Le Brun and later rents a country house near Meudon. At the Salon, she exhibits a portrait of the former king of Poland (cat. 63). She demands that Le Brun refund her dowry.
- 1803 In the spring, she travels to London, where she is often ill at ease. Later, the peace treaty between England and France is broken and she is unable to return to Paris.
- 1804 Julie Nigris returns to Paris with her husband.
- 1805 In London, the portraitist John Hoppner publishes a vicious indictment of Vigée Le Brun and her work. That summer she returns to Paris and to the Hôtel Le Brun.
- 1806 A portrait of Napoleon's sister, Caroline Murat (cat. 79), exhibited at the Salon of 1807, is the only commission she receives from the imperial government.
- 1807 In July, she visits Switzerland and stays with Germaine de Staël at Coppet (cat. 80). In November she is made an honorary member of the Société des Arts de Genève.
- 1808 In the summer, she makes a second trip to Switzerland and on August 17 attends the Festival of the Shepherds at Unspunnen with Madame de Staël (cat. 81).
- 1809 She purchases a country house in the village of Louveciennes, where she resides with her niece Caroline Vigée and the latter's husband, Louis Rivière, who have just married.
- 1813 Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun dies of cancer on August 7.
- 1814 After the abdication of Napoleon, Vigée Le Brun's house in Louveciennes is invaded by Prussian soldiers.
- 1817 She exhibits two works (cat. 32) at the Salon, one of which is a history painting begun in Vienna, *Amphion Playing the Lyre* (location unknown).
- 1819 Julie Nigris, having contracted syphilis and in dire need, dies in Paris.
- 1820 Etienne Vigée dies an alcoholic. His daughter, Caroline Rivière, becomes Vigée Le Brun's principal heir. The artist travels to Bordeaux.
- 1824 She participates at the Salon (cats. 86, 87).
- 1828 She paints from memory for King Charles X a portrait of the duc de Rivière (private collection), the purchaser of the *Venus de Milo* (Musée du Louvre).
- 1829 In December, she writes a letter about her life to Princess Natalya Ivanovna Kurakina.
- 1835 With the help of, among others, her nieces Caroline Rivière and Eugénie Tripiet Le Franc, she publishes the first volume of her *Souvenirs* on the presses of Hippolyte Fournier. She signs a contract to publish the second and third volumes, which appear in 1837.
- 1842 Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun dies in Paris at 99 rue Saint Lazare on March 30. Her funeral is held in the Paris church of Saint-Louis-d'Antin, and she is buried in the old cemetery of Louveciennes.

CHECKLIST

Cat. 1. *Etienne Vigée, 1773*

Oil on canvas, 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (61.6 × 50.5 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{lle} Vigée / 1773*
Saint Louis Art Museum, Museum Purchase, 1940
(3:1940)

PROVENANCE: probably by descent at the Château d'Aigues-Vives, near Faverolles-sur-Cher, Loir-et-Cher; [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, 1936–40]; to Saint Louis Art Museum (from 1940).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: New York 1958, no. 34, ill.; Baillio 1982a, no. 2, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 112, 348, no. 19 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 317; Musick 1941, pp. 54–55, ill.; St. Louis 1953, p. 86; Stockho 1981, p. 28; Baillio 1982b, pp. 13, 15, fig. 2; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 27–28, 32–33, 117–18, fig. 3.

Cat. 2. *Madame Jacques François Le Sèvre, the Artist's Mother, ca. 1774–78*

Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (65 × 54 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: the artist (until d. 1842; posthumous inv., April 14, 1842 ff., as *Un portrait de forme ovale qui représente la mère de la défunte costume pelisse de satin blanc avec fourrure dans son cadre de bois doré*); her niece, Caroline Rivière (1842–d. 1864); Comtesse de la Ferronnays (her sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 12, 1897, no. 18, as *L. de Lostanges, Marquise de la Ferronnays*); sale, Sotheby's, Monaco, June 22, 1985, no. 179, ill.; sale, Christie's, New York, January 27, 2000, no. 68; [Stair Sainty Mathiessen, New York]; Dr. and Mrs. Ira Kaufman, New York; sale, Christie's, New York, January 15, 2012, no. 139, ill., to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Wintermute 1996, pp. 56–57, 99, pl. 15; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 111, 348, no. 18 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Tripier Le Franc 1828, pp. 179–80; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 6, 22–23, 318; Nolhac 1908, pp. 11, 138; Helm 1915, p. 197; Baillio 1982a, p. 32; Baillio 1982b, p. 14 (cites an incorrect account of descendants of Caroline Rivière to the effect that this portrait had been destroyed); Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 21–22, 24, 37–38, fig. 2.

Cat. 3. *Jacques François Le Sèvre, ca. 1774*

Oil on canvas, 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (60 × 49.5 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: Monsieur and Madame Léonce Coblentz, Paris (their anonymous sale, Paris, January 24–25, 1917, no. 124, as *Denis Diderot*, attributed to Joseph Ducreux); Madame André Saint (her sale, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, May 20–21, 1935, no. 40, as attributed to Etienne Jeaurat); sale, Christie's, Paris, June 21, 2011, no. 71, as French School, ca. 1780, presumed portrait of Gabriel Sénac de Meilhan, to private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 317; Baillio 1982a, p. 30; Baillio 1982b, pp. 15, 26 n. 8, ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 42–43, 542 n. 47, fig. 5.

Cat. 4. *Allegory of Poetry, 1774*

Oil on canvas, 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (80 × 65 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left, on column):
M^{lle} Vigée / 1774

Académie de Saint-Luc 1774, no. 170
Collection of Henry and Catherine Robet

PROVENANCE: Marquise de Jocas (perhaps until d. 1963); Camille Frédault (perhaps until d. 1990); private collection, Paris; sale, Jean-Marc Delvaux, Paris, December 19, 2003, no. 115, ill.; Henry and Catherine Robet.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 131, 350, no. 31 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Deloynes 1881, vol. 51 (1774), no. 1412, pp. 297–98, no. 1416, p. 337; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 338; Nolhac 1908, pp. 17, 150; Guiffrey 1910, p. 116; Helm 1915, pp. 12, 215; Lyon 1958, p. 212, no. 7; Baillio 1982a, p. 17; Baillio 1982b, pp. 16–18; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 57.

Cat. 5. *Prince de Nassau-Siegen, 1776*

Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (64.4 × 53.5 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{de} Vigée le Brun / 1776*
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Ralph W. Showalter (64.740)

PROVENANCE: the sitter (in 1776); G. H. A. Clowes, Indianapolis (by 1941); [Ivan N. Podgoursky, New York, in 1951]; Mrs. Ralph W. Showalter, Indianapolis (ca. 1951–64, as the *Marquis de Lafayette*), to Indianapolis Museum of Art (from 1964).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Baillio 1982a, no. 4, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 121, 349, no. 26 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 252, 323, 337, vol. 2, p. 227; Thürheim

1879, pp. 377–78 n. 1; Nolhac 1908, pp. 17–18; Hauteceur 1914, p. 23; Helm 1915, p. 212; Blum 1919b, p. 95; Baillio 1980, pp. 157–59, 167 nn. 1–7; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 76, 548 nn. 14, 15.

Cat. 6. *Joseph Vernet, 1778*

Oil on canvas, 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (92 × 72 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *M^{de} Le Brun f. 1778*
Probably exhibited at the Salon de la Correspondance, 1783
Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3054)

PROVENANCE: the sitter; probably given to Ange-Joseph Aubert (until d. 1785); probably by descent (until 1817); Musée du Louvre (from 1817).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: probably *Exposition rétrospective des oeuvres de Joseph Vernet*, Salon de la Correspondance, Paris, 1783, no. 14; Baillio 1982a, no. 7, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 108, 348, no. 17 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Journal de Paris*, no. 72, March 13, 1783, p. 301; *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 12, March 19, 1783, p. 95, no. 14; *ibid.*, suppl. to no. 13, March 26, 1783, p. 105, no. 18; *ibid.*, no. 14, April 2, 1783, p. 111 (letter to Pahin de La Blancherie); Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 337; Lagrange 1864, p. 414; Nolhac 1908, p. 312, ill.; Helm 1915, pp. 106, 224; Blum 1919b, p. 99, ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 40–41.

ENGRAVING: Delpech 1840, vol. 3, unnumbered plate.

Cat. 7. *Marie Antoinette in Court Dress, 1778*

Oil on canvas, 107 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 76 in. (273 × 193.5 cm)
Inscribed (lower right): *Peint par M^{de} le Brun: âgée de 22 ans, en 1780*
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Gemäldegalerie (GG 2772)

PROVENANCE: Empress Maria Theresa, Vienna (until d. 1780); by descent, to Kunsthistorisches Museum.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Arizzoli-Clémentel and Salmon 2008, pp. 140–42, no. 94 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 150, 351, no. 44 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 44–45; Maria Theresa 1866, pp. 134, 210, 213; Heinz and Schütz 1982, pp. 178–79, no. 152, fig. 261; Salmon 2005, pp. 64, 72, 75; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 82–85.

Cat. 8. *Study for Abundance*, 1780

Pastel and black chalk on paper, 17³/₄ × 18⁷/₈ in. (45 × 48 cm)

Inscribed (lower right, apocryphal signature):

Lagrenée

Private collection

PROVENANCE: by descent (1998), to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 132–33, 350, no. 33 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

Cat. 9. *Peace Bringing Back Abundance*, 1780

Oil on canvas, 40³/₈ × 52¹/₈ in. (103 × 133 cm)

Signed and dated (lower center): *M^{de} Le Brun. f 1780*

Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 115

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (3052)

PROVENANCE: presented to the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, Palais du Louvre, Paris (in 1783); Ministère de l'Intérieur (until at least 1835); Musée du Luxembourg, Paris; Musée du Louvre.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 115; Baillio 1982a, no. 9, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 132–33, no. 34 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *L'Année Littéraire*, 1783, vol. 2, pp. 259–61; Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 24, September 13, 1783, pp. 5–6; Deloynes 1881, vol. 13 (1783), nos. 286–89, 291–92, 295–97, 308–9; *Mercure de France*, September 20, 1783, pp. 131–32; *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres et des Arts*, no. 14 (1783), p. 112, and no. 34, p. 305; Grimm 1877–82, vol. 13 (1783), p. 440; *Journal de Paris*, no. 266, September 23, 1783, pp. 1097–98; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 85, 339; Pillet 1890, pp. 16–17, ill. (Viel engraving); Nolhac 1908, pp. 28–29, ill.; Helm 1915, pp. 43, 214, ill.; Hautecoeur 1917, pp. 32, 55, ill.; Blum 1919b, pp. 27–28, ill.; Rosenberg 1981, p. 740, fig. 40; Coural 1989, p. 78, fig. 5; Sheriff 1996, pp. 123–29, fig. 12; Sheriff 2006, p. 93, fig. 24; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 101–3, fig. 17.

ENGRAVING: A drawing with the same subject as the painting (perhaps by the engraver Pierre Viel) was included with the Viel engraving in Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun's postmortem inventory of 1813. (The original document is in the I.N.H.A., Paris, *Papiers Le Brun, Vigée-Le Brun, Tripié Le Franc*, cote: Aut. C51. D1. sd13. 27742-27778.)

Cat. 10. *The Comtesse Du Barry in a Straw Hat*, 1781

Oil on canvas, laid down on board, 33⁷/₈ × 26 in. (86 × 66 cm)

Private collection

PROVENANCE: Louis Hercule Timoléon de Cossé, duc de Brissac (until d. 1792); Louis Antoine

Auguste de Rohan-Chabot (until d. 1807; posthumous sale, Paillet, Paris, December 8, 1807, no. 3); Hubert Robert (1807–d. 1808; posthumous sale, Paillet, Paris, April 5, 1809, no. 41); Duc de Rohan (by 1894); Duc or Duchesse de Rohan (by 1908–in 1919); [Duveen, by 1925/30–after 1945; sold to Mrs. Kilvert]; Mrs. Kilvert; by descent (until shortly before 1979); private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Louveciennes 1992, p. 154 (Marie-Amynthe Denis), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 169, 352, no. 54 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Roland Michel and Binda 1979, pp. 40–45, ill.

Cat. 11. *The Duchesse de Polignac in a Straw Hat*, 1782

Oil on canvas, 36³/₈ × 28⁷/₈ in. (92.2 × 73.3 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L^{se} Le Brun 1782*

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 8971)

PROVENANCE: private collection and by descent (until 1875); Jules Armand Jean Melchior, duc de Polignac (from 1875); by descent (until 1998), to Château de Versailles (from 1998).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Zafran 2004, pp. 150–51, 167, no. 57 (Joseph Baillio), ill.; Boysson and Salmon 2005, pp. 112–13, no. 32 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Arizzoli-Clémentel and Salmon 2008, pp. 288–89, no. 212 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Ono 2011, pp. 152, 248, no. 60 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 170, 352, no. 55 (Gwenola Firmin), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 237–41; Salmon 1998, pp. 13–14, ill.

Cat. 12. *Self-Portrait with Cerise Ribbons*, ca. 1782

Oil on canvas, 25¹/₂ × 21¹/₄ in. (64.8 × 54 cm)

Signed (lower right): *L. E. Vigée/Le Brun*
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas (ACK 1949.02)

PROVENANCE: Gustave Mühlbacher, Paris (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, May 13–15, 1907, no. 57); [Wildenstein, Paris]; Baron and Baroness Sigismund von Springer, Vienna (confiscated by German forces and exhibited at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1940–47; restituted); Baroness von Springer, Vienna (from 1947; sold through Kurt von Reininghaus to Newhouse); [Newhouse, New York, until 1949]; Mr. and Mrs.

Kay Kimbell, Fort Worth (from 1949), to Kimbell Art Museum (from 1965).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio 1982a, pp. 44, 46–47, no. 11, ill. Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 83, 347, no. 1 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 53, 109; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 94–95.

Cat. 13. *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat with a Plume*, ca. 1783

Black chalk, stumping, and charcoal on paper, 18⁷/₈ × 14¹/₂ in. (48 × 37 cm)

Private collection

PROVENANCE: Pierre-Georges Ponsard (until d. 1942); by descent, to private collection (sale, Hôtel des Ventes de la Vallée de Montmorency, Deuil-la-Barre, March 11, 2014, no. 16); private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 85, 347, no. 3 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

Cat. 14. *Sleeping Baby*, ca. 1783

Black, white, and red chalk, with stumping, on beige paper, 12³/₄ × 10¹/₄ in. (32.5 × 26 cm)

Private collection

PROVENANCE: sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, December 16, 1987, no. 16; private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Munich 1995, no. 8, ill.; Kayser 2003, no. 54, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 191, 353–54, no. 67 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

Cat. 15. *Eugène de Montesquiou-Fezensac Sleeping*, ca. 1783

Pastel on paper, 9¹/₈ × 12¹/₂ in. (23 × 31.5 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter's mother, Comtesse de Montesquiou-Fezensac, Paris and Château de Courtanvaux (until d. 1835); by descent to Blaise Anatole de Montesquiou-Fezensac (until d. 1974); his niece, Madame Yves Huchet de La Bédoyère (from 1974); private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 191–92, 354, no. 70 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

Cat. 16. *Marie Antoinette in a Chemise Dress*, 1783

Oil on canvas, 35³/₈ × 28³/₈ in. (89.8 × 72 cm)
Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg

PROVENANCE: given by the sitter to Princess Louise-Henriette-Karoline of Hesse-Darmstadt (d. 1829); by descent, to Hessische Hausstiftung.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 154, 351, no. 47 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Baillio 1982a, p. 63, fig. 16; Salmon 2005, p. 117, ill.; Arizzoli-Clémentel and Salmon 2008, pp. 306–8

Cat. 17. *Marie Antoinette with a Rose*, 1783

Oil on canvas, 46 × 35 in. (116.8 × 88.9 cm)

Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 110
Lynda and Stewart Resnick

PROVENANCE: commissioned by the sitter and later presented to Monseigneur François de Fontanges, bishop of Nancy (until d. 1806); by descent to Madeleine Marie Antoinette de Fontanges, Madame Louis-Armand-Théogène Regnault de la Mothe (from 1907); private collection; Baronne Liliane de Rothschild (until d. 2003; her estate, sold through Wildenstein, New York, 2004), to Lynda and Stewart Resnick, Los Angeles (from 2004).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 110; Kopplin 2001, no. 72, ill.; Jazzar and Marandel 2010, no. 38 (Joseph Baillio), ill. on cover.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *L'Année Littéraire* 6 (1783), pp. 262–63; Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 24, pp. 9–10 (Mouffle d'Angerville); Grimm 1877–82, vol. 13 (1783), pp. 441–42; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 331; Vannaire 1887, p. 385; Nolhac 1908, p. 42; Helm 1915, p. 211; Hautecoeur 1917, pp. 28–31; Jallut 1955, p. 40; Baillio 1981a, pp. 38, 74 n. 22; Baillio 1982a, pp. 17, 63; Salmon 2005, p. 117, ill.; Arizzoli-Clémentel and Salmon 2008, p. 308, ill.; Conisbee 2009, p. 452, fig. 2.

Cat. 18. *Madame Grand*, 1783

Oil on canvas, oval, 36¼ × 28½ in. (92.1 × 72.4 cm)

Signed and dated (at left): *L.E. Le Brun 1783*
Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 117

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Edward S. Harkness, 1940 (50.135.2)

PROVENANCE: Jacques Doucet, Paris (by 1899–1912; his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, June 6, 1912, no. 190); [Knoedler, Paris, 1912–14]; Mrs. William Bateman Leeds, later Princess Christopher of Greece, Paris (1914–d. 1923); Prince Christopher of Greece (from 1923); Françoise d'Orléans, Princess Christopher of Greece (until 1934); [Knoedler, Paris and New York, 1934–35]; Edward S. Harkness,

New York (1935–d. 1940); Mary Stillman Harkness, New York (1940–d. 1950).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 117; Baillio 1982a, no. 12, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 173, 352, no. 57 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Deloynes 1881, vol. 13 (1783), nos. 303, 309, 311; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 331; Nolhac 1908, pp. 30, 151, ill.; Hautecoeur 1914, pp. 32, 40; Helm 1915, p. 222; Blum 1919b, p. 97, ill.; Sterling 1955, pp. 186–88, ill.; Orioux 1970, pp. 333–41; Percival 2001, pp. 203–11, fig. 10; Waresquiel 2003, pp. 246–48, 662 n. 2, ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 103–4.

Cat. 19. *The Maréchale-Comtesse de Mailly in Van Dyck Costume*, 1783

Oil on canvas, 29 × 23¼ in. (73.5 × 59 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L^e Le Brun f. 1783*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter, Paris and Château de la Roche de Vaux, Requeil, Sarthe (until d. 1840); by descent to Arnould Adrien Auguste, Marquis de Mailly-Nesle and prince d'Orange (until 1987); [Maurice Segoura, Paris, in 1987]; private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 331; Ledru 1893, vol. 1, ill. (heliogravure by Dujardin); Ledieu 1895, ill. p. 67; Baret 1959, p. 62, ill.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 172, 352, no. 56 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

Cat. 20. *Duchesse de Guiche*, 1784

Pastel on two sheets of paper, joined, and laid down on canvas, oval, 31¾ × 25¼ in. (80.5 × 64 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *M^{de} Le Brun / 1784*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: Joseph Hyacinthe Rigaud, comte de Vaudreuil, Paris (until d. 1817); his widow, Marie Victoire de Vaudreuil (1817–d. 1851); Charles Alfred, comte de Vaudreuil (1851–d. 1880; posthumous sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, May 20, 1881, no. 2); [Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris, until 1909]; Baron Léo d'Erlanger, London (in 1909); Baron Léo d'Erlanger and Commodore Gerald d'Erlanger (1909–1946; their sale, Knight, Frank & Rutley, London, March 25, 1946, no. 29); [Frank T. Sabin, London, 1948]; Thérèse Henriette de Pognac, Madame de Barros, Palácio de la Junqueira, Lisbon; sale, Sotheby's London, December 11, 1991, no. 79, to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Baetjer and Shelley 2011, p. 41, no. 28, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 218, 356, no. 88 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Baillio 1993, ill.

Cat. 21. *Comte de Vaudreuil*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 52 × 38⅞ in. (132.1 × 98.7 cm)

Inscribed (lower left): *COMTE DE VAUDREUIL / G^d FAUCONNIER DE FRANCE / CHEVALIER DES ORDRES DU ROI / LIEUT^{nt} / GÉNÉRAL ET PAIR DE FRANCE / NÉ 1740, MORT 1817.*

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Gift of Mrs. A. D. Williams, 1949 (49.11.21)

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1817); his son, Victor Louis Alfred de Vaudreuil (1817–d. 1834); his daughter, Marie Charlotte de Vaudreuil, Comtesse Gédéon de Clermont-Tonnerre (1834–d. 1900; her estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, December 10–13, 1900, no. 1, to Gardner); Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams; Mrs. A. D. Williams (until 1949), to Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (from 1949).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1874, no. 295; Paris 1974a, no. 197, ill.; Baillio 1982a, no. 14, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 160, 351, no. 50 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 332; Vaudreuil 1889, pp. 351–52, frontis.; Nolhac 1908, pp. 44, 49, 144, ill.; Helm 1915, p. 223; Blum 1919b, p. 35; Bailey 2002, p. 178, fig. 161.

Cat. 22. *Comtesse Du Barry de Cérés*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 36 × 29 in. (91.4 × 73.7 cm)

Signed and dated (on the letter): *L^e V^e Le Brun / 1784*
Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey (1963.33)

PROVENANCE: probably Rabaudy Montoussin, Toulouse (? until 1898); Baron Albert Salomon von Rothschild, Vienna (until d. 1911); Baron Louis Nathaniel von Rothschild, Vienna (from 1911); [Rosenberg & Stiebl, New York]; [Wildenstein, New York, 1948–63], to Toledo Museum of Art (from 1963).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Sutton 1968, no. 716; Baillio 1982a, pp. 54–56, no. 15, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 174, 352, no. 58 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 111–13; Baillio 1980, pp. 160–61, ill.; Conisbee 1981, pp. 137, 139.

Cat. 23. *Madame Royale and the Dauphin Seated in a Garden*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 45½ × 37⅞ in. (115.5 × 94.3 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *L. Le Brun f. 1784*
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 85
Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de
Trianon (MV 3907)

↪ New York only

PROVENANCE: Musée du Louvre (from 1818);
Château de Versailles (from 1899).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 85;
Versailles 1955, no. 209, ill.; Baillio 1982a, pp. 49–
51, no. 13, ill.; Boysson and Salmon 2005, pp. 102–3,
no. 24 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Chapman et al. 2007,
pp. 64–65, no. 14 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Arizzoli-
Clémentel and Salmon 2008, p. 135, no. 90 (Xavier
Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 156, 351,
no. 48 (Gwenola Firmin), ill.

Cat. 24. *Bacchante*, 1785

Oil on canvas, oval, 28⅞ × 23⅜ in. (73.3 × 59.4 cm)
Signed and dated (upper center): *L^e V^e Le Brun f 1785*
Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute,
Williamstown, Massachusetts, Acquired by
Sterling and Francine Clark, 1939 (1955.954)

PROVENANCE: Madame Seube, Toulouse (her sale,
Hôtel des Ventes, Toulouse, October 28, 1929);
[Wildenstein, Paris and New York, by 1937–39];
Sterling and Francine Clark (from 1939), to Sterling
and Francine Clark Art Institute (from 1955).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Hartford 1937, no. 32;
Williamstown 1957, no. 303; Baillio 1982a, pp. 64–
65, no. 20, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 135,
350, no. 36 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Auricchio 2009, pp. 22–23,
fig. 15.

Cat. 25. *Charles Alexandre de Calonne*, 1784

Oil on canvas, 61¼ × 51¼ in. (155.5 × 130.3 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *Le Brun. f. 1784*
Inscribed (on the billet): *Au Roi*; (on the documents):
Edit du R. . . / Portant établissemen. . . / Caisse
d'Amortisseme. . . / La liberation des . . . / dettes de
L'Etat / aout 1784 / et Arret du Conseil de l'Etat / au Roi
qui . . . / fonds et . . . / Soulagement . . . / peuples . . .
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 87

Royal Collection Trust/H.M. Queen Elizabeth II
(RCIN 406988)

PROVENANCE: the sitter (perhaps until d. 1802);
George IV of England (by 1806); by descent; Her
Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 87;
London 1954, no. 339; London 1966, no. 6; Allard
et al. 2006, pp. 98–99 (Sébastien Allard), ill.;
Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 163, 351–52, no. 51
(Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 1, pp. 105–13; Nolhac 1908, pp. 57–62;
Hautecoeur 1917, pp. 68–69; Fort 1999, p. 290.

Cat. 26. *Comtesse de Ségur*, 1785

Oil on canvas, 36¼ × 28¾ in. (92 × 73 cm)
Signed and dated (upper right): *L^e V^e Le Brun. f. / 1785*
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 88
Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de
Trianon (MV 5962)

PROVENANCE: the sitter's husband, comte Louis
Philippe de Ségur (until d. 1830); by descent to
comte Louis de Ségur (until 1923); Château de
Versailles (from 1924).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1785,
no. 88; Adams 1976, p. 157, no. 247 (A. Brejon de
Lavergnée), ill.; Boysson and Salmon 2005, pp. 114–
15, no. 33 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon
2015, pp. 175, 352, no. 59 (Gwenola Firmin), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 3, pp. 140–41.

Cat. 27. *Baronne de Crussol Florensac*, 1785

Oil on wood, 44¾ × 33⅞ in. (113.8 × 84 cm)
Signed and dated (upper right, with a pointed
instrument): *L^e Le Brun f 1785*
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 89
Musée des Augustins, Toulouse (RO 307)

PROVENANCE: the sitter; her nephew, Anne Marie
Félix Gabriel, marquis de Faudoas (until d. 1850);
his daughter, Clémence de Faudoas, marquise de
Villeneuve-Péquilha, Toulouse (1850–d. 1877),
by bequest to the Musée des Augustins (from 1879).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 89;
Paris 1900, no. 410; Paris 1933, no. 110; Copenhagen
1935, no. 235; Biron 1989, no. 83; Ono 2011, pp. 158,
249, no. 63 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Bergström et al.
2012, p. 154, no. 30, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015,
pp. 176, 352–53, no. 60 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Avis* 1785, p. 27; Bonnefoy
de Bouyon 1785, p. 21; Deloynes 1881, vol. 14 (1785),
no. 345, p. 757, no. 350, p. 829, no. 363, p. 923;
Gorsas 1785b, p. 47; *Impromptu* 1785, p. 9; Pujoulx
1785, p. 21; Soulavie 1785, p. 31; Bachaumont
et al. 1783–89, vol. 30 (1786), p. 161 (Mouffle

d'Argenville); Grimm 1777–82, vol. 14 (1880–81),
p. 274; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 332; Nolhac
1912, p. 96, ill.; Gramont 1914, ill.; Helm 1915,
pp. 67, 103–4; Blum 1919b, p. 38; Mesplé 1959, ill.;
Baillio 1982a, pp. 18, 60, fig. 14; Baillio 2005, p. 120,
ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 137.

Cat. 28. *The Comtesse de Clermont-Tonnerre as a Sultana*, 1785

Oil on wood, 38¾ × 28¼ in. (98.5 × 71.5 cm)
Signed and dated (upper right): *L^e Le Brun. f 1785*.
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 90
Collection of the Marquis de Ganay

PROVENANCE: the sitter (probably until d. 1832);
probably her niece, Louise-Antoinette de Rosières
de Sorans, marquise de Perthuis (from 1832);
probably Delphine de Clermont Mont Saint Jean,
comtesse de Courtivron (until d. 1866); by descent
to René Le Roy de Lisa, marquis de Chateaubrun
(until 1920); [Wildenstein, Paris]; Otto Sebastián
Bemberg Ocampo (until d. 1932) and Josefá Leonia
de Elortondo Armstrong, Buenos Aires and Paris;
by descent, to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 90;
Oulmont 1928, no. 109; Charpentier 1945, no. 113;
Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 178, 353, no. 61
(Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Bonnefoy de Bouyon
1785, pp. 21–22; Grimm 1777–82, vol. 14, p. 273
(November 1785); Soulavie 1785, pp. 29, 31;
Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 30 (1786), pp. 159–
62 (Mouffle d'Angerville); Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 1, p. 333; Nolhac 1912, pp. 94, 251; Helm 1915,
pp. 67, 222; Hautecoeur 1917, p. 37; Blum 1919b,
p. 38; Du Bus 1931, pp. xviii, 31, 111, fig. 5; Passez
1973, p. 146; Baillio 1982b, p. 18; Williams 2014,
p. 97.

LITHOGRAPH: Charles-Louis Constans (Constans
de Sèvres), after a drawing by Lucienne Collière
(1785–1847).

Cat. 29. *The Comtesse de Gramont Caderousse Gathering Grapes*, 1784

Oil on wood, 41⅜ × 29⅞ in. (105.1 × 75.9 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *L^e Le Brun. f. 1784*
Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 91
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City,
Missouri, Purchase, William Rockhill Nelson
Trust through exchange of the bequest of Helen F.
Spencer and the generosity of Mrs. George C.
Reuland through the W. J. Brace Charitable Trust,
Mrs. Herbert O. Peet, Mary Barton Stripp Kemper

and Rufus Crosby Kemper Jr., in memory of Mary Jane Barton Stripp and Enid Jackson Kemper, and Mrs. Rex. L. Diveley (86-20)

PROVENANCE: the sitter; by descent to André, marquis de Sinety et de Lurcy-Levis (until d. 1832); by descent to André, marquis de Sinéty, Château de Misy, Montereau-Fault-Yonne, Seine-et-Marne (sale, Nouveau Drouot, Paris, November 28, 1984, no. 21); [Newhouse Galleries, New York and Stair-Sainty Matthiesen, London, until 1986], to The Nelson-Atkins Museum (from 1986).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1785, no. 91; Ward 1987, p. 152, no. 66, ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Bonnefoy de Bouyon 1785, p. 21; Chénier(?) 1785, p. 987; Deloynes 1881, vol. 14 (1785), no. 363, p. 19; Gorsas 1785a, pp. 15–16; Grimm 1877–82, vol. 14, p. 274 (November 1785); *Impromptu* 1785, p. 9; Soulavie 1785, p. 31; Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 30 (1786), pp. 183–86 (Mouffle d'Angerville); M. de C. 1790, pp. 371–72 (entry dated September 8, 1785); Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 53; Nolhac 1908, p. 56, ill.; Nolhac 1912, pp. 93, 94–95, 96–97, 246, 251, ill.; Hautecoeur 1914, p. 38; Helm 1915, pp. 67, 103–4; Blum 1919b, pp. 37–38; Baillio 1982a, pp. 18, 54–55, ill.

Cat. 30. *Madame Etienne Vigée*, 1785
Oil on canvas, 22 × 18³/₈ in. (56 × 46 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter's husband (until d. 1820); by descent to Joseph Eugène Bailloud de Masclary (until 1957); by descent to private collection; [Wildenstein, New York]; private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Tours 1959, no. 52, ill.; Baillio 1982a, pp. 13, 58, no. 18, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 106, 348, no. 16 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 133; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 115–16, 118, fig. 18.

Cat. 31. *Marquise de Puységur*, 1786
Oil on wood, 41¹/₂ × 29¹/₄ in. (105.5 × 74.5 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left, with a pointed instrument): *L Le Brun f. 1786*

Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana, Gift of Mrs. Fred J. Fisher (1951.004.015)

PROVENANCE: Madame Christiane de Polès, Paris (by 1926; her sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, June 22–24, 1927, no. 26); [Wildenstein, Paris and

New York]; Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Fisher, Detroit (from 1928); Mrs. Fred J. Fisher (until 1951), to the University of Notre Dame Art Gallery (from 1951).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1926, no. 110 (lent by Madame de Polès); Notre Dame 1972, no. 88.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Feuillet 1927, p. 161; Notre Dame 1967, p. 78, no. 39, ill.; Garland 1968, ill.; Notre Dame 1980, p. 51, ill.; Martin 2011, pp. 191, 193, fig. 4.13.

Cat. 32. *Marie Antoinette and Her Children*, 1787
Oil on canvas, 108¹/₄ × 85¹/₄ in. (275 × 216.5 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *L Vigée. Le Brun 1787*
Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 97

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 4520)

PROVENANCE: Château de Versailles (from 1787).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 97; Versailles 1955, no. 87, ill.; Arizzoli-Clémentel and Salmon 2008, pp. 314–17, no. 232 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 158, 351, no. 49 (Gwenola Firmin), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 70–73, vol. 3, p. 317; Baillio 1981a; Baillio 1981b.

Cat. 33. *The Marquise de Pezay and the Marquise de Rougé with Her Two Sons*, 1787

Oil on canvas, 48³/₈ × 61³/₈ in. (123.4 × 155.9 cm)
Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 98

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of the Bay Foundation in memory of Josephine Bay Paul and Ambassador Charles Ulrick Bay (1964.11.1)

PROVENANCE: one of the sitters, the marquise de Rougé (until d. 1828); Comte Adrien Gabriel Victurnien de Rougé, Château de Guyencourt, Somme (1828–d. 1838); by descent to Comte Jean de Rougé, Château de Saint-Symphorien, Manche (until d. 1960); his nephew, Charles-Edouard de Cassagnes de Beaufort de Miramon-Pesteils (in 1960); [Wildenstein, New York, 1960–64]; Bay Foundation, New York (1964), to National Gallery of Art (from 1964).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 98; Saisselin 1963, no. 67; Houston 1964, no. 10; Adams 1976, no. 261; Baillio 1982a, no. 24, ill.; Ono 2011, pp. 160, 249–50, no. 64 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 206, 355, no. 79 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Conisbee 2009, pp. 436–42, no. 93 (Joseph Baillio).

Cat. 34. *Madame Dugazon in the Role of "Nina,"* 1787
Oil on canvas, 57⁷/₈ × 45³/₈ in. (147 × 115 cm)
Paris, Salon, 1787, no. 103
Private collection

PROVENANCE: Joseph Hyacinthe, comte de Vaudreuil, Paris and London; to Colonel Pierre François Venault de Charmilly, London, in 1796; (his sale, Peter Coxe, London, May 28, 1810, no. 14 as "Portrait of Madame du Gazon, the celebrated French Actress, in the character of Nina full of Life, Sp[irit] & Animation"); Alleyne FitzHerbert, 1st Baron St Helens, London (from 1810); probably his nephew, Sir Henry FitzHerbert, 3rd Bt.; Gaston Baconnière de Salverte (until d. 1886; his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, May 5–6, 1887, no. 13 (repr. reversed); Comtesse Edmond de Pourtalès-Gorgier, Paris (until d. 1914); [Gimpel & Wildenstein, Paris, ca. 1924]; Charles A. Wimpfheimer, New York (until d. 1934); [Wildenstein, ca. 1937]; Baron Maurice de Rothschild (until d. 1957); by descent, to private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *L'Année littéraire* 7 (1787), p. 5; Batz 1787; Beffroy de Reigny 1787, pp. 47–48; *Bourgeoise* 1787, pp. 15–16; *Correspondance littéraire*, November 1787, p. 163; Dulaure 1787a, p. 21; *Lettre* 1787, pp. 20–21; *Mémoires secrets*, August 25, 1787, pp. 301–2; *Mercur de France* (1787); *Observations* 1787, p. 25; *Petites affiches de Paris* (1787); Potocki 1787, p. 18; Pujoulx 1787, p. 29; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 138–40; *Les Arts* (July 1909), ill. p. 91 (engraving); Brière 1909, p. 140, no. 97; Nolhac 1912, p. 126, ill.; Helm 1915, pp. 54, 106, 195, ill.; Hautecoeur 1917, p. 43, ill.; Olivier 1917, ill.; Blum 1919b, p. 42, ill.; Oulmont 1928, ill.; Wildenstein 1932, p. 54, ill.; Bizardel 1957, ill.; Gimpel 1963, pp. 135, 136, 140; Rice 1976, pp. 33–34.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 181, 353, no. 62 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

Cat. 35. *Julie Le Brun Looking in a Mirror*, ca. 1786
Oil on wood, 28³/₄ × 23³/₄ in. (73 × 60.3 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: David David-Weill, Neuilly-sur-Seine; [Wildenstein, New York]; Jessie Woolworth Donahue (1938–d. 1971); her niece, Barbara Hutton (1971–78); [Wildenstein, New York, 1978], to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio 1982a, pp. 74–76, no. 25, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 194, 354, no. 71 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Fahy 2005, pp. 250–51 (Perrin Stein), ill.

Cat. 36. *Alexandre Charles Emmanuel de Crussol-Florensac, 1787*

Oil on wood, 35³/₈ × 25¹/₂ in. (89.9 × 64.8 cm)
Signed and dated (upper right): *L^{se} E^{bet} Vigée: Le Brun: P^{ste} 1787*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.53)

∞ New York only

PROVENANCE: Charlotte Eustache Sophie de Fuligny Damas, marquise de Grollier (until d. 1828); her daughter, Claudine Alexandrine de Grollier, marquise de Sales; her daughter, Pauline-Françoise-Joséphine de Sales, comtesse de Roussy de Sales, Château de Thorens (d. 1852); Anne de Rochecouart de Mortemart, duchesse d'Uzès; Louis Emmanuel de Crussol, duc d'Uzès (until at least 1908); Sir Robert Abdy, London (until 1929); [Abdy, London, 1929]; [Wildenstein, London and New York, 1929]; Jules Bache, New York (1929–d. 1944; his estate, 1944–49), to The Metropolitan Museum of Art (from 1949).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Paris 1883, no. 139.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 109, 336; Nolhac 1908, pp. 156, 162; Helm 1915, p. 193; Blum 1919b, p. 99; Sterling 1955, pp. 180–90, ill.; Baillio 1982a, pp. 5, 76–78, ill.

Cat. 37. *Marie Antoinette in a Blue Velvet Dress and a White Skirt, 1788*

Oil on canvas, 106⁵/₈ × 76³/₄ in. (271 × 195 cm)
Signed and dated (center left, on column): *E. Vigée Le Brun / 1788.*

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 2097)

∞ New York only

PROVENANCE: the artist (until 1818); Louis XVIII, Château de Saint-Cloud (from 1818); Château de Versailles (from the reign of Louis Philippe).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Versailles 1955, no. 81, ill.; Gordon 1983, no. 28; Boysson and Salmon 2005, pp. 92–94, no. 16 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 16–17; Baillio 1981b, p. 52; Baillio 1982a, pp. 78–81.

Cat. 38. *The Prince Henryk Lubomirski as Love of Glory, 1787–88*

Oil on wood, 41¹/₂ × 32⁵/₈ in. (105.5 × 83 cm)
Paris, Salon, 1789, no. 78

Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (74.4)

PROVENANCE: Marshal-Princess Izabela Lubomirska, Paris, and Lubomirski Palace, Warsaw (until d. 1816); Prince Henryk Lubomirski, Lańcut (1816–d. 1850); Prince Jerzy Lubomirski, Przeworsk Castle; Prince Andrzej Lubomirski, Przeworsk Castle (probably until 1944); Prince Jerzy Rafal Lubomirski; [Galerie Heim, Paris, before 1968]; Gemäldegalerie (from 1974).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1789, no. 78; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 198, 354, no. 74 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 226–27; Bock 1977, pp. 83–92; Baillio 1988, pp. 101–2, figs. 4–17; Bock 2010, pp. 462–63.

Cat. 39. *Comtesse de la Châtre, 1789*

Oil on canvas, 45 × 34¹/₂ in. (114.3 × 87.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Jessie Woolworth Donahue, 1954 (54.182)

PROVENANCE: Arnail François de Jaucourt, marquis de Jaucourt (until d. 1852); Charles Levisse de Montigny, marquis de Jaucourt (1852–d. 1877); Jean François Levisse de Montigny, marquis de Jaucourt (1877—at least 1883); James Stillman, New York (by 1908–d. 1918); [Duveen and Knoedler, New York, 1934]; Mrs. Charles E. F. McCann, Oyster Bay, New York (1934–d. 1938); Mrs. James P. Donahue, New York (1938–54), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (from 1954).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Harris and Nochlin 1976, no. 59 (Ann Sutherland Harris); Baillio 1982a, no. 29; Allard et al. 2006, no. 29 (Sébastien Allard), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 188, 353, no. 66 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 337; Nolhac 1908, ill.; Hautecoeur 1914, pp. 61, 65, ill.; Helm 1915, p. 202; Blum 1919b, p. 99, pl. 15.

Cat. 40. *Self-Portrait in Traveling Costume, 1789–90*

Pastel on paper, 19³/₄ × 15³/₄ in. (50 × 40 cm)
Inscribed (on the reverse): *28. nov^{bre} 1816 / Légué par M^r Menageot / a M^{me} Nigris- / Ce dessin représente M^{me} Le Brun / il est fait par elle-même*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: François Guillaume Ménageot, Rome (until d. 1816); the artist's daughter, Madame Gaëtan Bernard Nigris (1816–d. 1819); probably her cousin, Madame Justin Tripiet Le Franc (until d. 1872); her son, Charles-Auguste Tripiet Le Franc (1872–d. 1892); possibly his common-law wife, Françoise-Anne Cardinot (from 1892); L. L. Brot; sale, Nouveau Drouot, Paris, December 17, 1983, no. 1, to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Baillio 1989, no. 47; Stein and Holmes 1999, pp. 216–17, no. 93 (Mary Tavener Holmes), ill.; Baetjer and Shelley 2011, p. 42, no. 29 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 86, 347, no. 4 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun, 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 337; Baillio 1993, pp. 22, 28, fig. 13; Jeffares 2006, p. 548, ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 241–42, fig. 40.

Cat. 41. *The Duchesse de Polignac in Profile, ca. 1789–90*

Black and white chalk with stumping on gray-beige paper, 16³/₄ × 10¹/₂ in. (42.2 × 26.9 cm)
Private collection.

PROVENANCE: sale, Christie's, New York, July 4, 2000, no. 18, to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 254, 358, no. 112 (Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 237–41.

Cat. 42. *Self-Portrait, 1790*

Oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 31⁷/₈ in. (100 × 81 cm)
Galleria degli Uffizi, Corridoio Vasariano, Florence (1890, n. 1905)

∞ New York only

PROVENANCE: presented by the artist to Ferdinando III, grand duke of Tuscany (1791), to Galleria degli Uffizi (from 1791).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1974a, no. 198 (Nathalie Volle), pl. 57; Rosenberg 1977, no. 21, ill.; Osano et al. 2010, no. 22; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 88, 347, no. 5 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Le Brun 1793, p. 18; Goethe 1805, pp. 318–19; Wicar 1819, vol. 3, pl. 47 (etching by Pierre Audouin after a drawing by Wicar of 1804); Tripiet Le Franc 1828, pp. 187–88; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 110, vol. 2, pp. 20, 38, 368; La Fizelière 1873, vol. 1, no. 122; Dussieux 1876,

p. 427; Bouchot 1898, pp. 57–62, 219–23; Nohac 1908, pp. 90, 135, 162, frontis., ill.; Tuetey 1911, pp. 171, 179; Helm 1915, p. 207, ill.; Hautecoeur 1917, p. 47, ill.; Blum 1919a, p. 493; Blum 1919b, p. 54, frontis.; Berenson and Simony 1945, p. 56, no. 78, ill.; Boyer 1955, p. 55; Golzio 1956, pp. 182–83, ill.; Thuillier and Châtelet 1964, p. 221, ill.; Jackson-Stops 1985, p. 569; Sheriff 1996, pp. 227–39, fig. 40; Rosenberg 1999, pp. 92–93; Fossi 2001, p. 30, ill.; Brown and Van Nimmen 2005, p. 44, fig. 34; Aldecoa 2014, ill.

Cat. 43. *Countess Ekaterina Vasilievna Skavronskaya*, 1790

Oil on canvas, $53\frac{1}{8} \times 37\frac{3}{8}$ in. (135 × 95 cm)
Signed and dated (at left, above the sofa): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun/a Naples en 1790*
Institut de France, Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris (MJAP-P 578)

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1829); her granddaughter, Countess Julia Pavlovna Samoïlova (from 1829); [F. Petit, Paris, until 1872]; Edouard André (from 1872), to Musée Jacquemart-André.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: New York 1956, no. 41, ill.; Albi 1959, no. 39, ill.; Rome 1961, no. 380 (traveled to Turin, 1961, no. 370); Bregenz 1968, no. 466, ill.; Baillio 1982a, pp. 85–87, no. 30, ill.; Biron 1989, p. 196, no. 84, ill.; Delafond and Bodis 1995, no. 31; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 236, 357, no. 101 (Anna Soulimova), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 85, 369; Nohac 1908, pp. 94–95, 97; Helm 1915, pp. 112–13, 208; Hautecoeur 1917, pp. 80–83, ill.; Blum 1919b, pp. 57, 100; Ernst 1935, pp. 161–62, ill.; Constans 1967, pp. 266, 269, 270, ill.; Nikolenko 1967, p. 101, no. 7, ill.; Gétreau 2011, pp. 230–33, no. 66, pp. 344–45, 371, 385.

Cat. 44. *Maria Luisa di Borbone, Princess of the Two Sicilies*, 1790

Oil on canvas, $46\frac{7}{8} \times 32\frac{1}{4}$ in. (119 × 82 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun a Naples 1790*
Museo di Capodimonte, Naples (OA 7228)

PROVENANCE: Palazzo Reale, Caserta (by 1830); Palazzo Reale di Capodimonte, Naples (by 1874), later Museo di Capodimonte.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Naples 1967, no. 32; Mazzocca et al. 2002, pp. 257, 484–85, no. IX.9 (Ippolita di Majo), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 225–27, 356, no. 93 (Anabelle Kienle Poňka), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 117–18, 369; Spinosa 1987, p. 154, no. 262, ill.; Spinosa and Utili 2002, p. 220; Spinosa 2010, pp. 155–57, no. 145b; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 235.

Cat. 45. *Madame Adélaïde de France*, 1791

Oil on canvas, oval, $31\frac{1}{8} \times 26\frac{3}{4}$ in. (79 × 68 cm)
Signed (lower right): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun/a Rome*
Musée Jeanne d'Aboville, La Fère, Aisne (MJA 124)

PROVENANCE: the sitter's illegitimate half-brother, Philippe Louis de Narbonne-Lara, duc de Narbonne-Lara, Paris (until d. 1834; inv. 1834, as "représentant Madame Adélaïde"); Gabrielle Uranie Le Maistre de Sacy, comtesse d'Héricourt de Valincourt (1834–68), to Musée Jeanne d'Aboville (from 1868).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 228, 356, no. 96 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 143–44, 368; Stryienski 1911, pp. 274, 283; Nohac 1912, p. 174; Hautecoeur 1914, p. 87; Helm 1915, pp. 185, 224; Blum 1919b, pp. 60, 100; Baillio 1982a, pp. 99–100, fig. 36; Milam 2003; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 240–41.

Cat. 46. *Madame Victoire de France*, 1791

Oil on canvas, oval, $30\frac{3}{4} \times 26\frac{3}{8}$ in. (78.1 × 67 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *E. Vigée Le Brun/à Rome 1791*

Phoenix Art Museum, Museum Purchase with funds provided by an anonymous New York foundation, in memory of Mr. Donald D. Harrington (1974.36)

PROVENANCE: Berthe de Béhaque, Marquise de Ganay (in 1910); by descent; [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, ca. 1954–74], to Phoenix Art Museum (from 1974).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Berlin 1910, no. 81 (lent by the marquise de Ganay); Baillio 1982a, no. 35, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 228, 357, no. 97 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 143–44, 368; Nohac 1912, p. 174; Helm 1915, p. 185; Blum 1919b, p. 60; Milam 2003, pp. 115–38; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 240–41.

Cat. 47. *Countess Anna Potocka*, 1791

Oil on canvas, $55\frac{7}{8} \times 49\frac{9}{8}$ in. (142 × 126 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right, on stone): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun/a Rome/1791*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1814); by descent to Countess André Mniszzech, Wisniowiec, Poland; her son, Count Leon Mniszzech (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, April 9–11, 1902, no. 84, as *Princess Charles de Lorraine*, attributed to Vigée Le Brun, to Gardner); Count Karol Lanckoronski, Vienna; [Newhouse Galleries, New York, until 1952]; Mr. and Mrs. Kay Kimbell, Fort Worth (from 1952) to Kimbell Art Museum (from 1965); private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Fort Worth 1953, no. 20; Baillio 1982a, no. 34; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 239, 357, no. 102 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 39, vol. 3, p. 355; Sheriff 1996, p. 322 n. 22; Walczak 2004, pp. 17–18.

Cat. 48. *Hyacinthe Gabrielle Roland*, 1791

Oil on canvas, $39 \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ in. (99.1 × 74.9 cm)
Signed and dated (at left): *L. Vigée Le Brun/Roma 1791*
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Mildred Anna Williams Collection, Bequest Fund of Henry S. Williams in memory of H. K. S. Williams (1991.29)

PROVENANCE: the sitter's husband, Marquess Wellesley (until d. 1842); by descent to Hyacinthe Mary Wellesley and her husband, Edward John Littleton, Teddesley Park, Staffordshire (he d. 1863); by descent (until the 1930s); Baron Sanderson of Ayot; anonymous sale, Christie's, London, June 26, 1964, no. 74; [Duits, London, in 1965]; [Schaefer, New York, until 1967]; Elizabeth Parke Firestone, Newport (1967–d. 1990); her second posthumous sale, Christie's, New York, March 22–23, 1991, no. 654; [Mathiessen, London, and Guy Stair Sainty, New York, in 1991], to Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (from 1991).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Nash et al. 1993, no. 49; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 244, 358, no. 105 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 39; Duits 1965; Baillio 1988, p. 102; Stewart 1992, pp. 24–25, ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 216.

Cat. 49. *Giovanni Paisiello*, 1791

Oil on canvas, $51\frac{9}{16} \times 38\frac{3}{4}$ in. (131 × 98.5 cm)
Dated and inscribed (lower left, on the sheet lying on the books): *Rondo de Nina/a mei ben quando verraï/musica/Del Sigr Giovanni Paisiello*; (and on the score): *Te Deum/Messa in Musica/in occasione del*

felice viaggio / delle Loro Maestà delle Sicile / 1791

Paris, Salon, 1791, no. 772

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, on deposit from the Musée du Louvre (MV 5877)

PROVENANCE: the artist (until d. 1842); her niece, Madame Tripier Le Franc (in 1843); Musée du Louvre (from 1843); Château de Versailles (from 1921).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1791, no. 722; Baillio 1982a, pp. 92–96, no. 33, ill.; Ono 2011, pp. 172, 251, no. 70 (Jean-Philippe Baireil), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 232, 357, no. 99 (Gwenola Firmin), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 264, vol. 2, pp. 118, 119, 121; Mirimonde 1967, pp. 81–83; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 239.

Cat. 50. *Life Study of Lady Hamilton as the Cumaean Sibyl, 1792*

Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 22½ in. (73 × 57.2 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / a Rome 1792*

Private collection

PROVENANCE: her husband, Sir William Hamilton, Naples (his sale, Christie's, London, March 27–28, 1801, no. 28); Alleyne FitzHerbert, Baron St. Helens, London (1801–d. 1839); by descent to Sir John Richard Frederick FitzHerbert, 8th Baronet, Tissington Hall, Ashbourne (until d. 1989); private collection (until 2003); private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Derby 1877, no. 13; Baillio 2005, no. 145, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 246–47, 358, no. 107 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 88, 369; Walpole 1857–59, no. 2557; Nolhac 1908, p. 96; Nolhac 1912, p. 165; Helm 1915, p. 201; Blum 1919b, p. 100; Deutsch 1943, p. 41; Fothergill 1969, pp. 298–99, 401, 431; Baillio 1982a, p. 101; Fraser 1987, pp. 131, 253; Jenkins and Sloan 1996, p. 268, 271–72, 284; Goodden 1997, p. 120; Ingamells 1997, p. 45; Contogouris 2010, pp. 35–43, ill.; Hottle 2010, pp. 12, 131, 133, 136, 138, 139, 140–41; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 226–32.

Cat. 51. *Julie Le Brun as a Bather, 1792*

Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 21⅞ in. (73 × 55.5 cm)

Private collection

PROVENANCE: Prince Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov (until d. 1831), Saint Petersburg, or Arkhangelskoye Palace, near Moscow; by descent; Prince Felix

Felixovich Yusupov, Paris (from 1928); Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, Castagnola (before d. 1947); [Galerie Fischer, Lucerne, in 1986], to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 199, 354, no. 75 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 191; *Trésors d'Art en Russie* 6 (1906), pp. 204–5; Ernst 1924, p. 170; Réau 1928, p. 243, no. 574; Baillio 1982a, p. 76; Lang 2004, pp. 125–26.

Cat. 52. *Isabella Teotochi Marini, 1792*

Oil on paper, laid down on canvas, 19 × 13⅞ in. (48.3 × 35.2 cm)

Signed, dated, and inscribed (lower left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / pour son ami De Non / à Venise 1792*

Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey (1950.243)

PROVENANCE: Dominique Vivant Denon (until d. 1825; his posthumous sale, Paris, May 1, 1826, no. 210, to Pérignon); Tomasseto Mocenigo Soranzo, given by him to the sitter, Contessa Albrizzi, Venice (until 1836); by descent (until 1898); [Stefano Bardini, Florence, in 1898; his sale, Christie's, London, June 5–7, 1899, no. 484]; E. M. Hodgkins (until 1913); sale, Christie's, London, May 14, 1920, no. 83; [C. Morland Agnew, London]; Lord Burgh (his sale, Christie's, London, July 9, 1926, no. 132); Frederick A. Szarvasy, London (1936–d. 1948; his sale, Christie's, London, December 10, 1948, no. 60); [Roland, Browse, and Delbanco, London, until 1950], to Toledo Museum of Art (from 1950).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Bassi 1978, no. 72; Baillio 1982a, p. 102, no. 37, ill.; Rosenberg 1999, no. 540; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 234, 357, no. 100 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 371; Denon 1999, pp. 27, 79, 113, 116, 302, 337, 446; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, pp. 249–55, fig. 44.

Cat. 53. *Countess von Bucquoy, 1793*

Oil on canvas, 53½ × 39 in. (135.9 × 99.1 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L.E. Vigée*

Le Brun / a Vienne 1793

Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The William Hood Dunwoody Fund (78.7)

PROVENANCE: Prince Wenzel Paar, Vienna (until d. 1812); by descent (until 1948); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, 1948–78], to Minneapolis Institute of Arts (from 1978).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Baillio 1982a, pp. 103–4, no. 38; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 253, 358, no. 110 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 220, 371; "Accessions for the Year 1978," in *Minneapolis Institute of Arts Bulletin* 64 (1978–80), p. 115, no. 5; Sheriff 1996, p. 322 n. 22.

Cat. 54. *The Princess von und zu Liechtenstein as Iris, 1793*

Oil on canvas, oval, 25¾ × 21⅞ in. (65.4 × 53.6 cm)

Private collection

PROVENANCE: Count Arnošt Emanuel da Silva-Tarouca, Čechy pod Kosířem, Czechoslovakia (d. 1936); [Cailleux, Paris]; [John Levy, New York]; Florence Wickham Lueder, New York (her sale, Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, March 21, 1963, no. 26); Nicolas and Paula de Koenigsberg, Buenos Aires; Gaby Salomon, Buenos Aires; sale, Christie's, London, March 29, 1974, no. 35, ill.; [Cailleux, Paris, 1974]; Jean-Pierre Brasseur and M. Gregor, Paris and Zell, Germany (1974–2004; sale, Christie's, Paris, June 24, 2004, no. 106, ill.), to private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 219–20, 232.

Cat. 55. *Count Grigory Ivanovich Chernyshev, ca. 1793*

Oil on canvas, 22 × 17⅞ in. (56 × 44 cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 7459)

↪ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: the sitter, Saint Petersburg (until d. 1831); by descent in the Chernyshev-Kruglikov family, Saint Petersburg (until 1923); State Hermitage Museum (from 1923).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Montclos 2004, p. 302.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 371; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 5, no. 104, ill.; Vrangell 1911, pp. 22, 76, no. 110; Réau 1924, p. 296; Nemilova 1986, p. 409, no. 316, ill.

Cat. 56. *Baron Grigory Alexandrovich Stroganov, 1793*

Oil on canvas, oval, 36¼ × 26 in. (92 × 66 cm)

Signed and dated (at left): *L.E. Vigée Le Brun / à Vienne 1793*

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 5658)

↪ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1857); by descent, Saint Petersburg; Count V. A. Shermetev, Saint Petersburg; Shermetev Palace Museum; State Hermitage Museum (from 1921).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Leningrad 1938, no. 211; Gukovskii 1956, p. 14; Lemoyne de Forges 1965, no. 87; Martin-Méry 1965, no. 38; Paris 2002, no. 143; Ono 2011, pp. 178, 252, no. 73 (Xavier Salmon), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 264, 359, no. 118 (Ekaterina Deryabina), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–36, vol. 2, pp. 210–11, 219, 371; Dussieux 1876, p. 559; Vranghel' 1913, p. 22, no. 5; Réau 1924, p. 296; Réau 1929, no. 178; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 96, 116, nos. 58, 58a; Nemilova 1973, pp. 124–31; Nemilova 1986, p. 410, no. 317, ill.

Cat. 57. *Duchesse de Guiche*, 1794

Oil on canvas, 22½ × 18⅞ in. (57 × 46 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *Vigée/Le Brun à/Vienne 1794*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: Antoine Louis Marie de Gramont, duc de Guiche et de Gramont (until d. 1836); by descent to Antoine Alfred Agénor, 12th duc de Gramont; [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, until 1909]; probably Baron [Jacques or Léon] Cassel, Brussels; their niece, Madame Jacques-Robert Speyer; by descent to Didier Manheimer, Neuilly-sur-Seine and Boulogne-Billancourt; Micheline Bernadaud, Madame Manheimer, Versailles (until d. 2013; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, November 15, 2013, no. 54), to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1894, no. 134; Paris 1909, no. 185; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 258, 358, no. 114 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 372; Baillio 1993, pp. 20–29, ill.; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 583 n.17; Gueniffey 2013, p. 787.

Cat. 58. *The Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna Arranging Flowers*, 1795

Oil on canvas, 103⅜ × 78¾ in. (262.5 × 200 cm)
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 1283)

∞ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: Romanov Gallery of the Winter Palace (until 1918); State Hermitage Museum (from 1918).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Saint Petersburg 1902, pp. 85–87, no. 108; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 273, 359, no. 124 (Ekaterina Deryabina), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 299, vol. 3, p. 346; Golovine 1910, pp. 137–38; Vranghel' 1911, p. 25; Nolhac 1912, pp. 201, 265; Réau 1924, p. 297; Réau 1929, no. 174; Nemilova 1986, p. 415, no. 320, ill.

Cat. 59. *Grand Duchesses Alexandra Pavlovna and Elena Pavlovna*, 1796

Oil on canvas, 39 × 39 in. (99 × 99 cm)
Signed and dated (at right): *L.E.V. Le Brun 1796*
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 7747)

∞ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: Gatchina Palace Museum (until 1934); State Hermitage Museum (from 1934).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Pomeroy 2003, pp. 184 (Ekaterina Deryabina), ill.; Fukaya 2005, no. 38; Androsov 2011, no. 34; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 274, 359, no. 123 (Ekaterina Deryabina), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 294, 295, vol. 3, pp. 345–46; Dussieux 1876, p. 559; Catherine 1878, pp. 655, 661–62, 665; Nolhac 1908, pp. 113, 162; Vranghel' 1911, pp. 23–24, 76 n. 121; Nolhac 1912, p. 198; Réau 1924, pp. 296–97; Nemilova 1986, pp. 413–14, no. 319, ill.

Cat. 60. *Countess Ekaterina Vasilievna Skavronskaya*, 1796

Oil on canvas, 31½ × 26 in. (80 × 66 cm)
Signed and dated (at left): *E. Louise Vigée Le Brun/à S^t Petersburg/1796*
Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (RF 1966-5)

PROVENANCE: Prince Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov (until d. 1831), Yusupov Palace, Saint Petersburg, or Arkhangel'skoye Palace, near Moscow; by descent to Princess Zinaida Nikolayevna Yusupova, Countess Sumarkov-Elston (from 1891); confiscated by 1925 by the Bolshevik government and deposited in the Hermitage Museum (until 1930; sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, 1931]; Mr. and Mrs. Albert Blum, New York (from 1931); their daughter, Edith Clara Blum, New York and Paris (until 1966); Musée du Louvre (from 1996).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Saint Petersburg 1902, no. 106; Diaghilev 1905, no. 239; San Diego 1967,

unnumbered, ill.; Spate 1980, no. 123; Baillio 1982a, no. 43, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 270, 359, no. 121 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 346; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 1, no. 30, ill.; Nolhac 1908, p. 160, ill.; Helm 1915, p. 208; Yusupov 1920, no. 69; Ernst 1924, p. 174, ill.; Réau 1929, p. 37, no. 175; Constans 1967, nos. 4, 5, ill.; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 94, 101–2, no. 7a, ill.

Cat. 61. *Countess Anna Ivanovna Tolstaya*, 1796

Oil on canvas, 54¼ × 41 in. (137.7 × 104 cm)
Signed and dated (on the rock): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun/a St Petersburg 1796*
Private collection, Canada, on loan to the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1825); probably her daughter, Ekaterina Nikolayevna Tolstaya, Princess Konstanty Lubomirska; probably her daughter, Valentina Lubomirska, Comtesse Raymond de Ségur d'Aguesseau (until d. 1889); by descent; [Arnold Seligmann, Paris, ca. 1919]; Louis de Maniquet-Vaubert, Paris (from ca. 1919); his daughter, Marie-Louise de Maniquet-Vaubert, Madame Laurent Schiaffino, Paris; by descent; [Guy Stair Sainty, Edmondo di Robilant, and Marco Voena, London], to private collection, Canada (on loan to the National Gallery of Canada from 2010).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1919, no. 263; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 278, 360, no. 125 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 323–24, vol. 3, p. 347; Blum 1919a, p. 495; Nikolenko 1967, p. 107, no. 23 (as lost); Ryszkiewicz 1979, p. 31 and n. 45.

Cat. 62. *Grand Duchess Elizabeth Alexeyevna*, 1797

Oil on canvas, 30¾ × 26⅜ in. (78 × 67 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun 1797*
Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg (WO B 8012)

PROVENANCE: Amalie Friederike of Hesse-Darmstadt, Karlsruhe (until d. 1832); Wilhelmine Luise of Baden, Grand Duchess of Hesse and of the Rhine (1832–d. 1836); by descent, to the Hessische Hausstiftung (from 1986).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Seidel 1910, no. 75; Hedinger et al. 2010, p. 261 no. 28, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 277, 359, no. 124 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 300, 346; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1908–9, vol. 1, pp. 283, 300, 321, 339; Jullian 1969, p. 128, ill.

ENGRAVING: The portrait was engraved by Ignaz Sebastian Klauber in 1789, with the title *ELISABETH ALEXIEWNA/Grande Duchesse de toutes les Russies/peint par Louise le Brun 1798 [sic]/Gravé par Ign. S. Klauber 1798./Dédié à Son Altesse Impériale Monseigneur Alexandre Pawlowitsch (ELIZABETH ALEXEYEVNA/Grand Duchess of all Russia/Painted by Louise Le Brun 1798 [sic]/Engraved by Ign. S. Klauber 1798. A dedication to Grand Duke Alexander Pavlovich was printed in Paris after 1801 by the Imprimeries Sarazin, and the inscription, in Cyrillic and roman characters, indicates that Elizabeth Alexeyevna was at the time “empress of all Russia.”*

Cat. 63. *Stanislaw August Poniatowski, formerly King of Poland, 1797*
Oil on canvas, oval, 38⁷/₈ × 30³/₄ in. (98.7 × 78 cm)
Paris, Salon, 1802, no. 916
Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, on deposit from the Musée du Louvre (MV 5878)

PROVENANCE: the artist (until d. 1842); her niece, Madame Justin Tripiet Le Franc; Justin Tripiet Le Franc (until d. 1883); Musée du Louvre (from 1884); Château de Versailles (from 1921).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1802, no. 916; Baillio 1982a, pp. 114–17, no. 47, ill.; Paris 1989b, no. 17, ill.; Starcky 2011, no. 153, ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 27–36, 347; Nohac 1908, pp. 116–17, ill.; Ryszkiewicz 1979, pp. 17, 40.

Cat. 64. *Princess Tatyana Vasilievna Yusupova, 1797*
Oil on canvas, 55¹/₂ × 41 in. (141 × 104 cm)
Signed and dated (on tree trunk): *L. E. Vigée/Le Brun 1797/a St. Petersburg*
Tokyo Fuji Art Museum (W 68)

∞ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1841); by descent to Princess Zinaida Nikolaevna Yusupova, Countess Sumarkov-Elston and Prince Felix Felixovitch Yusupov, Saint Petersburg (from 1891); confiscated during the Russian Revolution and deposited at the Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (until 1933, sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, New York, from 1933]; Roberto Polo (sale, Théâtre

des Champs-Élysées, Paris, May 30, 1988); Tokyo Fuji Art Museum (from 1988).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Saint Petersburg 1902, no. 113; Diaghilev 1905, no. 257; New York 1948, no. 42; Baillio 1982a, pp. 110–12, no. 44, ill.; Ono 2011, pp. 184, 253, no. 76 (Jean-Philippe Bareil), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 191, vol. 3, p. 346; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 1, no. 10, ill.; Prakhov 1906, pp. 205–6, no. 114, ill.; Nohac 1908, pp. 112, 162, ill.; Helm 1915, pp. 32–33, 225; Hautecoeur 1917, p. 107; Blum 1919b, pp. 71, 102; Ernst 1924, p. 176, ill.; Réau 1928, p. 244; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 93, 105, no. 17, ill.; Krasnobaeva and Sharnova 2011, pp. 210–11; Savinskaia 2013.

Cat. 65. *Princess Ekaterina Ilyinichna Golenishcheva-Kutuzova, 1797*
Oil on canvas, 32¹/₄ × 26³/₄ in. (82 × 68 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun/St Petersburg 1797*
The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (2793)

∞ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: probably by descent to Nikolai Nikolayevich Tuchkov; Uglich Museum (in 1905); State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (from ca. 1939).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Lushev 1870, no. 725; Diaghilev 1905, no. 253; Moscow 1955, p. 26.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 347; Dussieux 1856, p. 420, no. 909; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 1, no. 194; Vrangl' 1911, pp. 9, 25, 77, nos. 6–9; Hourticq 1939, p. 145; Nikolenko 1967, p. 100; Kuznetsova and Georgievskia 1980, p. 407, no. 584; Danilevich 2000; Kuznetsova and Sharnova 2005, p. 68, no. 53.

Cat. 66. *The Countess Ekaterina Sergeevna Samoilova with Two of Her Children, 1797*
Oil on canvas, 90¹/₄ × 70¹/₈ in. (229 × 178 cm)
Signed and dated (lower left): *Vigée Le Brun Petersburg 1797*
The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (GE 9626)

∞ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: by descent to her son-in-law, Count Alexey Alexeyevich Bobrinsky, Saint

Petersburg (d. 1868); by descent to Count Alexey Alexandrovich Bobrinsky, Saint Petersburg and Grasse (d. 1927); State Russian Museum; State Hermitage Museum (from 1941).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Lushev 1870, no. 740; Diaghilev 1905, no. 232; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 282, 360, no. 127 (Ekaterina Deryabina), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 346; Roche 1905, p. 422; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 5, no. 2; Vrangl' 1911, pp. 22, 76 n. 115; Nohac 1912, p. 197; Réau 1924, p. 299; Réau 1929, no. 180; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 94, 102, no. 8; Nemilova 1986, p. 417, no. 322, ill.

Cat. 67. *Princess Anna Alexandrovna Golitsyna, ca. 1797*

Oil on canvas, 53¹/₂ × 39¹/₂ in. (135.9 × 100.3 cm)
The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Mary Frick Jacobs Collection (BMA 1938.192)

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1842); by descent to Elizaveta Alexeyevna Naryshkina (in 1905); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, after 1917–1923]; Mary Frick Jacobs (1923–d. 1938), to the Baltimore Museum of Art (from 1938).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Diaghilev 1905, no. 247; Rosenthal 1968, no. 46 (George Levitine); Baillio 1982a, no. 48, ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 284, 360, no. 128 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 112, 347; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 3, no. 17, ill.; Nohac 1908, p. 112, ill.; Helm 1915, p. 198; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 93, 102–3, no. 9; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 338.

Cat. 68. *Portrait of a Young Woman, ca. 1797*
Oil on canvas, 32³/₈ × 27³/₄ in. (82.2 × 70.5 cm)
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Robert Dawson Evans Collection (17.3256)

PROVENANCE: Eugène Kraemer (his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, May 5–6, 1913, no. 50); E. M. Hodgkins; Maria Antoinette Evans, Boston (until 1917), to Museum of Fine Arts (from 1917).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Baillio 1982a, pp. 112–13, no. 45; Chen 2014, n.p., ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 287, 360, no. 130 (Anna Soulimova), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Helm 1915, pp. 104, 213, ill.

Cat. 69. *Ivan Ivanovich Shuvalov*, ca. 1797–1800
Oil on canvas, 33 × 24 in. (83.8 × 61 cm)
North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh,
Purchased with funds from the State of North
Carolina (52.9.224)

PROVENANCE: Countess Varvara Nikolayevna
Golovina, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and
Paris (until d. 1821); by descent to Count Karol
Lanckoroński, Vienna (until d. 1933); by descent
(from 1933); [Frederick Mont and Newhouse,
New York]; North Carolina Museum of Art
(from 1952).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Rosenthal 1968, no. 45
(George Levitine), ill.; Raleigh 1972, no. 12, ill.;
Harris and Nochlin 1976, p. 192, no. 58 (Ann
Sutherland Harris), ill.; Baillio 1982a, no. 42, ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Nollhac 1908, ill.; Vrangel'
1910, pp. 32–33; Helm 1915, p. 220 (conflates
portrait with that of Count Pavel Andreyevich
Shuvalov); Nikolenko 1967, p. 114, no. 46, ill.

Cat. 70. *Countess Varvara Nikolayevna Golovina*,
ca. 1797–1800

Oil on canvas, octagonal, 32⁷/₈ × 26¹/₄ in.
(83.5 × 66.7 cm)

The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of
Fine Arts, University of Birmingham (80.1)

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1821); by descent
to Count Karol Lanckoronksi, Vienna (until d. 1933);
by descent (1933–78); [Heim, P. & D. Colnaghi, and
Hazzlitt, Gooden & Fox, London, 1978–80]; The
Trustees of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts (1980).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Baillio 1982a, no. 46; Baillio
and Salmon 2015, p. 288, no. 131 (Paul Lang), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 2, pp. 323–24; Nikolenko 1967, p. 104, no. 12;
Spencer-Longhurst 1981, pp. 741–45.

Cat. 71. *Julie Le Brun as Flora*, ca. 1799

Oil on canvas, 51 × 38¹/₂ in. (130.5 × 98 cm)
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida,
Rexford Stead Art Purchase Fund (1983.5)

PROVENANCE: ?Kapitolina Semyonovna Klotchkova,
Moscow (in 1905); [Charles Brunner, Paris
ca. 1928]; Schwob d'Héricourt, France (until 1979).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baillio 1982a, no. 50, ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Nikolenko 1967, pp. 92, 111,
nos. 36, 36a (as second version of *Princess Evdokia
Ivanovna Golitsyna as Flora*).

Cat. 72. *Self-Portrait*, 1800

Oil on canvas, 30⁷/₈ × 26³/₄ in. (78.5 × 68 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *Vigée Le Brun a
Petersbourg 1800*

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg
(GE 7586)

≈ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: Academy of Arts, Saint Petersburg
(until 1922); State Hermitage Museum (from 1922).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Lushev 1870, no. 729;
Diaghilev 1905, no. 256; Paris 1986, no. 313; Paris
2002, no. 142; Pomeroy 2003, p. 188 (Ekaterina
Deryabina) ill.; Ono 2011, pp. 186, 253, no. 77
(Xavier Salmon), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 2, p. 472, vol. 3, pp. 37, 38–39, 348; Dussieux
1876, p. 560; Nollhac 1908, p. 162; Réau 1924, p. 299;
Réau 1929, no. 180; Nemilova 1986, p. 421, no. 326,
ill.; Deryabina 2002, pp. 23–29.

Cat. 73. *The Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky in a
Blue Mantle*, 1800

Oil on canvas, 30¹/₂ × 26³/₄ in. (77.5 × 68 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun a
Petersbourg. 1800*

The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (4617)

≈ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1825); by descent
at Maryino, village of Ivanovskoye, Kursk
Province; State Museum Fund; State Tretyakov
Gallery (from 1920).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Diaghilev 1905, no. 235;
Moscow 1918, no. 107; Moscow 1925, no. 139;
Aleksandrova et al. 2002, p. 70.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 2, pp. 303, 341–42, vol. 3, pp. 4–5, 348; Nikolai
Mikhailovich 1905–9, vol. 4, no. 16; Zhidkov 1952,
p. 501; Nikolenko 1967, p. 116, no. 57; Antonova et al.
1984, p. 538; Tretyakov 1998, no. 122; Petrucci 2011,
pp. 38, 40, 41; Tretyakov 2015, pp. 106–7, no. 127.

Cat. 74. *Varvara Ivanovna Lodomirskaya*, 1800

Oil on canvas, 25 × 21³/₄ in. (63.5 × 55.2 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L.E. Vigée/Le Brun/
1800/a Moscou*

Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio, Museum
Purchase, Derby Fund (1963.019)

PROVENANCE: ?M. A. Myatleva, Saint Petersburg
(end of the 19th century); A. Couteaux, Paris; Boris

Serguyeff; [Wildenstein, until 1948]; Oscar B.
Cintas, Havana (1948–d. 1957); Cintas Fellowship
Program, Institute of International Education,
New York (his sale, Parke-Bernet, New York, May 1,
1963, no. 21), to Columbus Museum of Art (from
1963).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Lushev 1870, p. 51, no. 735,
ill.; Sutton 1968, no. 714; Harris and Nochlin 1976,
no. 61; Baillio 1982a, pp. 121–23, no. 51, ill.; Baillio
and Salmon 2015, p. 290, no. 132.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37,
vol. 3, pp. 55–56, 61; Nikolai Mikhailovich 1905–9,
vol. 1, no. 175; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 94–95, 98,
106, no. 19, ill.; Columbus 1978, pp. 121–22, ill.;
Greer 1979, pp. 81, 342 n. 27; Rykova 2002, p. 70,
ill.; Kuptsov 2005, p. 112, no. 149; Rudneva 2009;
Kuznetsov 2012, pp. 23–25.

Cat. 75. *Luise von Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of
Prussia*, 1802

Oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 32⁷/₈ in. (100 × 83.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *Vigée Le Brun/1802*
HRH Georg Friedrich Prince of Prussia,
Hohenzollern Castle

PROVENANCE: her husband, Friedrich Wilhelm III
of Prussia (until d. 1840); by descent, to H.R.H.
Georg Friedrich, Prince of Prussia, Hohenzollern
Castle.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: (?) Paris, Salon, 1805;
Rosenberg 2005, pp. 297, 443, no. 167 (David
Mandrella), ill.; Hedinger et al. 2010, pp. 198, 216,
no. 39 (Stefan Schimmel), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: “Die Porträtmahlerin Le
Brun,” *Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 28, 1802, p. 592;
Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 109, 350;
Bouchot 1898, p. 227, ill. (Tardieu engraving);
Seidel 1905, p. 128, ill.; Bernhard 1965, p. 78;
Goodden 1997, pp. 206–7; Simon 1999, pp. 11, 32
n. 46, ill.; Kemper 2002, pp. 32–34; Feldhahn 2003,
pp. 83–84, ill.; Walczak 2004, pp. 68–71, ill.

Cat. 76. *Princess Antoní Henryk Radziwill*, 1802

Oil on canvas, 31³/₄ × 25¹/₄ in. (80.5 × 64 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L.E. Vigée/Le Brun/
1802*

Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter, Berlin (until d. 1836); by
descent to Prince Janusz Franciszek Radziwill,
Nieborów Palace; confiscated by the Socialist
government of Poland and sent to the Muzeum

Narodowe, Warsaw (1945); returned, by exchange, to Prince Stanislaw Albrecht Radziwill, Paris and London (his posthumous sale, Christie's, London, May 26, 1978, no. 175, ill.; bought back by his heirs), by descent (until 1981); [Wildenstein, New York], to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Paris 1958, no. 50 (misdated), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1802, p. 592; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 350; Boehn 1921–22, vol. 2, pp. 10–11, no. 21, ill.; Mycielski and Wasylewski 1927, pp. 81–83, 91–92, ill.; Wegner 1954, p. 100; Białostocki and Walicki 1955, p. 548, no. 400 (misdated); Łodyńska-Kosińska 1956, pp. 271–80, ill.; Tatariewicz 1958, p. 207, fig. 11; Ryszkiewicz 1979, pp. 34–37, fig. 13; Haroche-Bouzinac 2011, p. 601 n. 7.

Cat. 77. *Prince Ivan Ivanovich Baryatinsky*, 1803–5

Oil on canvas, 34¼ × 26⅝ in. (87 × 67 cm)
The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (839)

↪ Ottawa only

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1825); by descent, at Maryino, village of Ivanovskoye, Kursk Province (until 1918); State Museum Fund; State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (from 1924).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Diaghilev 1905, no. 246; Antonova et al. 2002, no. 18; Antonova et al. 2005, pp. 24, 93–94, no. 15.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 348–49; Nikolenko 1967, p. 118, no. 65; Kuznetsova and Sharnova 2005, pp. 68, 71, no. 54.

Cat. 78. *Lady Ossulston*, 1806

Pastel on paper, laid down on canvas, 18 × 13¼ in. (45.8 × 33.6 cm)
Inscribed (on a handwritten label on the reverse of the frame in which the painting was sold in 2009): *Par mde Le Brun/Corisande de Gramont/Countess of Tankerville/Done in 1806*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: Charles Augustus Bennet, Lord Ossulston, later 5th Earl of Tankerville (1806–d. 1859); by descent; Peter Grey Bennett (until 2009; sale, Bonhams, New York, April 21, 2009, no. 89), to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Baetjer and Shelley 2011, p. 42, no. 30 (Katharine Baetjer), ill.

Cat. 79. *Caroline Murat, later Queen of Naples, and Her Daughter*, 1807

Oil on canvas, 85¼ × 56½ in. (216.5 × 143.5 cm)
Signed and dated (at left): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun/1807*
Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 4712)

PROVENANCE: Caroline Murat, Palais de l'Élysée, Paris; Château de Versailles (from the reign of Louis Philippe).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Olivési 2001, no. 45, ill.; Caracciolo 2013, no. 90, ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 148, 227–28, 351; Mazzocca 2002, pp. 151–54, no. 212.

Cat. 80. *Madame de Staël as Corinne at Cape Miseno*, 1807–9

Oil on canvas, 55⅝ × 46½ in. (140 × 118 cm)
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Genève, Gift of Madame Necker-de Saussure, 1841 (1841-0003)

PROVENANCE: the sitter, Geneva (given to the Musée Rath, Geneva, 1841); Musées d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève (from 1910); deposited at the Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Salle Lullin, Geneva (from 1986); Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Genève (from 1994).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: London 1972, p. 166, no. 262, pl. 16; Hauptman 1991, pp. 106–7, no. 30; Eger and Peltz 2008, pp. 84–93; Paccoud 2009, p. 230, no. V.6; Ono 2011, pp. 188, 253–54, no. 78 (Jean-Philippe Bareil), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 262–63; Loche 1996, pp. 302–7, no. 78; Sheriff 1996, pp. 239–61.

Cat. 81. *Festival of the Shepherds at Unspunnen, August 17, 1808*, 1808–9

Oil on canvas, 33⅝ × 44⅞ in. (84 × 114 cm)
Gottfried Keller-Stiftung, Bundesamt für Kultur, Bern, on deposit at the Kunstmuseum Bern (G 0843)

PROVENANCE: Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (in 1834); Theodor Engelmann, Basel; Gottfried Keller Foundation, held at the Kunstmuseum Bern (from 1910).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Gamboni and Germann 1991, pp. 404–5, no. 260.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 292–95; Kuthy 1976, notebook 2 pp. 158–71; Bern 1983, pp. 86–87, no. 270; Kuthy 1983, pp. 12–13; Tavel 1983, pp. 28–29.

Cat. 82. *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1808–9

Oil on canvas, 16¼ × 13 in. (41.3 × 33 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: Franz Niklaus König, Unterseen (perhaps until d. 1832); Frau Dewild, Bern; Y. Courvoisier, Lugano; Christie's, London, December 8, 2009, no. 35; private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 289 n. 1; Kuthy 1975; Kuthy 1976, notebook 2, p. 171 n. 24.

Cat. 83. *Baronne de Thellusson*, ca. 1814

Oil on canvas, 31½ × 24⅞ in. (78 × 63 cm)
Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1852); by descent; Gustave Laurens de Waru (until d. 1941); given or sold by his widow to his distant cousin, Comte Xavier de Poret (until d. 1975); by descent, to private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Girod de l'Ain 1956, pp. 143, 144, fig. 55; Girod de l'Ain 1977, p. 284, ill.

Cat. 84. *Boy with a Flintlock Rifle*, 1817

Oil on canvas, 21¾ × 18¼ in. (55.2 × 46.4 cm)
Signed and dated (on the barrel of the gun): *Vigée Le Brun 1817*
National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay (1986.343)

PROVENANCE: sale, Palais Galliera, Paris, March 15, 1975, no. 4; [H. Shickman Gallery, New York, until 1978]; Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay, McLean, Virginia (1978–86), to National Museum of Women in the Arts (from 1986).

Cat. 85. *Tatyana Borisovna Potemkina*, 1820

Oil on canvas, 41¾ × 31⅞ in. (106 × 81 cm)
Signed and dated (lower right): *. . . Brun /1820*
Private collection

PROVENANCE: A.C.P.J. Honigmann, Heerlen and The Hague; private collection.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 351.

Cat. 86. *Count Emmanuel Nikolayevich Tolstoy, 1823*

Oil on canvas, 36³/₈ × 28¹/₂ in. (92.5 × 72.5 cm)

Signed and dated (lower right): *L. E. Vigée Le Brun / 1823*

Paris, Salon, 1824, no. 1057

Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter's mother, Countess Anna Ivanovna Tolstaya, Paris (until d. 1825); probably her daughter, Ekaterina Nikolayevna Tolstaya, Princess Konstanty Lubomirska; probably her daughter, Valentina Lubomirska, Comtesse Raymond de Ségur d'Aguesseau (until d. 1889); by descent; Georges-Joseph Demotte (in 1919); [Arnold Seligmann, Paris]; Louis de Maniquet-Vaubert, Paris; his daughter, Marie-Louise de Maniquet-Vaubert, Madame Laurent Schiaffino, Paris; by descent, to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1824, no. 1057; Paris 1919, no. 41.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Blum 1919a, p. 495, ill.; Nikolenko 1967, pp. 118–19, no. 66.

Cat. 87. *The Duchesse de Berry in a Blue Velvet Dress, 1824*

Oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 29¹/₂ in. (100 × 75 cm)

Signed and dated (lower left): *L. E. Vigée / Le Brun / . . . 4*

Paris, Salon, 1824, no. 1055

Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter, Paris and Schloss Brunnsee, Styria, Austria (until d. 1870); by descent to one of her children by her second husband—Clémentina Lucchesi Palli (d. 1925), Francesca Lucchesi Palli (d. 1923), Maria Isabella Lucchesi Palli (d. 1873), or the 9th Duca della

Grazia (d. 1911); [Dino Franzin, Milan]; Brandolino Brandolini d'Adda, Conte di Valmareno (until d. 2005), to private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1824, no. 1055; Dupont-Logié 2007, no. 149 (Patrick Guibal), ill.; Blois 2013, ill.

SELECTED REFERENCE: Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, pp. 328, 352.

Cat. 88. *Augustin Pajou (French, 1730–1809). Madame Vigée Le Brun, 1783*

Terracotta, H. 21⁷/₈ in. (55.5 cm); H. with base

27³/₄ in. (70.5 cm); W. 17¹/₂ in. (44.5 cm); D. 8¹/₄ in. (21 cm)

Signed and dated (on the reverse): *Pajou f. 1783*

Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 218

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Sculptures (RF 2909)

PROVENANCE: Evrard-Joseph-Charlemagne Rhoné (until d. 1861; his sale, Paris, May 13, 1861, no. 529); Henri Didier (his sale, Paris, June 10–11, 1868, no. 114); Madame Denain (by 1874–93; her sale, Paris, April 6–7, 1893, no. 182); François Wilbrod Chabrol (by 1908–19); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, 1919–35]; Edward J. Berwind (d. 1936); Julia A. Berwind, New York (1936–d. 1961; her estate sale, Parke Bernet, New York, February 9–10, 1962, no. 322); [French & Co., New York, until 1967], to Musée du Louvre (from 1967).

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1783, no. 218; Paris 1874, 1st series, p. 29, no. 7, 2nd series, no. 17 (lent by Madame Denain); Draper and Scherf 1997, pp. 254–57, no. 104 (Guilhem Scherf), ill.; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 84, 347, no. 2 (Joseph Baillio), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Brière and Vitry 1908, pp. 178–79; Lami 1910–11, vol. 2, pp. 217–18; Stein 1912, pp. 44–47, 413; Gimpel 1963, p. 146; Baillio 1982a, p. 44, ill.

Cat. 89. *Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun (French, 1748–1813). Self-Portrait, 1795*

Oil on canvas, 51¹/₂ × 39 in. (131 × 99 cm)

Inscribed (on title page of volume on which sitter leans): . . . *Par J.B. LEB . . . / TOME SECO . . . / 179 . . .* Private collection

PROVENANCE: the sitter (until d. 1813); his niece, Madame Justin Tripier Le Franc (1830–d. 1872); Justin Tripier Le Franc (1872–d. 1883; his posthumous sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, June 5–7, 1883, no. 10); Joseph Bardac, Paris (until 1927; his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, December 9, 1927, no. 35); [Wildenstein, Paris]; sale, Paris, October 16, 1940; [Heim-Gairac, Paris, about 1956]; private collection.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Salon, 1795, no. 301; Paris 1939, no. 1078; Baillio 1989, no. 90; Baillio 2005, no. 148; Baillio and Salmon 2015, pp. 103, 348, no. 13 (Stéphane Guégan), ill.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Emile-Mâle 1956, ill.; Haskell 1976, p. 18, ill.; Bailey 1984, ill.; Pommier 1991, ill.; Bailey 2002, p. 23, ill.; Michel 2007, p. 84; Guichard 2014, pp. 253–54, ill.

Cat. 90. *Alexis-Joseph Pérignon (French, 1806–1882). Marie Antoinette Gathering the Brushes of Madame Vigée Le Brun, 1784, ca. 1859*

Oil on canvas, 53¹/₈ × 39¹/₄ in. (134.9 × 99.7 cm)

Signed (lower right): *Pérignon*

Paris, Salon, 1859, no. 2382

New Orleans Museum of Art, Gift of Joseph Baillio (2010.150)

PROVENANCE: private collection, France; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 7, 2010, no. 36; Joseph Baillio, New York (in 2010), to New Orleans Museum of Art (from 2010).

SELECTED EXHIBITION: Paris 1859, no. 2382.

NOTES TO THE ESSAYS

The Artistic and Social Odyssey of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun

1. Vigée Le Brun began reversing the order of her given names at an early age, and those in her inner circle called her “Louise,” which is how she often signed her works and documents. In her will of 1825 she indicated her final wishes, using her eccentric orthography (approximated in the following English translation): “A caveat: I have often signed in my deeds espily in The purchase of my house in Lucienne Louise elisabeth vigée Le Brun it was by distraction having always signed all my paintings that way but following The order of my Batismal certificate I ought to sign Elisabeth Louise.” The first and last names of her husband, Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun, are written without hyphenation.
2. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, p. 3.
3. Madame Bocquet and her daughter, Madame Filleul, were guillotined in 1794, as was Madame Chalgrin, the daughter of Joseph Vernet. Among the finest paintings by Anne Rosalie Bocquet Filleul is her portrait of Benjamin Franklin of about 1778 (Philadelphia Museum of Art).
4. Wille 1857, vol. 1, p. 568, entry of February 25, 1774.
5. We do not know whether she kept a register of her sitters like the *Livre de Raison* (account book) of Hyacinthe Rigaud (Institut de France) or the “sitter books” of Joshua Reynolds, one of which—from 1755—has survived (Cottonian Collection, City Museum and Art Gallery, Plymouth, England).
6. Her sitters at this time included the libertine comte Jean Baptiste Du Barry de Cérés and the marquis de Choiseul Beaupré. Vigée painted Du Barry in 1773; her portrait of Choiseul was sold at the Hôtel Drouot on November 17, 2004, erroneously attributed to Greuze.
7. Vigée Le Brun’s copy in oil of La Tour’s pastel of Le Moyne is at the Cleveland Museum of Art (2011.49); her pastel of the sculptor’s son Jean Baptiste Antoine, previously attributed to Perronneau—which the present author restored to her in 1982—is in a private collection (see Arnould 2008, pp. 117–18, fig. 6). For the duchesse de Chartres, see Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 149, no. 43, ill.
8. The sellers were Marie Madeleine (“Marguerite”) de Lubert (1702–1785), a writer of children’s tales, and her brother Louis Pierre, former *maître de camp* of dragoons and adjutant in the bodyguard of Stanislaw Leszczyński, duc de Lorraine, Louis XV’s father-in-law.
9. Sale, Cabinet Coutau-Bégarie, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, May 25, 2011, no. 77 (Baillio and Salmon 2015, p. 16, fig. 4).
10. Of the twelve or more works in the handbook of the Salon de Saint-Luc (nos. 169–175), only the three allegories of the arts (Painting, Poetry [cat. 4], and Music) can be identified on Vigée Le Brun’s lists. She also exhibited the portrait of Dumesnil (no. 169); the portrait of M.*** playing the lyre (perhaps the oil portrait of a man as Apollo in the Musée de l’Opéra [Bibliothèque Nationale de France]; see Castil-Blaze 1855, p. 222); and the portrait of M. le Comte, with a globe and books (no. 172; no. 36 at the sale of the Hôtel Drouot, June 3, 2004).
11. National Archives of France, Minutier Central, Etude Arnaud, bundle 51, item 1109; bundle 51, item 1134; and bundle 85, item 677.
12. “[The Le Brun saleroom] is located in the rue de Cléry, at the former Hôtel de Lubert, & was built from the drawings & under the supervision of M. Raimond, royal architect. You enter through a vestibule, to the right of which are two rooms, one for porters & the other for servants; a large staircase, nine feet wide, leads to the saleroom, which is 43 feet long & 31 feet wide, not including the cabinets and corridors, 4½ feet deep, above which are rotating galleries with private staircases. It is 20 feet high without the cornice, & without the elevation of the arches & the loft, through whose opening daylight penetrates into the hall through the stained-glass windows” (Dulaure 1787b, pp. 390–91). According to Luc Vincent Thiéry: “M. Le Brun, custodian of the paintings of HRH Monseigneur COMTE D’ARTOIS, residing on the left side of that street in the former Hôtel de Lubert, is of all dealers the one who has traveled the most to foreign countries. It is through the multiplicity of his travels & his knowledge of painting that he has in some sense managed to double the number of masterpieces that decorate the private town houses of this capital. In his house he has a store of paintings of all kinds, in which he trades with particular distinction. He also produces catalogues raisonnés for the finest sales, which he is often given the honor of organizing. . . . M. Le Brun has kept for himself, for his own enjoyment & that of his wife . . . a selection of the most famous masters of the three schools: exquisite & rare drawings; rich portfolios of prints; antique Egyptian, Greek, & Roman bronzes; a suite of cameos & engraved stones in a perfect state of preservation. A large number of richly mounted vases in agate, jasper & lapis; precious pieces of lacquerware. A collection of shells & minerals of the first order; superb Boulle furniture, & a number of curious & interesting objects. M. Le Brun . . . proposes to have a gallery built there” (Thiéry 1787, vol. 1, pp. 440–42).
13. Barthélemy François Joseph Mouffle d’Angerville in Bachaumont et al. 1783–89, vol. 22, pp. 103–4.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 3–11.
15. Baillio 1981a, 1981b.
16. On August 19, 1785, disguised as Almaviva in Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais’s *Le Barbier de Séville*, a play by Beaumarchais (1732–1799), Vaudreuil became, during a single performance, the suitor of Rosine, played by Marie Antoinette herself in her theater at the Petit Trianon.
17. On the Vaudreuil collection, which included many works by Vigée Le Brun, see Thiéry 1787, vol. 2, pp. 542–49. Vigée Le Brun’s *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* was commemorated in an engraving exhibited at the Salon in 1785, by Johann Gotthard von Müller after his own drawing of 1783 (Staatsgalerie Stuttgart [C 7051]; see Rümelin 2000, no. 61). The painting’s history is captivating. Vigée Le Brun claims that she painted it in Brussels after visiting, with her husband, the Van Havre collection in Antwerp, where she saw Rubens’s famous *Presumed Portrait of Susanna Lunden* (*The Straw Hat*), ca. 1622–25 (National Gallery, London [NG852]; Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 82–84). It was her first portrait on wood, a support she would use until late 1789 for a series of remarkable works. Very quickly, the artist’s husband sold it to the comte de Vaudreuil for the reported price of 10,000 livres, an astronomical sum (*Correspondance secrète* 1787–90, vol. 15, p. 418, article of February 15, 1784). The count lent it to the Salon de la Correspondance in May 1783 (no. 153), and then to the Salon du Louvre (no. 119).

In the course of a stay in Paris, Caleb Whitefoord (1734–1810), secretary of the British commission responsible for drafting the 1783 peace treaty ending the American War of Independence, composed a poem addressed to “Madame Le Brun an eminent Artist at Paris. On seeing a beautiful & excellent Portrait of

her, painted by herself," in which he compared the self-portrait to the composite masterpiece of the Greek painter Zeuxis (original document, British Museum, London, Manuscript Department, call no. 36596, fol. 61), of which this is the final stanza:

But his work so renowned by Le Brun is
outdone,
And her own charming self is the model
alone;
This Portrait excelling in every part,
The Goddess in Beauty; the Painter in Art.

- During the Revolution, Vaudreuil arranged for his cousin, the comte de Paroy, to transfer the picture to London, where it was sold at Peter Coxé's auction house on May 28, 1810 (no. 17), to Aleyne FitzHerbert, Baron St. Helens; it passed by descent and later appeared as lot 51 in a Christie's sale on December 12, 1896, where it was knocked down to Colnaghi's. In 1898 Bernard Berenson tried to persuade Isabella Stewart Gardner to purchase the picture for £4,000 (see Berenson 1987, p. 146, letter dated London, July 27, 1898). Colnaghi's ultimately sold it to Baron Edmond de Rothschild (1845–1923) or his son Maurice (1881–1957).
18. Two lampoons, published anonymously in March and April 1789—*Lettre de Madame Le Brun à M. de Calonne* and *Réponse à M. de Calonne à la dernière lettre de Madame Le Brun*—convey the tone. (Excerpts quoted in Baillio 1982a, pp. 132–33.)
 19. Beaumarchais, *Le Barbier de Séville* (act 2, scene 8), in Beaumarchais 1988, p. 310.
 20. Lapauze 1903, pp. 183–84.
 21. Letter dated September 14, 1795. Vorontsov 1870–95, vol. 8, p. 113.
 22. Inv. no. 200751.
 23. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 3–4.
 24. Letter from Vigée Le Brun to the artist Charles Edouard Crespy-Le Prince, August 11, 1831 (private collection, New York). This captivating letter, translated into English, is quoted in part, with an approximation of the artist's eccentric spelling: "I have often heard about notre dame de paris by victor hugo, I know that work is full of verve & originality, but From what I've been Told about it I would have to have the monstrous pasages taken out they are Too strong for me. I am not of this century & do not want to dull my sensations. I wuld lose thereby The charm of my emagination which lives only on calm and Dreams

happiness & Tranquility, you know how much everything unfortunate affects me not for myself, witness The tale of our misfortunes The details of which I could not bear Last year, will you remember It?

People sometimes used to make fun of my ideas about Noises, When I said there were Round ones, pointed ones, angular ones. That is because they truly give me that impression, I could even draw a few of them. . . . so mr. hugo also has that acute sensitivity I am delighted that he is becoming for me an [illegible] authority."

25. On Vigée Le Brun's hypersensitivity to sounds, bright light, and colors, see Vigée Le Brun 1903a, pp. 471–83.
26. See Baillio 1988.
27. Baillio 1993.
28. Baillio 1983.
29. On this subject, see Jones 2014, a key work whose starting point is Vigée Le Brun's *Maternal Tenderness* of 1786 (fig. 13).
30. Watelet and Levesque 1792, pp. 149–50.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 153–54.
32. Levey 1993, p. 280. He had earlier written: "The [eighteenth] century's achievements deserved their place in art: the philosophical, scientific, industrial advances which had been made through fresh study of nature. Naturalness, which was not at all a discovery of Rousseau's but which he had made into a doctrine, was really the century's last burst of optimism. At the emotional extreme it found Madame Vigée-Lebrun, who gave it chic and confused simplicity in dress with goodness of heart. Ravished by the charm of her own appearance, and hardly able to paint a male sitter, Vigée-Lebrun continued the century's cult of women. By removing any suggestions of intelligence (naturally) as if it had been rouge, she created the limpid, fashionably artless portrait, of which the Princesse de Polignac is a brilliant example. . . . The Princesse de Polignac claims to be just like us—an amiable but unconvincing claim. In Vigée-Lebrun we have the last view of eighteenth-century woman—who had begun as a goddess, became a courtesan, and now ended all heart—before Napoleon and War banish her from the centre of events" (Levey 1966, pp. 152, 154).
33. Nochlin 1971.
34. "The emigration [of the comte de Provence] on June 20, 1791, without his having paid Mme Guiard the agreed-upon price of thirty

thousand livres for that unfinished painting or reimbursed her expenses (estimated at eight thousand livres), caused her considerable harm; an even greater disaster lay in store for her, however. After her protector's departure, she no longer had any reason to complete the large canvas, and it can be assumed that she left it rolled up in her atelier, waiting for better days. On August 11, 1793, she received the order to deliver, in order to be burned, the large and small canvases and all the studies. . . . [and] the large work was destroyed" (Passez 1973, pp. 220–21, no. 102).

35. Haroche-Bouzinac 2008.
36. Beauvoir 1974, p. 786.
37. Sheriff 1996, pp. 43–52.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

The Women of the French Royal Academy

1. The proposal to establish an academy was presented in 1648 to Louis XIV (1638–1715) and his mother, the regent Anne of Austria (1601–1666). Guérin 1715, pp. 5–28, 257–60; Vitet 1880; Benhamou 2009. For academy deliberations, see Montaiglon 1875–92. Anyone with an interest in the wider subject of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture and its practices should consult two fine recent books: Michel 2012 and Williams 2015.
In the winter of 2012, I was a Museum Scholar at the Getty Research Institute. For this privilege, which has benefited my work on French eighteenth-century painting in general and this essay in particular, I am indebted to Scott Schaefer, Peter Björn Kerber, and Thomas W. Gaehtgens. They have my warmest thanks.
2. Vitet 1880, pp. 195–210. Le Brun (1619–1690), a powerful force in the politics of seventeenth-century art, was allied with the chancellor of France, Pierre Séguier (1588–1672). It should be noted that Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun, Elisabeth Louise Vigée's husband, was his nephew several generations removed.
3. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), pp. 7–11, 14. The statues are similar to those of the Académie de France in Rome, for which see Arnaud 1886, pp. 7–13. The classicism and narrative style of Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) were ardently admired in Paris by the 1640s.
4. Benhamou 2009, pp. 108–13; Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), pp. 100–102.
5. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), pp. 249–58.

6. The powerful Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683) was not only *surintendant des Bâtiments du Roi* but also controller general of finance. See Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), p. 273; Lapa-uze 1924, vol. 1, pp. 1–4.
7. Berger 1999, pp. 62–69, 74–79.
8. “Il est du devoir et de l’honneur de l’Académie, en suivant l’intension du Roy quy est d’espandre sa grasse sur tous ceux quy excellent dans les artz de Peinture et de Sculpture, d’en faire part à ceux quy seront jugéz dignes sans avoir regard à la déférence du sexe.” Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), p. 223. Women artists are the subject of Linda Nochlin’s seminal article “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?”; see Nochlin 1971. Brief accounts of their compromised position in the academy can be found in Sheriff 1996, pp. 73–90, and Sheriff 1997.
9. François Girardon (1628–1715) was presented and approved by the Académie royale in 1656 and admitted in 1657, when he delivered a marble ordered by the assembly. Francastel 1928; François Souchal, “Girardon, François,” in *Oxford Art Online*, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/032584?q=francois+girardon> (accessed June 17, 2015).
10. Jal 1872, pp. 641–43; Sandrine Lely, “Catherine Duchemin,” 2004, http://www.siefar.org/dictionnaire/en/Catherine_Duchemin (accessed June 19, 2015).
11. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), pp. 120, 132.
12. Guérin 1715, p. 229, no. 28, and plan opp. p. 209.
13. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Chambéry (M 468). The work is signed *CD* and inscribed on the stretcher. It is illustrated on Joconde, the web-site of the Musées de France.
14. Louis I Boullogne’s (1609–1674) artist children were Geneviève (1645–1708), Madeleine (1646–1710), Bon (1649–1717), and Louis II (1654–1733). Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), p. 344; Jal 1872, pp. 266–68; Sandrine Lely, “Geneviève de Boullongne,” 2003, http://siefar.org/dictionnaire/fr/Genevi%C3%A8ve_de_Boullongne (accessed June 19, 2015).
15. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 1, Salon de 1673, p. 36.
16. Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (MV 7127, MV 7128, MV 7129); the paintings, for the queen’s apartment, are catalogued and illustrated on Joconde.
17. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 3, Salon de 1704, p. 19.
18. Dézallier d’Argenville 1745–52, vol. 2 (1745), pp. 373–79, 388–93; Jal 1872, pp. 266–68.
19. Guérin 1715, pp. 210–11, no. 3, and plan opp. p. 209.
20. Chéron (1648–1711), born a Protestant, was a convert to Roman Catholicism. Dézallier d’Argenville 1745–52, vol. 2 (1745), pp. 369–72; Jal 1872, p. 379. See also Véronique Meyer, “Elisabeth-Sophie Chéron,” 2004, http://www.siefar.org/dictionnaire/fr/Elisabeth_Sophie_Chéron (accessed June 19, 2015).
21. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 1 (1875), p. 388.
22. Ibid., vol. 2 (1878), p. 12.
23. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 1, Salon de 1673, p. 36. See also Guérin 1715, pp. 183–84, no. 37, and plan opp. p. 165.
24. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 2, Salon de 1699, p. 24; vol. 3, Salon de 1704, pp. 28–29. Some thirty of her paintings were exhibited or engraved; a signed and dated miniature is in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt.
25. “M^{le}. Chéron peignoit également l’histoire et le portrait, & même ce dernier étoit toujours traité allégoriquement, c’est qu’on appelle portrait historié: elle dessinoit beaucoup d’après l’antique, & surtout d’après les pierres gravées. . . . Ces desseins sont en effet au-dessus de l’imitation.” Dézallier d’Argenville 1745–52, vol. 2 (1745), p. 370.
26. The Paduan academy, with many foreign members, admitted women to honorary status.
27. Strésor (1651–1713), Massé, and Pérot are unknown outside the registers of the academy and the catalogue of its holdings. See Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 2 (1878), pp. 91, 175–76, 215.
28. Jal 1872, pp. 1153–54. Her career was brief, as in 1687 she became a nun and, in the service of the church, a history painter, doubtless of religious subjects.
29. Guérin 1715, p. 160.
30. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 2 (1878), pp. 175–76.
31. Ibid. “L’Académie . . . a agréé sa réception . . . sans que sela puisse a l’avenir tirer à aucune conséquence.”
32. Ibid., p. 215.
33. Guérin 1715, p. 163.
34. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 4 (1881), pp. 33–34. Although the rule that four should be the maximum number of women members lay far in the future, there must have been a back text; Strésor and the three who had exhibited in 1704 were all still alive when the new fiat was passed in 1706.
35. The translation of André Félibien (1667) is based on those of Duro 1997, pp. 9–10; Bailey 2003, p. 4. For the French text, see Félibien 1725, pp. 310–11.
36. Pierre Crozat (1665–1740) had visited Rosalba Carriera (1673–1757) in Venice and already owned her work. See Sani 2007, pp. 9–18, 22–25, 51–54; Henning 2007, pp. 29–34, colorpl. p. 31. She may have studied with Jean Stève, a miniaturist, Sebastiano Bombelli (1635–1719), Felice Ramelli (1666–1741), and/or Antonio Balestra (1666–1740) and was painting miniatures in 1701 and pastels by 1704.
37. Sani 2007, pp. 129–31, nos. 120–23, ill. Carriera’s seasons allowed her to escape the conventions of society portraiture and explore female seminudity and sensuality. Also the seasons, as allegory, border on history painting.
38. Ibid., pp. 139–41, nos. 132, 133, ill. Versions are in the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (65.2655). The miniatures seem not to have survived.
39. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 4 (1881), pp. 302–5.
40. Sani 2007, pp. 54, 162, 164, no. 158; Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 4 (1881), pp. 330–31; *Mercure de France*, February 1722, pp. 114–16. The pastel is in the Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques.
41. For Margareta Haverman (1693–1739) and her training with Jan van Huysum (1682–1749), see Liedtke 2007, vol. 1, pp. 308–10, no. 72, colorpl.; Marloes Huiskamp, “Haverman, Margaretha,” in *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*, 2014, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemmata/data/Haverman> (accessed June 19, 2015).
42. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 4 (1881), p. 328; *Mercure de France*, February 1722, pp. 112–14, where this panel painting is described. Some details (a butterfly, a snail, a bit of straw) are present in the 1716 still life in the Metropolitan Museum (71.6), one of two signed works. A note on the suppression of her membership is in Vitet 1880, p. 358 n. 1, quoting Hultz, who makes the unsubstantiated claim that she submitted a work by her teacher.
43. For Anna Dorothea Therbusch (1721–1782), her father, Georg Lisiewski (1674–1751), and Antoine Pesne (1683–1757), see Berckenhagen 1987; Küster and Scherzer 2002, pp. 12–34, 114–15, nos. 1–22, colorpls. pp. 35–55.
44. The painting is in the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 7 (1886), pp. 353–55. For a different account, see Küster and Scherzer 2002, pp. 19–21.
45. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 7 (1886), pp. 41, 44. Marie Thérèse Rebol, whose birth date is variously given (1728, 1735, and 1738), died in

1805. Joseph Marie Vien (1716–1809) became a professor in 1759.
46. The watercolor, in the Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques (33267, recto), is described and illustrated on Joconde. Ann Sutherland Harris (in Harris and Nochlin 1976, p. 36 n. 123) mentions two miniatures by Reboul in the Musée Fabre, Montpellier.
 47. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 19, Salon de 1757, p. 24; vol. 20, Salon de 1759, pp. 21–22; vol. 22, Salon de 1763, p. 24; vol. 23, Salon de 1765, pp. 21–22; vol. 24, Salon de 1767, p. 19.
 48. For Denis Diderot (1713–1784), see Seznec and Adhémar 1975, vol. 1, pp. 50, 152, 177, 231.
 49. Roland Michel 1970; Kahng 2002. The botanical illustrator was Madeleine Basseporte (1701–1780).
 50. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 8 (1888), p. 48; Kahng 2002, pp. 39–41, 196–97, no. 6, ill., p. 198, no. 12, colorpl. 5. The works belong to the Musée du Louvre (8259, 8260).
 51. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 26, Salon de 1771, pp. 29–30.
 52. Marianne Roland Michel, “Vallayer in Her Time,” in Kahng 2002, pp. 17–19.
 53. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 27, Salon de 1773, p. 29; vol. 28, Salon de 1775, p. 21; vol. 29, Salon de 1777, pp. 23–24; vol. 30, Salon de 1779, pp. 27–28, etc. See also Kahng 2002, pp. 205–6, nos. 53, 56, colorpl. 25. Vallayer-Coster’s portraits and expressive heads were in general not well received.
 54. Colin B. Bailey, “A Still-Life Painter and Her Patrons: Collecting Vallayer-Coster, 1770–1789,” in Kahng 2002, pp. 59–73.
 55. On Marie Suzanne Giroust (1734–1772) and Alexander Roslin (1718–1793), see Bonnet 2012, pp. 21–27.
 56. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 8 (1888), pp. 51–52.
 57. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 26, Salon de 1771, p. 30. The work is in the Musée du Louvre (30860, recto).
 58. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 8 (1888), pp. 53, 107. Madame Roslin (died August 1772) was present for many of the assemblies held during her brief tenure.
 59. *Ibid.*, vol. 9 (1889), pp. 152–59. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard (1749–1803) separated from her husband and many years later married her painting teacher François André Vincent (1746–1816). In the registers her name is invariably spelled “Guyard.”
 60. Passez 1973; Auricchio 2009. For the reception pieces, see Passez 1973, pp. 109–11, no. 37, pl. 27 (Pajou), and pp. 148–50, no. 58, pl. 46 (the painter Charles Amédée van Loo). The former is in the Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, and the latter, an oil painting, was transferred in 1821 to Versailles (MV 5874).
 61. See, for example, Passez 1973, pp. 60–61, no. 2, pl. 1, a miniature self-portrait exhibited at the Académie de Saint-Luc, and pp. 90–91, no. 28, pl. 20, a painted self-portrait shown at the Salon de la Correspondance.
 62. For example, *ibid.*, pp. 182–84, no. 79, pl. 65 (state portrait of Madame Adélaïde, 1787), and pp. 210–12, no. 97, pl. 78 (state portrait of Madame Victoire, 1788).
 63. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 9 (1889), pp. 152–53, 155–57.
 64. Guiffrey 1869–72, vol. 32, Salon de 1783, p. 34, no. 115, as “le morceau de réception donné par l’Auteur.” The painting (cat. 9) is in the Musée du Louvre (3052).
 65. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 1, pp. 84–85.
 66. According to Vitet 1880, pp. 333, 338, 339, 342, 344, 345, 358, 371, 373, 374, 378. I have referred to the women by the names that distinguish them from their husbands who were members.
 67. Benhamou 2009, pp. 41, 44–45, 153, no. 34.
 68. Montaiglon 1875–92, vol. 10 (1892), p. 224.
- Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun and the European Spirit**
1. Tuetey 1911, pp. 169–70; Sheriff 1996, p. 265.
 2. Boffa 1988, p. 348.
 3. Letter of March 3, 1790, from Ménageot to d’Angiviller. See Walczak 2004, p. 11.
 4. Sheriff 1996, pp. 223–25.
 5. Müntz 1874–75, pp. 449–50; Sheriff 1996, pp. 229–30.
 6. Letter of March 3, 1790, from Ménageot to d’Angiviller, quoted in Sheriff 1996, p. 230.
 7. Quoted in Walczak 2004, p. 13.
 8. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 30–31.
 9. Walczak 2004, pp. 13–17.
 10. Baillio 1982a, pp. 87–88.
 11. Sheriff 1996, p. 239.
 12. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 159; Sheriff 1996, pp. 225–27.
 13. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 158–59.
 14. Quoted in Walczak 2004, p. 24.
 15. Sheriff 1996, pp. 237–39.
 16. Walczak 2004, p. 25; Rosenberg 1999, pp. 92–93, no. 47 (Udolpho van de Sandt).
 17. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, pp. 211–12; Goodden 1997, p. 140.
 18. Sheriff 1996, p. 239.
 19. Walczak 2004, pp. 33–35.
 20. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 2, p. 219.
 21. Paris 1986.
 22. Dussieux 1856, p. 420.
 23. Rovinskii 1886–89, vol. 4, p. 694, quoted in Nikolenko 1967, p. 99, no. 1.
 24. September 14, 1795, mentioned in Baillio 2005, p. 232.
 25. Baillio 2005, p. 232; Walczak 2004, p. 59.
 26. “Correspondance artistique de Grimm avec Catherine II,” *Archives de l’Art Français* 17 (1931–32), pp. 199–200, quoted in Baillio 2005, p. 234.
 27. Walczak 2004, pp. 52–55.
 28. “Journal privé du roi Stanislas Auguste pendant son voyage en Russie pour le couronnement de l’empereur Paul Ier,” in *Mémoires secrets et inédits de Stanislas Auguste, comte Poniatowski, dernier roi de Pologne* (Leipzig, 1862), p. 71, quoted in Baillio 1982a, p. 116.
 29. Baillio 2005, p. 237.
 30. Letter to Luise Radziwill of December 28, 1802, quoted in Walczak 2004, p. 94 n. 163.
 31. Walczak 2004, p. 76.
 32. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 166.
 33. Farington 1978–, vol. 6, pp. 2051, 2287, 2437, 2478.
 34. Roberts 1911.
 35. Hoppner 1805, pp. ix–xi, xvi–xix.
 36. Tripier Lefranc 1828, Entry, Papiers Tripier Le Franc 28099, Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art (INHA)—collections Jacques Doucet, quoted in the introduction to Vigée Le Brun 2008, pp. 108–9.
 37. Vigée Le Brun 1835–37, vol. 3, p. 238.
 38. *Ibid.*, p. 271. *Société des Arts—Minutes of the General Assembly and Committee Meetings—IV/1799–1817*. Excerpt from the minutes of the meeting of November 30, 1807, p. 219: “The members of the Comité de dessin, having had the benefit several months ago in Geneva of meeting Mme Lebrun, a celebrated artist in the genre of portraiture, and M. Du Cros, who as a landscape painter is no less prominent, propose that the Société admit them as honorary associates[.] The Société wholeheartedly seized the opportunity to show these two artists the esteem in which it holds such distinguished talents, and immediately admitted them as associates[.] The secretary is instructed to convey this to them and to send them their certificates.”
 39. Sheriff 1996, p. 265.
 40. Walczak 2004, p. 9.

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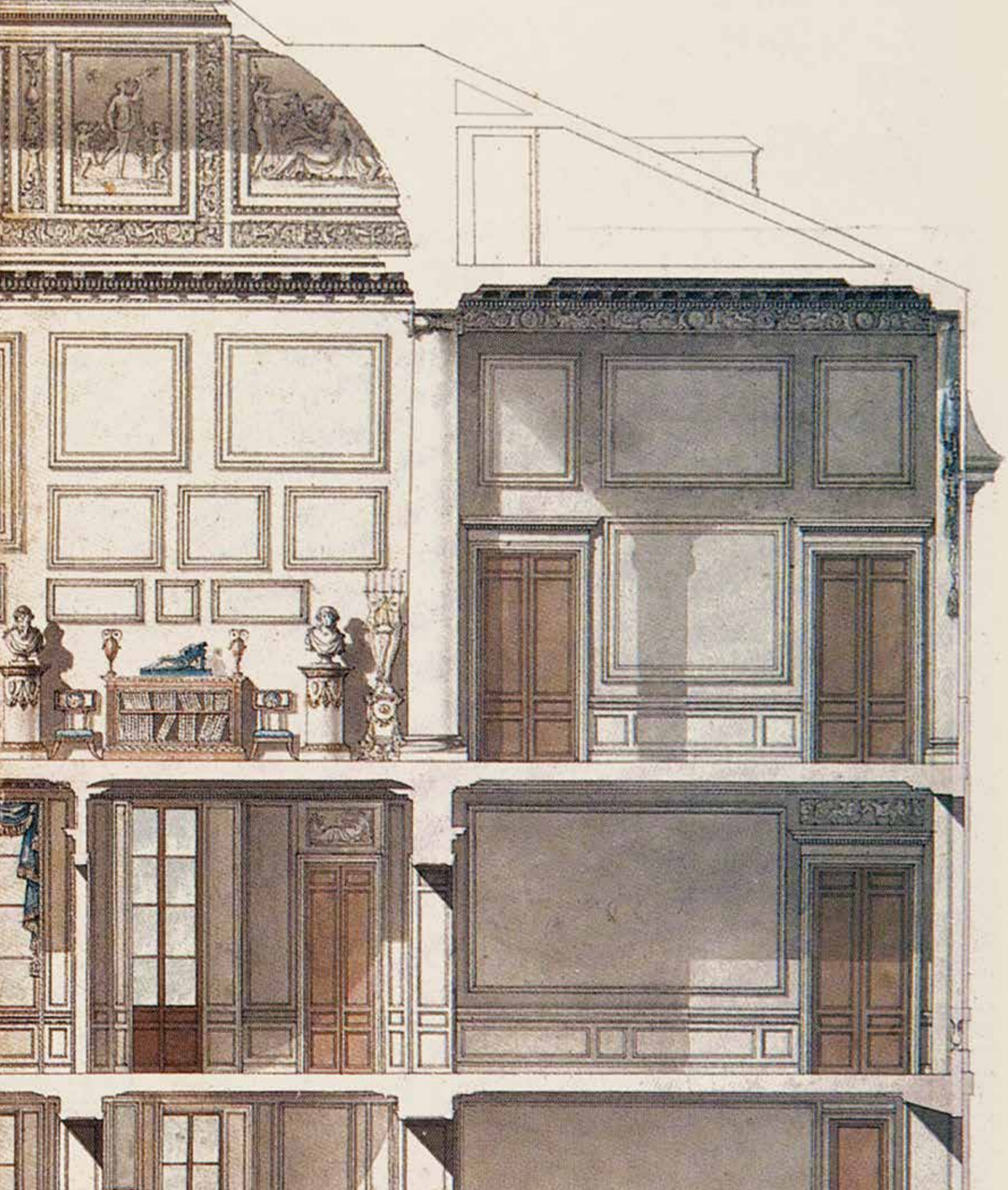
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