

DAVID TO POLLOCK | Selected Master Drawings

18th & 19th Century Natural History, Garden Plans & Barbara Regina Dietzsch

January 8 - February 29, 2020



Jean Jacques-Louis David, *Paris and Helen*



Paul Borel, *Portrait of a seated man*



Jackson Pollock, *Untitled*

From January 8 through February 29, 2020 Victoria Munroe Fine Art is pleased to present two exhibitions *David to Pollock: Selected Master Drawings* and, in a separate room, *18th & 19th Century Natural History, Garden Plans & Barbara Regina Dietzsch*.

David to Pollock presents seven important master drawings, each composition a study of the figure in a context unique to the culture and art of drawing at the time of its making. Works by Francois Quesnel, Luigi Sabatelli, Paul Borel, Jacques-Louis David, Maurice Denis, Pierre Bonnard, and Jackson Pollock reveal the dynamic range of drawing as the preeminent expressive discipline to study human thought.

The earliest work is a delicate 17th century watercolor and graphite portrait of a noblewoman by Francois Quesnel, (Edinburgh 1542-1619, Paris). Her aristocratic family name La Dame de Baillet identifies her from the Court of Burgundy. Drawn from the side almost in profile, with a light touch without modeling, the genteel lady is a study in composure.

Another very different portrait drawing by Paul Borel (French, 1828-1913) presents a fashionable 19th century man seated in an Empire chair and twisting toward the viewer and artist. In a diminutive portrait composition, the influence of Jean Dominique Ingres is realized in the delicate features of the porcelain complexion, the details of the jewelry and waistcoat of the alert gentleman.

The classical composition by Jean Jacques-Louis David (French, 1748-1825) is a loosely drawn elegant tableau of Paris playing his lyre for Helen as she swoons resting her arm on his shoulder. The drawing was made around 1785 in one of his albums filled with trace drawings he made from original Greek vase paintings during his years in Rome. The corresponding painting *Paris et Helene* was commissioned by the Duc D'Artois and is now in the Louvre.

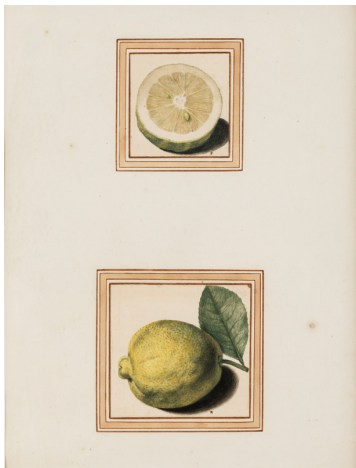
The Pierre Bonnard (French, 1867-1947) drawing *Nu devant le miroir* is of his wife, Marthe, standing in front of a full-length mirror in a compressed composition showing her back side in contraposto, closest to the picture plane, as she admires herself in her reflection. This modern drawing on serrated notebook paper packs the space with all the information needed to make a dazzling painting which he did the same year, *Femme nue se regardant dans une glace*, 1924.



Luigi Sabatelli (Italian, 1772-1850), **left**, was a pre-romantic Italian artist known for his frescoes of Homeric epics and heroic events from Florentine history. In this dynamic double-sided preparatory drawing for a fresco from the 1830's, Sabatelli reimagines the 14th century demonstration against ruthless government led by disenfranchised Florentine wood carders and artisans. The fury and passion of his retelling in swift pen and ink bring the revolutionary hero Michele di Lando, to life.

The soft contour drawing of a life size baby by Maurice Denis (French 1870-1943) was made in 1896, the year his first daughter Nöelle was born. Denis drew constantly from his family placing them in many Nabis style paintings of his six children with their mother in various lush gardens and beaches. One of the first artists to use photography of his family as a basis for paintings, Denis cropped compositions with a newfound freedom.

The double-sided drawing made in 1939-40 by Jackson Pollock (American, 1912-1956) was one of 83 which he gave to his Jungian psychoanalyst, Dr. Henderson. The drawing process stirred unconscious content which may have served to illuminate Pollock's thought process in the sessions. Filled with dramatic doodles, bird talons, crosses, circles around heads, and a wiry figure holding up a scrawl of a globe, these private sheets of automatic drawing came to the art market with a controversial sale of the material by the doctor.



A second show in the back gallery features eight Natural History gouache paintings by Barbara Regina Dietzsch (Nuremberg, 1706-1783), **below**, *Studies of a Lemon* by Vincenzo Leonardi (Rome, c. 1590-1646), **left**, two watercolors -a quince and an apple- by Anthelme-Eugene Grobon (French, 1820 - 1878) and garden plans by Leon Dufourney (French, 1754-1818), François Leonard Seheult (French, 1771-1840) and Jean Baptists Plantar (French, 1790-1879).

Born on September 22, 1706 in Nuremberg, Germany, Barbara Regina Dietzsch was the eldest in an artistic family in which her father, the landscape painter Johann Israel Dietzsch, taught her to paint with gouache on vellum. Her focus on the beauty of nature was rooted in physico-theology, a Protestant movement which held that the splendor and order of nature proved the existence of a virtuous God and that the contemplation of nature is a way of honoring this belief. Dietzsch reached acclaim during her lifetime.



The exhibition coincides with our participation in Master Drawings New York, a celebration of drawing offered by 25 Upper East Side exhibitors January 24- February 1, 2020. www.masterdrawingsnewyork.com

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