François Boucher

Portrait d’une fillette (Portrait of a young girl)

Pastel on paper, 265 x 201 mm
on verso, at centre, inscribed in pencil: “Boucher”; lower right, in blue pencil: “14”

Provenance:
Jean-Claude Gaspar de Sireul
Vente Sireul, Boileau, Paris, 3 December 1781, lot 63
(...) Louis Gaston Le Breton, Rouen
Sale: Vente Le Breton, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 6–8 December 1921, lot 36
(...) By 1932: Roger Delapalme, Paris (per exh. cat.)
Acquired after February 1941: Hildebrand Gurlitt, Hamburg (per Gurlitt Papers)
Thence by descent to Cornelius Gurlitt, Munich/Salzburg
From 6 May 2014: Estate of Cornelius Gurlitt

Exhibitions:
Exposition François Boucher, Hôtel Jean Charpentier, 9 June–10 July 1932. [no. 103]
Bibliographical references:

* Catalogue des dessins et tableaux anciens et modern. Auct. cat., Galerie Georges Petit, 6–8 December 1921. [lot 36]

Primary sources:

* Hildebrand Gurlitt and Cornelius Gurlitt Papers:
  * Delapalme Files: BArch, N 1826/49. Appraisal François Max-Kann, 25 February 1941
* Photographs: BArch, N 1826 Bild-0250 [=3.1_F302], [10 June 1942]
* Seizure Inventory [Sicherstellungsverzeichnis], 2012, no. SV 41/121

* Hildebrand Gurlitt and Cornelius Gurlitt Papers – possible references:
  * Correspondence: BArch, N 1826/177, fol. 275 f. [=vol. 6, fol. 216 f. ] Gitta Gurlitt to Hildebrand Gurlitt, 3 January 1948
  * Ibid., fol. 277 [=vol. 6, fol. 218]. List Gitta Gurlitt, 9 December 1947
  * Sales ledger 1937–41: 23 July 1942 [no. 152]
  * Sales ledger 1937–?: 23 July 1942 [no. 139]
  * Sales ledger 1937–?: 23 July 1942 [no. 1620]
  * Note [no. 42]

* Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague:
  * Folder Boucher [Vente Le Breton I, Paris 1921, no. 36, ill.]

* Witt Library, London:
  * Folder François Boucher [Le Breton Sale, Petit, Paris, 8. Dez 1921, ill.]

Further sources consulted:


* Archives de Paris
* Archives Nationales, Paris
* Bundesarchiv, Berlin; Freiburg; Koblenz
* Centre Pompidou, Bibliothèque Kandinsky, Paris
* Cultural Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg: Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume
* Database “Central Collecting Point München”
Note:
Among the earliest known owners of this work were Jean-Claude Gaspar de Sireul, a collector of Boucher works, and Gaston Le Breton (1845–1920), the director general of the museums of the city of Rouen.

By 1932, the drawing had been acquired by Roger Delapalme (1892 Paris–1969 Paris), the son of the public notary Pierre-Marie Delapalme. Roger Delapalme was professionally employed in the management of the Compagnie des Courtiers Jurés d’assurances, an insurance company, where he served first as Treasurer and then as Deputy Director. His wife Yvonne was the daughter of Henry Chabert, the director of the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas. The couple resided in Paris, first at 17 Rue du Général-Foy, and from 1929/30 at 65 Rue La Boétie. Delapalme’s business address was 92 Rue de Richelieu.

The extant papers of Cornelius Gurlitt contain an inventory of art works said to belong to Roger Delapalme, as appraised by the art expert François Max-Kann in early 1941. This appraisal itemizes 40 lots (comprising a total of 58 artworks), including this Boucher drawing.

The Taskforce was able to confirm Roger Delapalme’s ownership by latest 1932, when he loaned this work to a Boucher exhibition. While the exact circumstances of the transaction are not yet known, it is most likely that Gurlitt acquired these works after February 1941, possibly through Max-Kann who may have acted as intermediary.

The personal papers found in Cornelius Gurlitt’s Salzburg home include a collection of about 2,400 photographs of artworks. Photograph no. 3.1_F302 is a reproduction of this work; inscribed on verso, a statement of authenticity by Max-Kann, dated 10 June 1942.

The original report on the provenance of this work, as submitted to the Task Force Schwabing Art Trove, was made accessible online at www.taskforce-kunstfund.de as of 14 January 2016. That report was updated by the Gurlitt Provenance Research Project on 29 September 2017.

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