Glossary and Oil Sketch Key

Nineteenth-Century Art at the Snite Museum

One of the strengths of the Snite Museum’s nineteenth-century collection is its extensive group of oil sketches, comprised largely of a generous gift made by Noah L. and Muriel S. Butkin in 2009. By the 1800s, the Academy in France had schematized the production of art, carefully naming and describing each step in a rigorous system. The display of this material here introduces the visitor to a highly intellectualized generative process as it was then taught in France, from an artist’s inception or “first thought” to the final presentation piece. Artists were not discouraged from expressing themselves on canvas or in clay, but rather schooled in practices that would articulate their ideas and feelings in a prescribed manner to a broad audience.

GLOSSARY*

croquis
krō-kee’
a preliminary, thumbnail sketch made to lay out the basic composition of a work with an emphasis on improvisation and spontaneity with the intention of testing the “spirit” of the idea (4. Delaunay or 10. Meissonier).

première pensée
pre-mee-air’ poñ-say’
literally “first thought” or “first idea,” it is interchangeable with croquis.

esquisse
es-kees’
the next step in the design process after the croquis, a painted sketch, often smaller than the final project, working out relationships between figures and masses and used to guide the composition and color of the final work (6. Guillemot).

ébauche
ay-bōsh’
blocking in of the colors and masses which became the basis of the final composition (5. Legros).

effet
eh-fay’
literally “effect,” here used to describe the arrangement of color harmonies in order to evoke a mood (2. Dehodencq).

étude
ay-tood’
studies of figures or objects, working out the details of gestures or positions (25. Gervex or 26. Cormon).

pochade
pō-shahd’
a study of an effect determining the correct values that accurately conveyed the mood of the motif (8. Díaz de la Peña or 13. Granet).

présentation
pray-zoñ-ta-see-on’
a small-scale, finished version of a final composition, often presented to a patron for approval before work on the full-scale project began (27. Flandrin).

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*See Breaking the Mold: The Legacy of the Noah L. and Muriel S. Butkin Collection of Nineteenth-Century French Art exhibition catalog for in-depth discussion of this work.*
Jules Bastien-Lepage, French, 1848–1884
oil on canvas
Acquired with funds provided by The Butkin Foundation
1981.105

22. *Study of a Woman in Period Costume*
Ferdinand Roybet, French, 1840–1920
oil on panel. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.119

23. *Study for The Death of a Sister of Charity*, ca. 1850
Isidore Alexandre Augustin Pils, French, 1813–1875
oil on canvas. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.118

Paul Baudry, French, 1828–1886
oil on canvas. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.079

25. *Communicants*, ca. 1877
Henri Gervex, French, 1852–1929
oil on canvas. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.039

26. *The Head of Cain*, ca. 1878–1880
Fernand Cormon, French, 1845–1924
oil on canvas with graphite, squared
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.088

27. *Studies for the Chapel of Saint John the Evangelist, Church of Saint-Séverin, Paris*, 1839–40
Hippolyte Jean Flandrin, French, 1809–1864

*The Calling of Saint John*
oil on canvas, mounted to panel and cardboard
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.082

*The Martyrdom of Saint John*
oil on canvas, mounted to panel and cardboard
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.083

*Saint John on Patmos*
oil on canvas, mounted to panel and cardboard
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.084

*The Last Supper*
oil on canvas, mounted to panel and cardboard
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin
2009.045.085

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