

Jean-Gabriel Domergue (1889-1962) - Elegant young woman with veil



Oil on canvas, signed lower left

Dimensions : H. 54 cm x W. 45 cm (with frame : H. 77 cm x W. 68 cm)

Jean-Gabriel Domergue was born in Bordeaux on March 4, 1889. His father, a journalist and art critic, took him to artists' studios from an early age. Very precocious, he was drawing remarkably well by the age of 15. He naturally entered the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris, and frequented the studios of the best academic painters, such as Lefèvre, Robert-Fleury, Humbert and Flameng.

In 1906, aged just seventeen, he took part in the Salon des Artistes Français, where he received his first commendation. In 1913, the artist was awarded the Second Grand Prix de Rome. 1920 was a decisive year for Domergue, as he was awarded the Gold Medal at the Salon des Artistes Français, marking the start of a period of immense success.

He was soon in demand in the advertising industry for posters and catalog covers. He also created theater sets and illustrated several books. Domergue was the painter par excellence of the female portrait, from the 1920s to the 1950s. The artist succeeded brilliantly in putting his traditional training at the service of his own style, originality and joie de vivre. He is undeniably an essential milestone in the evolution of female portraiture in France. Domergue was also a worldly painter, his parents being members of the Bordeaux upper middle class. He frequented the French and British aristocracy and owned a villa in Cannes. Thanks to his origins and success, he spent his entire life rubbing shoulders with the greatest personalities, and painted portraits of the most beautiful women. Highly influential, he played a key role in the evolution of fashion in his day. He designed numerous dresses, hats and accessories for the most famous couturiers, including Paul Poiret and Henry Marie.

Domergue produced a large number of paintings. He loved women and money, and accepted innumerable commissions, sometimes neglecting the quality of his work; there are many small formats,

often repetitive and lacking in attention to detail. Last but not least, Domergue's type of painting gives the subject a crucial importance; even if all tastes are in nature, the elegance and beauty of women can make prices vary significantly.

This portrait by Domergue is the artist's most sought-after subject, an elegant Parisian woman in evening dress. The posture of this very pretty young woman is complex; the tilted head in opposition to the body gives a feeling of life that some of the artist's works, treated too quickly, lack. The portrait stands out against a shaded blue background. The veil, hairstyle and accessories are carefully treated. The transparency of the dress lends fluidity and sensuality to this quality work. The painting is in perfect condition, on its original canvas. This Domergue is presented in a beautiful antique "Bouche" frame.

Museums :

Cannes, Villa Domergue

Paris, Museum of Modern Art

Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts

Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts

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