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11



(Sopra e a destra) Alcune fra le copie più significative della Gioconda (n. 31): quella pubblicata (1967) da H. Pulitzer (Londra) come autografa, e quelle di Roma (Parlamento), Innsbruck (Collezione Luchner; forse del Salaino), Tours (Musée; sec. XVII), Madrid (Prado; forse di spagnolo del '500) e Tours (ibid.; col corpetto 'fantasia'). - (Qui sotto) Alcune libere interpretazioni: Raffaello, disegno per la Doni di Pitti a Firenze (Parigi, Louvre); Scuola del Luini, Maddalena (già a Montreux, Collezione Cuenod); Joos van Cleve, Giovane donna (già in collezione tedesca); Busto in cera (Berlino, Staatliche Museen; già dato a Verrocchio, poi a Leonardo, ma contraffazione ottocentesca). - (Penultima fila) Derivazioni da un ipotetico studio leonardesco della modella ignuda: cartone a Chantilly (Musée Condé; già creduto autografo); e dipinti a Pallaanza (Collezione Käupe), Leningrado (Ermitage; già creduto autografo), Bergamo (Accademia Carrara; del sec. XVII). - (In basso) Variazioni della Gioconda nuda, a Digione (Musée; Scuola di Fontainebleau), Washington (National Gallery; Diane de Poitiers, firmata da Fr. Clouet) e già a Parigi (Louvre; Gabrielle d'Estrées e la duchessa di Villars; Scuola di Fontainebleau).



The following text is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a multi-paragraph document or report, but the content cannot be discerned due to the low contrast and blurriness of the scan.

THE MONA LISA:

ENCYCLOPEDIA AMERICANA
VOLUME 19, PAGE 335
1951 EDITION

it many
times that "the mathomable ~~same~~
touch of something sinister in it" was a technique of Leonardo da Vinci's master, Verrocchio, and had been copied many times.

There are two *Mona Lisa's* attributed by experts to Leonardo da Vinci, neither of which is a copy of the other. Since no original sketch exists for *Mona Lisa*, it is not thought improbable that da Vinci first painted one portrait directly on canvas before working on the final copy. The Isleworth version, in England, is admitted by many to be more beautiful than the Louvre painting. It is thought to be the final, unfinished portrait since it is much richer in shading and tone, and is probably the one from which Raphael made his famous sketch. See also PAINTINGS OF THE GREAT MASTERS.

Bibliography.—Taylor, Rachel, *Leonardo the Florentine*, new ed. (New York 1930); Goldscheider, Ludwig, *Leonardo da Vinci, The Artist* (New York 1943).

CRITICISM: Boas, George, "The *Mona Lisa* in the History of Taste," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, April 1940.

ISLEWORTH VERSION: Eyre, John R., *Monograph on Leonardo da Vinci's 'Mona Lisa'* (New York 1915); Eyre, John R., *The Two Mona Lisa's, Ten Direct, Decisive Data in favor of the Isleworth Version and some recent Italian Expert Opinion on it* (London 1924).

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THE MOON LISA

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The first is the case of the artist who has been able to capture the essence of the subject in a single stroke. The second is the case of the artist who has been able to capture the essence of the subject in a single stroke. The third is the case of the artist who has been able to capture the essence of the subject in a single stroke.

MOON LISA is the subject of the painting. It is a painting of a woman in a white dress, standing in a landscape. The painting is a masterpiece of the artist's style, capturing the essence of the subject in a single stroke.

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THE
TWO
MONA
LISAS

by

JOHN R. EYRE

FIRST EDITION 1926

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Photo]

[Braun, Clément & Cie.

A DRAWING (IN THE LOUVRE) BY RAPHAEL

from the original *Mona Lisa*, made in Florence, 1504-1505.

THE
TWO MONA LISAS

WHICH WAS GIOCONDO'S PICTURE?

Ten Direct, Distinct, and Decisive Data
in favour of the Isleworth Version, and
some recent Italian Expert Opinions on it

BY
JOHN R. EYRE

Author of 'Monograph on Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa,' &c., &c.

LONDON

J. M. OUSELEY & SON, LTD.
9 John Street, Adelphi, W.C. 2



The Two *Mona Lisas*

WHICH WAS GIOCONDO'S PICTURE ?

*Ten Direct, Distinct, and Decisive Data in favour of
the Isleworth Version, with some recent Italian Expert*

Opinions on it

FIRST. The great beauty, the highly artistic and the supreme technical qualities, with the ineffable calm and the golden glow of the Isleworth Master-piece, stamp it as the work of the Great Master, while its age is contemporaneous. It is not, in any way, a copy, even from Leonardo's own studio, for the pose of the head, several minor details, and the whole unfinished background, are different from the accepted version in the Louvre, while the picture itself is larger. It was purchased as the original in Italy by an English collector in the latter half of the eighteenth century; and remained in the possession of his family until purchased direct by the present owners.

All the experts recently consulted by me in Rome, whose opinions are attached, admit the greater beauty of the Isleworth version, and all agree, but one, that the picture must be from Leonardo's studio.

SECOND. Fra Pietro Nuvolaria, Vice-General of the Order of Carmelites, wrote to Isabella d'Este, Marchesa of Mantua, on March 28, 1502 (in reply to her letter of a week previous,

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March 22, 1501,¹ in which she asked him to get Leonardo to paint her portrait as he had promised), saying: '. . . Leonardo has only done one cartoon since he has been in Florence. His composition is an Infant Christ hardly a year old, slipping from his mother's clasp to catch hold of a lamb and to embrace it. The Virgin, rising out of the lap of St. Anne. . . . This sketch is not yet completed. He has done nothing else. *Two of his pupils are painting portraits, and he touches them up from time to time*². He grows very impatient of painting and spends all his time over geometry.'

All authorities are now agreed that this cartoon was that for the *St. Anne* picture now in the Louvre. The two portraits are since unaccounted for, and are presumed to have been lost. Yet Leonardo, during his lifetime, never lost a single drawing or a single picture, while all those that were really lost can be traced to other hands after they had left the Master's.³

¹ All of Leonardo's biographers who refer to these letters have been completely fogged over their dates. Calvi, Müntz, Gronau, McCurdy have gone hopelessly wrong over them, for they never realized that they were dated according to the Julian Calendar and not to the Gregorian, which did not come into force until 1582, when the New Year started on January 1st, instead of March 25th. On April 4, 1502, one week after his first letter, Fra Nuvolaria wrote again saying he had been to Leonardo's house, and, 'To sum it up, his mathematical studies have so drawn him away from painting that he cannot endure to use his brush.'

² Mr. McCurdy, in his article on Leonardo in 'Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers' (1919 ed.), says: 'The *Mona Lisa* is the only existing example of his work in portraiture,' and that 'Fra Nuvolaria's reference to these two portraits was the genesis of the other portraits attributed to him.'

³ For full particulars of lost and existing pictures, see 'Monograph on Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*,' by John R. Eyre, pp. 42, 43, 44. Grevel, London, and Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. A few copies of the Monograph are still to be had from the publishers of this book.

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But we know, for a fact, that a few months previously he made two drawings of Isabella d'Este, when he visited her at Mantua, with the view of painting her portrait, which, in spite of her constant entreaties from March, 1501, to March, 1506, and his numerous promises, he never even commenced.

But if he had made two drawings of Isabella d'Este, why should he not have commenced two paintings of Lisa Giocondo? If these two portraits, seen by Fra Nuvolaria, were not two versions of the *Mona Lisa*, then what were they? All agree that at this time Leonardo worked on the *Mona Lisa*, the sitter having sat for him in 1500 or beginning of 1501.¹ Again I ask, What evidence or proof is there that these were not two versions of the *Mona Lisa*? But there are two versions now extant, from Leonardo's studio at least, according to the opinions of the Italian Experts on the Isleworth picture. Vasari accounted for the second portrait being painted at this time by Leonardo, by describing it as that of Ginevra the wife of Amerigo Benci, not knowing that he had painted her daughter as a child, and that in 1503 she had been dead just thirty years. The other portrait he never questioned to be the *Mona Lisa*. But it is admitted that Leonardo is not known to have painted any other portrait at this time but the *Mona Lisa*, yet there

¹ The *Mona Lisa* was one of the first commissions after Leonardo's return to Florence, commenced, according to Milanese and Ravaisson-Mollien, in 1500. 'Leonardo da Vinci,' by Edward McCurdy, M.A., p. 113.

² In 1501 he executed the famous cartoon for the picture of the Madonna with the *St. Anne* intended for the Church of the Annunziata. At about the same time he must have begun the portrait of *Mona Lisa*. 'Leonardo da Vinci, the Florentine Years of Leonardo and Verrochio,' by Dr. Jens Thiis, translated by Jessie Muir, p. 36. London, Messrs. Herbert Jenkins, Ltd., 1913.

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were beyond doubt two portraits being painted in his studio. So why should we assume that they were lost rather than admit that they were the two versions of the famous portrait ?

THIRD. Indeed it would have been quite contrary to his confirmed practice had he not commenced two versions of the *Mona Lisa*, for it would appear to have been an almost hard and fast rule of his to commence two representations of all his works, whether in drawing, in cartoon, or in painting.

As early as October, 1478, he states in his own handwriting : ' I commenced the two of the Virgin Mary,' and we have extant to-day two versions of most of his works, viz. the small *Annunciation* in the Louvre and the larger one in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence¹ ; the two drawings of Isabella d'Este ; two drawings of the *Adoration of the Magi*, and one cartoon, and Müntz admits there was probably a second cartoon ; two paintings of the *Virgin of the Rocks*,² one of them in the

¹ The following maintain that he painted the *Annunciation* in the Uffizi : Dr. von Bode, Dr. Friedländer, MM. Beyersdorfer, Müller-Walde, Schmarzou, Makovsky, Sidney Colvin, Geymüller, and Gabriel Sailles.

² When I was in Rome, Signor Venturi ascribed this picture, as he did the Isleworth *Mona Lisa*, to Ambrogia de Predis, whom he described as Leonardo's partner. But partner or not, de Predis would not have had the effrontery in a copy to omit the pointing hand of the angel which appears in the earlier version in the Louvre. Lomazzo mentions the National Gallery version as having been painted by Leonardo himself. J. P. Richter says : ' A replica of it in the Louvre is doubtless an original of the Master's, although its history is less known.' Waagen says of the Louvre version : ' This picture cannot have been the work of Leonardo. . . . The heads of the Virgin and Angel are without expression and display a surprising feebleness of design . . . folds of drapery are stiff in appearance.' Mr. McCurdy, referring to the Louvre picture, says : ' The differences of design between this and the picture in the National Gallery would of themselves make it impossible to regard the latter as a copy.' 'Bryan's Dictionary of Painters,' etc.

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National Gallery, the other in the Louvre; two cartoons of the *St. Anne*, one of which now hangs in Burlington House, and the other was in Milan, according to Lomazzo, in 1584, in the possession of Aurelio Luini, Bernardino Luini's son, from this the painting is in the Louvre. He commenced two versions of *St. John the Baptist*, both now in the Louvre, but one of them has been altered to a *Bacchus*¹; two versions of *Leda and the Swan*, one was in Francis I's collection, another is in Signor L. Spiridon's in Rome, purchased from a French noble family, of which he has the history from its inception, as he told me himself. Indeed, Müller-Walde emphatically states that one version was painted in Florence between 1501 and 1506, and a second at Fontainebleau (Cloux?) between 1516 and 1519. M. Rosenberg, in his 'Monograph' on the Master, says Leonardo made two models of the Sforza monument. 'It is very remarkable,' says Richter in his 'Life of Leonardo' (p. 46), 'that in many cases we find several accurate reproductions of the same drawing, as for instance the wonderful allegorical composition in the British Museum of a Dragon and a Unicorn fighting with dogs, while a youth seated near flashes a mirror in the rays of the sun. An exact replica of this is to be found in the Louvre.' It amounted to almost a principle with Leonardo to start two versions of any subject, as we shall see he even wrote two drafts of his important letters. There is no doubt this method of his was prompted by the desire to reach perfection so far as it was possible for him to reach it. Under these circumstances, was it not extremely probable that he started two versions

¹ 'The picture of *Bacchus* in the Louvre need not be mentioned here, for originally the picture represented *St. John the Baptist*.' Dr. Grunaud, 'Life of Leonardo da Vinci,' p. 146.

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of the *Mona Lisa*, more especially as he painted her direct on to the canvas; and, as one of his earliest biographers (de Piles, Paris, 1716) says, 'He took more care and pleasure in painting this picture than any other.'

FOURTH. The fact that both the Isleworth and the Louvre *Mona Lisas* are painted on contemporaneous canvas of the same fibre, the Louvre one being mounted on a panel, while all his other works, extant to-day, are painted on plain panel, is overwhelming evidence, so far unrebuted, that the two versions must have been commenced at the same time by Leonardo himself, though the Isleworth version was left *unfinished*, and the Louvre *Florentine Lady* was finished at Cloux by Melzi.

FIFTH. Another very significant and corroborative piece of evidence in favour of the Isleworth portrait is its expression. A few months before Lisa Gioconda sat for the Master she had lost her little child. Vasari tells us that while Leonardo was painting her he entertained her with singers and jesters 'who might make her remain merry, in order to take away that melancholy which painters are often wont to give to their portraits.'¹

'Mona Lisa,' wrote M. Salomon Reinach, the great French archaeologist and art critic, 'had lost an only daughter, she was a distressed mother. Leonardo, when beginning to paint her portrait, about 1501, found she looked dejected, and, in order to elicit a smile from her, he called in Jesters and Musicians. Vasari's story is true, though he himself missed the reason and point of it.'²

But I ask in all seriousness, Does the Louvre

¹ Vasari, vol. 4, p. 101.

² Article of M. Salomon Reinach in the 'Art Journal,' 1912, p. 22.





Photo]

THE LOUVRE *MONA LISA* (Giocondo)

Canvas on panel, size 30 in. by 20 in.

Hanfstaengl

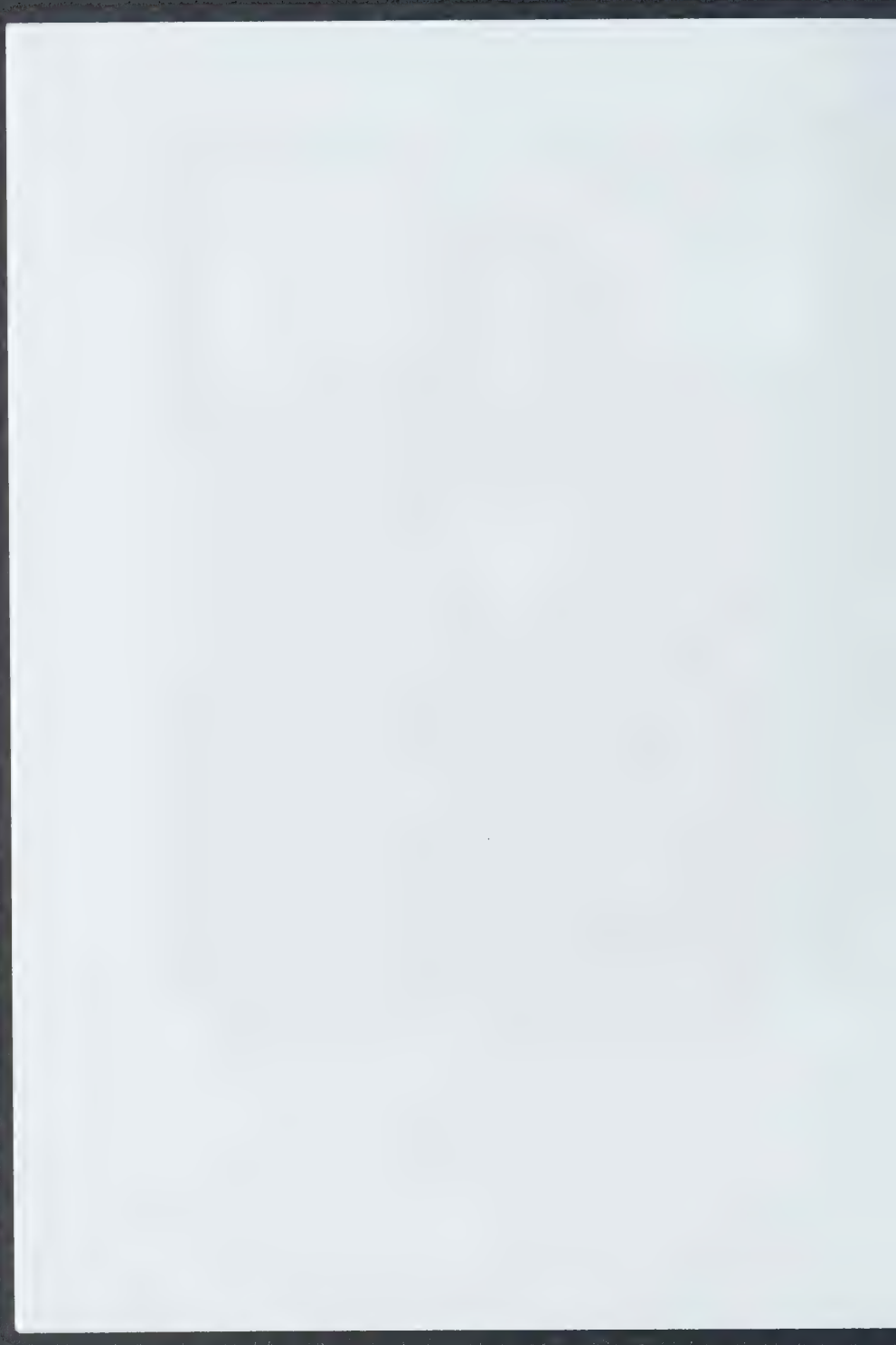


Photo:

THE ISLEWORTH *MONA LISA* (Giccondo)

Canvas, size 33½ in. by 25½ in.

[Paul Laib



THE TWO MONA LISAS

Mona Lisa represent the idea of a sorrowing mother painted for a husband who shares her grief? Does any one seriously maintain that this representation of a lynx-eyed coquette with the lascivious leer was Leonardo's ideal of a sorrowing mother? What says the great French historian Michelet of this picture? He calls it a 'dangerous picture,' and classes it with the *St. John* and the *Bacchus*, both now attributed by the latest authorities to some pupil of Leonardo. 'This canvas,' continues Michelet, 'entices me, calls me, usurps me, absorbs me; I go to it in spite of myself, as the bird goes to the serpent. . . . There is a strange look of Alcina's Island in the eyes of *la Joconde*,¹ gracious and smiling phantom. You would believe her reading the airy stories of Boccaccio.' But we know what this reference to Alcina means, who was 'the personification of carnal pleasure' in Oriosto's '*Orlando Furioso*.' Another great French critic, M. Gruyer, says: '*Mona Lisa* has been taken at times as the most perfidious of women.'² Such, we are asked to believe, was Leonardo's ideal of a mourning, sorrowing mother!

Yet, the ineffably calm, steady gaze from the beautiful eyes, and the sweet, sad, forced smile of the Isleworth picture speak to you from the canvas, not of coquettishness, not of cunning, not of intrigue, not of Alcina's carnal craving, but of that calm resignation born of deep sorrow, which appeals to and touches the human heart, and which represents all that is great, heroic, and ennobling in life, and which must have forcibly appealed to Leonardo.

¹ 'Histoire de France,' par Jules Michelet, vol. 9, pp. 88-90. Paris, 1879. The picture in the Louvre is known in France by either titles: *La Joconde* or *Mona Lisa*.

² M. A. Gruyer in 'La Gazette des Beaux-Arts,' August, 1887.

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SIXTH. One thing certain and beyond dispute is that the portrait painted by Leonardo in 1500-1504 and seen by Raphael in Florence in 1504-1505 is *not* the *Mona Lisa now in the Louvre*, for Raphael drew his study from it, upon which he modelled his portrait of Maddelina Doni, that he painted before his return to Perugia towards the end of 1505.

'The beautiful drawing,' says Müntz, in his 'Life of Raphael,' 'in the Louvre is an imitation of the *Mona Lisa*, having the same grave and easy attitude, the same full and simple modelling, and the same expression of voluptuous tenderness.'¹ . . . A comparison of the preliminary study with the painted portrait (Doni) cannot fail to be instructive. In the study, Raphael, inspired by the recollection of the Giocondo, puts out of sight the commonplace wife of Angelo Doni and gives us a young woman with large dreamy eyes and a sensuous mouth, fit sister of *Mona Lisa Giocondo*.'²

But this study by Raphael distinctly shows two columns, one on each side of the figure, yet there are no such columns in the composition of the Louvre *Mona Lisa*, which only contains brown dauby indications of the bases of columns. But it may be argued that since there are brown daubs for bases the columns may also have been there and may have been cut away for the purpose of framing. If so, this casts a stigma on Leonardo's work; for the balustrade on which the brown daubed base rests on the left hand side of the Louvre picture (otherwise so pronounced for its shadows) does not give *the faintest indication of a shadow* of the supposed column, which it should do had it ever been there, or had Leonardo ever

¹ 'Raphael: His Life, Work, and Times,' by Eugene Müntz, translated by Sir Walter Armstrong, 1888, p. 110.

² *Ibid*, p. 161.

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painted it, for he laid such great stress on giving full effect to shades and shadows. 'Shadows appear to me to be of supreme importance in perspective. . . . Shadow partakes of the nature of universal matter. . . . Therefore, O Painter, make your shadows darkest close to the object that casts it.' In his 'Trattato della Pittura' he devotes several chapters to light and shadow, and, amongst other things, says: 'If the painter then avoids shadows, he may be said to avoid the glory of the Art, and to render his work *despicable* to real connoisseurs.'¹ But the *total absence* of the shadow which even the brown daubed base should cast on the left of the picture—the light coming from the left—proves that the *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre was not the precise and exquisite work of the virile and robust Leonardo between 1500 and 1505; while it well may have been that of his Milanese pupil at Cloux in 1517, when the Master's right hand had been struck with paralysis, 'which forbids the expecting any more good work from him, but he has given a very good training to a Milanese pupil who works extremely well.'² But, to use Leonardo's own words, this shadowless base renders the 'work despicable to real connoisseurs.'

Yet the Isleworth *Mona Lisa* has not only the columns but has the bases beautifully moulded with the shadow distinctly painted across the left extremity of the balustrade. Moreover, compare the bases of the columns of the Isleworth portrait and the daubs of brown paint of the Louvre picture with the bases of the columns in Raphael's

¹ 'The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci,' by J. P. Richter, vol. 1, pp. 70, 73.

² 'Treatise on Painting,' by Leonardo da Vinci, p. 178.

³ 'Richerche Intorno a Leonardo da Vinci,' by Uzielli, vol. 2, p. 460. Interview in 1517 between Cardinal of Aragon and Leonardo at Cloux.

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drawing and it will demonstrate beyond question from which picture Raphael made his drawing, the bases of the columns in the drawing being exactly similar to those in the Isleworth picture.

SEVENTH. Yet another strong corroborative point in favour of the Isleworth version is the statement of Vasari, the first great Art historian: 'For Francesco Giocondo, Leonardo undertook to paint the portrait of 'Mona Lisa' his wife, but after toiling over it for four years, *he finally left it unfinished.*' Why did Vasari, thirty years after Leonardo's death, set a limit of four years in his statement, and then describe the picture as being left *finally* unfinished? Because Giocondo, having obtained his picture from Leonardo in 1505 (see p. 20), must have told Vasari this limit and shown him the unfinished picture in Florence: for he could not have written his detailed description without having seen it. But for the lack of shadow on the balustrade, the version now in the Louvre was a highly finished picture at the time of his writing, but he had never seen it as it went to France with Leonardo when he was four years old.¹

But how do Leonardo's biographers account for this deliberate and positive statement of Vasari's? Forsooth, they assert that the Master himself said that it was left unfinished, in the sense that it was not perfect. They have to resort to this flimsy, flabby interpretation in order to account, in any way, for Vasari's unqualified statement. But where, when, and to whom did Leonardo da Vinci ever make any such statement? He did not know Vasari, who was only four years old when the Master left Italy for France and seven years old when Leonardo died.

¹ The Cardinal of Aragon's secretary described it, when shown in 1517 at Cloux, as 'most perfect,' more than thirty years later Vasari describing the Giocondo version as '*finally unfinished.*'

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'What must have been the perfection of the ideal that floated in the Master's brain if he held such a finished masterpiece to be incomplete?' asks Müntz.¹ 'We do not understand,' says Rosenberg, 'how Leonardo, the restless, reckless seeker after truth, could say also of this work that it was unfinished.'² 'Of all his pictures it is carried farthest in degree and finish,' declares McCurdy, 'and Vasari's statement as to its incompleteness can only mean that Leonardo was still unsatisfied, that he never gave it what were designedly the last touches.'³ These three statements alone are sufficient to establish beyond question the identity of the *unfinished* Isleworth *Mona Lisa* without having resort to imaginative interpretation.

For the Isleworth version (the Giocondo version with the full columns) is *still unfinished*, and the paint of the unfinished background is not more than 150 years old, while all experts in Rome admitted recently that this paint was not of the same period as that of the head, which most of them declared to be Leonardo's work, and one of them went even so far as to suggest that the background had been painted in by a Dutch artist!

EIGHTH. But now let us see how Leonardo's biographers record the acquisition of the *Mona Lisa* by King Francis I.

'Francis the First bought this picture for his collection at Fontainebleau,' says Brown in the first English life published of Leonardo, 'and paid 4,000 golden crowns to the family for whom it was painted, a sum that would be equal to 45,000 francs in the present day. It is now in the Louvre.'⁴

¹ Müntz, vol. 2, p. 158.

² Rosenberg, 'Monograph,' p. 115.

³ McCurdy's 'Life of Leonardo,' p. 114.

⁴ 'The Life of Leonardo da Vinci,' by John William Brown, p. 116. London, 1828.

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Mrs. Heaton, with considerable temerity and ingenuity, surmises :

' Francesco del Giocondo, the husband of *Mona Lisa*, does not seem to have commissioned this picture ; at least, it remained with the painter until he sold it to the French king for 4,000 gold crowns, an enormous sum at that time.'¹

J. P. Richter, unquestionably one of the greatest authorities on da Vinci, states :

' It was about the year 1504 that the portrait of *Mona Lisa* was completed, at present in the Louvre Gallery. . . . Francis I paid, a few years later, 4,000 gold florins for the portrait, an enormous sum in those days.'²

Eugene Müntz, in his exhaustive *Life of the Master*, thinks :

' It is hardly probable that the portrait of *Mona Lisa* was the female portrait ordered by Giuliano de Medici and seen in Leonardo's studio by the Cardinal d'Aragon in 1516 (1517). However that may have been, it is certain that this artistic gem was acquired by Francis I at the price, we are told, of 4,000 gold crowns—somewhere about £8,000.'³ (? !)

Mr. Rosenberg asserts :

' When, at a later period, the matchless picture had passed from the ownership of those who had ordered it, into strange hands, Leonardo himself bought it for 4,000 gold ducats (about £1,800 sterling) on behalf of his royal patron, Francis I of France.'⁴

¹ 'Leonardo da Vinci and His Works,' by Mrs. Heaton. London, 1874.

² 'Leonardo,' by J. P. Richter, p. 88. London, 1880.

³ 'Leonardo da Vinci,' by Eugene Müntz, vol. 2, p. 158.

⁴ 'Leonardo da Vinci,' Monograph by Adolf Rosenberg, p. 116.

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None of these authorities, be it observed, states how, where, or when the picture was bought for Francis I; while they are all agreed about the price, *in gold*, of 4,000 crowns. Yet, will it be believed that there is *no contemporaneous authority whatever* for this price of 4,000 gold crowns? Neither Vasari, Lomazzo, nor the Anonymous Biographer (edited by Milanese) of that period ever mentions the price paid for it. The two latter are satisfied with stating that the picture was then (1568-1590) in the collection of Francis I, but say nothing about how he acquired it. This price was first mentioned in a book published in Paris in 1642 by Père Dan, whose sole authority for it was gossip, to which he gave credit 120 years after the supposed transaction. The truth is, no human being knows definitely the price or the circumstances of the acquisition of the Louvre *Mona Lisa* by Francis I, and circumstantial evidence is all we can go upon.

NINTH. Next we come to the drafts of Leonardo's two letters in his own handwriting, addressed respectively to the Maréchal Chaumont, Governor of Milan, and to the Superintendent of Canals. They were written in Florence in 1511, and in each he says he hopes to be back in Milan at Easter and bring with him two pictures. In his letter to Chaumont he describes them as 'due quadri di due nostre donne di varie grandezze, le quali son fatte pel cristianissimo nostre re,' the correct translation of which means 'two pictures of two of our ladies of different size which are made for our Most Christian King.' In the first draft of his letter to the Superintendent he says: 'due quadri di nostra donna chi io o' comiciate' — 'two pictures of our lady which I have commenced.' In the second draft he corrects it to 'due quadri dove sono due nostre donne di varie

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grandezze le quali io o' comiciate pel cristianissimo re.' 'Two pictures on which are two of our ladies, of different size, the which I commenced for our Most Christian King.' In each draft he says they are for the Most Christian King or 'Whomsoever you please,'¹ showing that though he had intended them for the king (Louis XII) they were not painted to the king's direct order. But in Chaumont's letter he calls them 'two pictures of two of our ladies,' as well as in the second draft to the Superintendent; while, again, in the one letter he says they are finished, while in the other two they are only commenced. The alteration from 'two pictures of our lady' in the first draft, to 'two pictures of two of our ladies' in the second draft, of his letter to the Superintendent is a very significant fact. By most of Leonardo's biographers these sentences have been translated as meaning two pictures of the Madonna or Virgin Mary, which I maintain is quite wrong. Translated accurately, they distinctly state 'two pictures of two of our ladies'; not, mind you, two pictures of our lady, but two pictures of *two of our ladies*,² and who ever heard of two pictures of our two Virgin Marys? Moreover, when in 1478 he commenced two pictures of the Virgin Mary, he wrote distinctly 'Incominciai le 2 Virgini Marie.'³

What were these two pictures or portraits? They could have been none other than the sketch of Isabella d'Este, and the second version of the *Mona Lisa* (the Florentine Lady) which, I hold,

¹ 'Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci,' by J. P. Richter, vol. 2, pp. 404, 405.

² In the 'Life of da Vinci,' by John William Brown, London, 1828, p. 285, the translation reads: 'Two of our ladies here.' In the 'Biographie Universelle,' vol. 43, p. 563, the rendering is 'Deux beaux portraits de femme.'

³ 'Literary Works of Leonardo,' by J. P. Richter, vol. 1, p. 342.

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he left by Will six years later to his legatee, Melzi, who sold them to Francis I.

TENTH. On October 10, 1517, the Cardinal d'Aragon visited Leonardo at his quiet secluded retreat at Cloux, near Amboise, in France, when the Cardinal's Secretary 'carefully noted down the details of this interview (all honour to him),' as Müntz says. From these notes we learn that the Cardinal was shown by the Master three pictures: 'One of a certain Florentine lady, painted from life, to the order of Julien de Medici. The other one of St. John the Baptist as a youth, and one of the Madonna with the child on the lap of St. Anne, all most perfect. A certain paralysis has attacked his (Leonardo's) right hand which forbids the expecting of any more good work from him, but he has given a very good training to a Milanese pupil, who works extremely well, and although Leonardo can no longer colour with that sweetness with which he was wont, he is still able to make drawings and to teach others.'

This interview is a most important episode in Leonardo's life, and at once establishes Melzi as one of the greatest artists of his time, though as yet unrecognized, for Leonardo, when struck with paralysis, handed him over all his unfinished work, which was considerable, and willingly entrusted his fame as a great master to the hands of this 'Milanese pupil who works extremely well.' But Leonardo showed the Cardinal three pictures: the *Florentine Lady*, the *St. Anne*, and the *St. John the Baptist*. The two latter became the property of Francis I, and are in the Louvre. The *Florentine Lady*, we are told, cannot be identified! It was not stolen, or the world would have heard more about it as a stolen picture than it has even as the Louvre *Mona Lisa*. It could not have disappeared from the quiet secluded retreat at

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Cloux without the Master's or his pupil's knowledge. Unless it was wilfully destroyed by either of these recluses, after the interview with the Cardinal, it must be the picture now hanging in the Louvre and known as the Joconde or *Mona Lisa*. What single circumstance is there to prove that it is not? To maintain that two out of the three pictures shown to the Cardinal in 1517 became the property of Francis I, but that the third was lost, though it in every way answers the description of the *Mona Lisa* now in the Louvre, and not to offer any reason for or clue to the loss, is to me strained sophistry. Moreover, there is not one shred of evidence as to how, where, or when Francis I came into possession of the *Mona Lisa* now in the Louvre. Yet there is the direct evidence of Raphael's drawing to show that the Louvre picture is not the portrait seen by Raphael in 1505, and described by Vasari as *unfinished* in 1550, over thirty years after the Louvre picture had been as highly finished, as it is to-day, for in 1517 the Cardinal of Aragon's Secretary described it as 'most perfect.'

Again, we have the deliberate statement of Leonardo to a Cardinal of his Church that the portrait of this *Florentine Lady* was painted, *from life*, to the order of Giuliano de Medici, brother of the then Pope. Therefore it could not have been the *Mona Lisa* portrait painted to the order of Mona Lisa's husband (Francesco del Giocondo), unless Leonardo, for no reason whatsoever, told the Cardinal a wanton, wilful, and deliberate lie. Further, there is not even a suggestion that any other lady in Florence, besides Lisa Giocondo, sat for Leonardo between 1500 and 1505; yet we know for a fact that two of his pupils were working at two portraits at this very time, so what could these have been but two versions of the *Mona Lisa*?

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Again, why did Giuliano de Medici order a portrait of a Florentine Lady? Moreover, did Giuliano order a Florentine Lady in mourning, for the Louvre portrait is in semi-mourning, without any ornaments or jewellery? When he met Leonardo, for the first time, in Florence in October, 1513, just a week before starting for Rome, after the election of his brother to the Pontificate, there was no time for the Master, who was accompanying him, to get a sitting from even a stray Florentine lady. But why a Florentine instead of a Roman or any other Italian lady, as they were on their road to Rome? The natural inference is that Giuliano de Medici, while in Florence over a year from September, 1512, to October, 1513, as Chief of the Republic, must have seen the *Mona Lisa* portrait, probably in Giocondo's house, for he was a leading citizen and one of the Priori, and must have met the Chief constantly on matters of state business, if not socially; or perhaps he saw it with Leonardo himself during the week in Florence together, and, being much struck with the picture, gave his newly appointed artist an order for another *Florentine Lady*. If we accept this very feasible, and more than probable, theory, the whole mystery of the *Florentine Lady* is at once solved, and Leonardo's statement to the Cardinal becomes clear and simple.

Now let us for a moment leave the realms of polemics and regard the subject from a purely human and common-sense point of view. Surely Lisa Giocondo, after having given several sittings to the Master, would have been over-anxious to get her portrait; her husband, proud of his third young wife, would have been equally keen, and would have insisted upon getting it from his friend Leonardo before the latter left for his first

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visit to Rome in 1505; and this would account for Vasari's statement, 'after toiling over it for four years he finally left it unfinished,' the time coinciding with the dates, and not requiring any wondrous inspiration to elucidate. But the Giocondos, having obtained their portrait, the replica or second version, also in its unfinished state, was still the portrait of a Florentine Lady, and Leonardo was quite justified in telling the Cardinal that it had been painted from life, for it was commenced between 1500 and 1501; and when in 1513 Giuliano de Medici gave an order for a *Florentine Lady*, and, *in compliance*, Leonardo determined to finish this second version for him, the Master would have been again quite justified in describing it as painted to the order of Giuliano. Then when finally finished, with the *St. Anne* and the *St. John* by Melzi at Cloux, it passed with them into the collection of Francis I, instead of vanishing by the aid of either magic or legerdemain.

Indeed, so convinced was one great French critic, M. Coppier, that the picture shown at Cloux was the *Mona Lisa* now in the Louvre, that he devoted eight pages of ingenious conjecture which appeared in the well-known French art journal 'Les Arts' (January, 1914), trying to prove that Giocondo could not possibly have ordered a portrait of his wife from Leonardo because the *Florentine Lady* was not painted until after 1512 (? 1513), when Leonardo first met Giuliano. He further argued that *Mona Lisa* would be thirty-five years old in 1512, while the Louvre picture represented a woman of twenty-six to twenty-eight years. But as the picture was commenced in 1501 *Mona Lisa* would then have been twenty-four according to his own dates. The Isleworth picture portrays a woman of twenty-four or

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twenty-five, slightly younger looking than the Louvre version, which is understandable since the latter was finished at Cloux by Melzi, who had never seen the sitter. M. Coppier, however, completely overlooked Raphael's sketch, made before 1505, which at once *totally explodes his whole theory*.

M. André Charles Coppier has returned to his attack in the March (1923) issue of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes.' In this he devotes thirteen pages of rodomontade in an effort to show that the *Virgin of the Rocks* in the National Gallery was painted entirely by Ambrogio de Predis; while he contributes nine and a half pages, mostly a *réchauffé* of his former article, in an attempt to prove that Leonardo da Vinci never painted Lisa Giocondo at all, but that the Louvre picture is merely an ideal representation of the Master's conception of feminine beauty. The defence of the National Gallery *Virgin of the Rocks* I leave to abler hands than mine, while his fallacies about the *Mona Lisa* I shall deal with as briefly as possible.

Having described Vasari's 'Lives of the Most Eminent Painters' as crammed with fables, he declares that it was Michel Angelo's hatred for da Vinci that instigated the author, his pupil, to publish the calumny that not only the *Equestrian Statue*, but even the *Last Supper*, as well as the famous portrait called *Mona Lisa*, were left unfinished, through Leonardo's incompetence. He then discusses, at some length, with justification, the absence of eye-lids and eye-lashes in many famous pictures of the Renaissance, besides those of da Vinci.

Next he quotes the passage in Vasari's short biography of Leonardo referring to the *Mona Lisa*, and makes the following comments :

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'Let us,' he says, 'state immediately that *la Joconde* (in the Louvre) has not a single brilliant point about it; neither has it the humidity of the eyes, which Vasari describes, and whose minute description is made after seeing with his own eyes (*de visu*) a picture of much less importance, for he refers but to "one head." It would be inadmissible that the author-painter should have neglected to mention the hands and the background which form such striking features in this composition—the chief work of the Renaissance—features so unlooked for in the pictorial representations of that period. When one recalls that Vasari, born in 1512, had never crossed the Alps and could not possibly have seen this picture, which da Vinci took to France in June (January ?), 1516, one must fully admit that he described a different painting, more especially as he speaks of a work "unfinished" and that it would be difficult to point out in *la Joconde* an unfinished part.'

I thank M. Coppier most sincerely for his, quite unconscious and unequivocal, *ex parte* statement, which reverts in favour of the establishment of the Isleworth *Mona Lisa*. Vasari's description answers more closely the features of the Isleworth version than those of the Louvre. That Vasari did '*de visu*' describe *the Mona Lisa*, without doubt in Florence, is perfectly true, and not the *Florentine Lady* taken to France with the *St. Anne* and the *St. John* and the drawing of *Isabella d'Este*, all now in the Louvre. That Vasari's description was of a picture of '*bien moindre importance*' I flatly deny, and refer M. André Charles Coppier to the Italian expert opinions on the Isleworth version given me recently in Rome, and printed herewith, while to

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the honest judgment of posterity I leave the Isleworth *Mona Lisa* without fear or scruple. That Vasari did not mention the hands was no doubt due to the absorption of his whole attention by the wonderfully beautiful face in the picture he beheld, the hands compared with it being of secondary importance, while his supposed omission regarding the background was natural enough because *it was not there*. That Vasari, born in 1512, did not see the Louvre version, when he was four years old, I see no reason to doubt, and that consequently he must have seen a different—a very different—version, I quite admit, more especially as he described it as *unfinished*, which the Isleworth version *is* to this day.

M. Coppier then refers to Leonardo's statement to the Cardinal of Aragon, with which I have already dealt. He discusses Julien de Medici's position, his inability to employ Leonardo before 1512, but is not quite accurate in the date of his departure from Florence, nor the date of Leonardo's return to that city from Milan *en route* for Rome. M. Coppier is again wrong in stating that Julien forced the 'Gonfalonier Ridolfi' to resign, as it was Pietro Soderini, who in 1502 was appointed Gonfalonier for life, and was forced to resign on the return of Medici in 1512. He then has the temerity to make the following statement:

'It is thus established that this *Florentine Beauty* delivered in 1517 to Francis I for four thousand golden crowns was not painted before 1512, and to which the artist could not have put a brush after 1516,' etc., etc.

Where does M. Coppier get his authority for stating that Leonardo handed the famous picture to the French king in 1517? As to the supposed

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price paid for it, we shall see it is one of those similar fables for which there is absolutely no foundation.

He quotes Vasari's description of *Mona Lisa's* smile as being 'not inferior to the model' and declares that 'this was sufficient ground for so many critics—following the lead of Père Dan—to identify Our *Jaconde with the portrait of Mona Lisa!* Yet Vasari,' he continues, 'could have observed that this smile was no new invention of Leonardo's, for it already animated, since 1501, the gracious traits of the *St. Anne.*'

Query—Was the smile of the *St. Anne* in the Louvre not suggested by *Mona Lisa's* smile, for according to Vasari they were being painted at the same time, and the complete absence of such a smile in the earlier cartoon for the *St. Anne* in Burlington House is a very remarkable fact?

But it is when he comes to deal with Lisa Giocondo's age that he over-reaches himself. He says that when her husband in 1495 'brought her (after being married) from Naples, she was *about twenty-two years of age.*' That in '1501 she was twenty-eight, which is not the apparent age of an Italian in *La Joconde*'; as a matter of fact reliable authorities have placed her age at sixteen when she married, and M. André Charles Coppier *himself* in his article in 'Les Arts' of January, 1914, *gave her age as eighteen when she was married.* Surely such a wile, as four years added to his own first statement, is a very poor device to bolster up a hyperbolic and sophistical argument. Immediately afterwards he states her first child died in 1499—but he passes over the awkward fact that even the Louvre picture is in semi-mourning, wearing no jewellery. Did Julien de Medici order the picture of a Florentine Lady in mourning?

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'How can it be explained,' he asks, 'that Leonardo, who was so anxious for the individual truth in his portraits, could have systematically destroyed all personal indication in this studied painting, since he has represented a Neapolitan, living in Florence, in this Alpine back-ground of lakes and glaciers,' etc.? This is yet another endorsement by M. Coppier for the Isleworth *Mona Lisa* which has no fantastical Alpine scene for a background, that was left quite *unfinished*.

He admits that Leonardo was in Florence in 1501, but he adds that then Lisa Giocondo would be twenty-eight years old—with his four years gratuitously tacked on—and he argues that at that time the Master was painting the *Virgin with the Spindles* and the cartoon for the *St. Anne*, as if these precluded his doing any other work. What about the two portraits Fra Nuvolaria saw in the Master's studio at this very time in Florence? But this great historical critic never as much as mentions them. Of course, he has a shot at Vasari for his error about the portrait of Ginevra Benci, whom he says in this article was dead eight years at the time it was supposed to be painted, whereas in his first article he says, more accurately, thirty years.

In his concluding paragraph he says :

'La Joconde is no more a portrait than the *Beatrice* of Dante; she is the conception of beauty as the *Vierge à la Source* is the conception of the religious, issued in the same vein and produced by the same means.'

There are other fallacious and subtle points raised in this article, but the answer to the whole inconsequent diatribe is that Raphael saw and made a drawing from the original *Mona Lisa* in Florence, before 1505. This is fact, not fiction,

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nor imaginative suggestion, and that drawing now hangs in the Louvre.

But after the return of the stolen *Mona Lisa* to the Louvre, a more serious French critic, perhaps the greatest of our time, M. Salomon Reinach, contributed a valuable article to the 'Revue Archéologique' (November - December, 1913), of which he was joint editor. This was such an important dissertation upon the subject that I do not hesitate to quote it fully:

'Peruggia, under the pretence that he was avenging the wrong done to his country by Napoleon, stole the *Mona Lisa*, whereupon the journalists, in a spirit of emulation, recalled the fact that this picture was purchased by Francis I at the cost of 12,000 francs of our money. This assertion is founded on the gossip picked up by Père Dan in 1642. In reality, the subject is veiled in complete obscurity. To start with, it is not proved that when the Cardinal of Aragon visited Leonardo at the Château at Cloux in 1517 the portrait of a woman that the painter showed him "painted to the order of Julien de Medici" was *La Joconde*. For if this were certain, one could conclude either of two things, as says M. Seymour de Ricci:

"(1) That Leonardo, after having painted the mistresses of Ludovici de Moro, painted the portrait of a favourite of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, or (2) that the unfinished portrait left by the sitter's husband on Leonardo's hands was purchased from him by the king in France, or was acquired by him from Melzi, his legatee, or that it was confiscated by virtue of the numerous rights of escheat or forfeit which the kings of France held over the properties of strangers who died within their territories; all

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of which are, however, equally doubtful. So long as it is not proved that *La Joconde* was taken to France by Leonardo, one might surmise that Francis I had caused it to be purchased for himself in Florence, perhaps after Fra Giocondo's death, knowing the fame and value of the portrait, of which there was sufficient evidence, according to Vasari's statements though made half a century later."'

With these ingenious theories I shall deal *seriatim*. The price of 4,000 gold crowns, the cause of as much ecstasy to the biographers, as to the journalists, has now passed into the land of fable. That the *Florentine Lady* shown at Cloux is the picture now in the Louvre I think I have proved in pp. 17-18 by all the rules of circumstantial evidence and logical sequence, but whether or not, I completely disagree with Messrs. Reinach's and Ricci's inferences and deductions. They are : (1) ' That Leonardo having painted the mistresses of Ludovico del Moro, painted the favourite of the Grand Duke of Tuscany.' I presume Messrs. Reinach and Ricci, both archaeologists, meant a favourite of Julien de Medici, created Duke of Nemours in 1515 on his marriage to the aunt of Francis I. Cosmo de Medici was the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, created such in 1569 by Pope Pius V fifty years after Leonardo's death. But I maintain—to the point of denial—that the Master had not the time during his short stay of a week in Florence in 1513 to paint the portrait of the mistress of his new patron, more especially as we know how long he took to paint a picture and that he never finished anything he commenced in the way of art. Moreover, he went straight to Rome with Julien and was lodged in the Vatican as a guest of the Pope, where surely common decency

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would have forbidden him painting the mistress of the Pope's brother. (2) That the 'unfinished portrait' left by the sitter's husband on Leonardo's hands was purchased from him by the king in France is simply impossible, for the Louvre picture *was not unfinished whenever it was purchased by the king*, or it would be still unfinished in the Louvre, but it is a highly finished picture, and if it were finished after it got into the king's gallery then it was not Leonardo's work, and consequently should be condemned straight away without further ado. Besides which Francesco del Giocondo never left his wife's picture on Leonardo's hands, and there is no scrap of evidence to show that he did. He had no necessity to sell the picture, and if he was proud enough of his young wife to get her portrait painted he would have been too proud to sell it and too anxious to keep it until his death in 1528, more especially as his wife died long before he did.

M. Reinach's next alternative is that the picture might have been purchased by Francis I from Leonardo's legatee, Melzi. In this I quite agree; in fact, I am convinced that such was the case, because Leonardo left Melzi in his will 'the instruments, and *portraits* appertaining to my art and calling as a Painter.' But if there were no portraits to leave, this was another lie, this time a written one, and the will was nothing better than a farce, performed in the presence of several witnesses, besides Melzi himself, and this lying and play-acting was indulged in nine days before the great and venerable man's death. Reader, I ask you, is it credible? Is it in accordance with the dictates of the most shallow Christian charity to even suggest such a thing about one of the greatest men that ever lived? But what could have been the portraits left in the will but the drawing of Isabella d'Este and the *Florentine Lady*,

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the former now in the Louvre, but the latter, we are told, seriously (?), cannot be identified and must have been lost or destroyed, though it perfectly answers the description of the *Mona Lisa* now in the Louvre? Again, I ask, why should it not be so?

The next alternative M. Reinach suggested was that the picture might have been confiscated by Francis I. This, again, was impossible, for he granted letters patent to Leonardo to dispose of his property as he desired, as Melzi informed the Master's brothers after his death.¹ The last is the far-fetched alternative that Francis I may have caused the picture to be purchased for him in Florence *after* Giocondo's death in 1528, 'knowing the fame and value of the portrait, of which there was sufficient evidence according to Vasari's statement, though made half a century later.' If my memory serves me rightly, this king was far too seriously engaged in foreign complications to be chasing the portrait of a dead man's dead wife, in spite of its 'fame and value,' which M. Reinach said Vasari made known 'half a century later.' M. Reinach again was inaccurate here, for Giocondo died in 1528 and Vasari published his 'Lives of the Painters' in 1550, twenty-two, not fifty, years later. But, again, it was impossible that Francis bought the Giocondo portrait, for if he did, where are the columns that Raphael saw in 1505, and it was not 'unfinished' as Vasari said. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that immediately after Giocondo's death Florence was once more in a state of turmoil, ending in the famous siege of the city in 1530, and in the consequent

¹ 'As he had letters patent from the most Christian King enabling him to bequeath his property to whom he pleased, without which he could not have done so, he made a will,' etc. Extract from Francisco Melzi to Leonardo's brothers, informing them of his death.

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confusion of that struggle the unfinished *Mona Lisa* may have remained undiscovered in Florence or have passed unobserved into the outer world, when its fate, like that of many another masterpiece, became unknown and unheeded ; as indeed so many of Leonardo's own manuscripts and drawings did without even the excuse of the confusion of a siege. ' Lilio Gavardi di Asola,' says Mr. McCurdy, ' tutor to the Melzi family, got thirteen volumes of Leonardo's manuscripts, and on his return to Milan offered to return them to Dr. Melzi, who, astonished at his solicitude, gave him them, informing him, at the same time, that ' there were many other drawings by Leonardo lying uncared for in the attics of his villa at Vaprio.'¹ Would it, then, be so extraordinarily wonderful if in those days the *Mona Lisa* were to remain in Florence hidden away, perhaps by Giocondo himself purposely owing to the disturbed state of the city, and it may have been sold afterwards surreptitiously by some underling ?

But it may fairly be asked ' How is it that for over four centuries no one has known of the two *Mona Lisas*, nor of the manner of their disposal ' ? This is very easily answered. It is quite simple. First of all Salai was about the only one who would have known after they left Florence in 1506 that the Master had given the Giocondos their version of the portrait before 1505. There was nothing unusual in their having received it, and it remained with Giocondo until his death, for we may rest assured he would not have sold his dead wife's portrait during his life. His death took place in 1528, when Florence was in a very perturbed state, and the siege was in 1530, when pictures, even by Leonardo, were of but secondary consideration. Indeed, no one could have known

¹ ' Leonardo's Note-books,' by McCurdy, p. 30.

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but Leonardo himself the true disposal of the two *Mona Lisas*, for Salai left his employ before he went to France, and would consequently know nothing of the Cloux *Florentine Lady* transaction; while Melzi, who accompanied the Master to Cloux, would have known nothing about the Giocondo version, as he was only a boy when he joined Leonardo in Milan some time after the Giocondo transaction. Then, again, Vasari was the first to write about Leonardo thirty-two years after his death, and it would appear that he knew very little about his life up to the time of his departure from Florence in 1506, and nothing of it from that date up to 1513, while he was in Milan, for he leaves these years a blank in his biography of the Master. Again, he mixes up the features in the two cartoons of the *St. Anne*. He undoubtedly picked up any information he had in Florence, and I imagine from Rustici, who was a great friend of Leonardo's, while there during the Master's youth, and who may have afterwards sent Vasari from France the information that Leonardo kept Francis I a long time waiting before he would finish the *St. Anne*. This information could not have come from Cloux except through Melzi, who did not meet Vasari until 1566, after he had written his book. But Rustici was with Francis I in France, and the king, knowing him to be the Master's friend, might have imparted to him this piece of exclusive information.

In conclusion I must point out that there are two *Mona Lisas* now acknowledged as from Leonardo's studio, neither of which is a copy of the other. The Isleworth version is admitted by the Italian experts to be far more beautiful and more artistic than the Louvre version. These two versions must have been the two portraits Fra Nuvolaria saw being painted in Leonardo's studio

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in 1501 in Florence, immediately after Madonna Lisa Giocondo had sat for the Master. No one else sat for him for years before nor for years after, so what could they have been but these? The Isleworth masterpiece is a portrait of transcendent beauty, with the most exquisite eyes that ever artist's brush gave life to. It answers completely in detail the picture from which Raphael made his sketch (now in the Louvre) and that which Vasari described as 'finally unfinished,' it having a nondescript background of comparatively modern paint. But it lacks a sufficiently authenticated pedigree for certain historical Art Experts, who for this reason alone, in spite of its *technique*, debar a picture from consideration, without their ever having seen it. The second is the Louvre *Mona Lisa*, with three fatal discrepancies, namely: the complete absence of columns, the representation of bases of columns by mere daubs of brown paint, and the conspicuous and entire lack of shade or shadow on the left extremity of the balustrade, which the brown daubed base should cast, the light coming from the left. But it boasts of a venerable pedigree since its christening in the presence of a Cardinal, while its birth is as doubtless as its pedigree is ancient. If the two portraits seen by Fra Nuvo-laria were not the two versions of the *Mona Lisa*, then the two portraits must have been lost; and if the 1511 'two portraits of two of our ladies' were not the second version of the *Mona Lisa* and the sketch of Isabella d'Este, then the 1511 'two portraits' were lost; and if the second version of the *Mona Lisa*, otherwise the *Florentine Lady*, be not now in the Louvre, then the *Florentine Lady* was lost, and if the Louvre picture and the Isabella d'Este sketch be not the 'portraits' left by Leonardo in his will, then these 'portraits' must also

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have been lost, or the will must have been a misrepresentation. But as against these vanishing tricks of at least six pictures we must record the fact that from the year 1500 to 1513 Leonardo had in constant attendance upon him his faithful pupil and servant Salai, and that before 1513 his loyal, trustworthy pupil and friend—his *alter ego* in fact—Francesco Melzi joined him and remained with him to the end, and that these two true and staunch friends jealously guarded every scrap of art that came from his hands, well knowing its value, and that Leonardo never lost a single picture while in his possession or under his control. But simply admit that the two versions of the *Mona Lisa* now extant were the two portraits seen by Fra Nuvolaria, and they can be traced right through to the end without the loss of a single picture, and the mystery surrounding the *Florentine Lady* becomes quite naturally solved.

That the Isleworth masterpiece will be acknowledged some day as the Giocondos' version I have not the shadow of a doubt, but being now an old, ailing man, I have little hope of living to see it, and I leave her intrinsic beauty and her enigmatic smile to bewitch and puzzle her admirers, while I shall sleep contentedly, having tried to establish her identity in spite of her inferior rival's four centuries of tradition.

'If the Louvre painting be the real *Mona Lisa*, and not a brilliant forgery, then Vasari, who described the picture, is a charlatan, and Raphael, who sketched the same, but a clumsy blunderer.'

¹ 'The Admirable Painter: A Study of Leonardo da Vinci', by A. J. Anderson. Stanley Paul & Co., London, 1915.

Opinions of Italian Experts on the Isleworth *Mona Lisa*

Given in Rome, where the Picture was brought, in November
and December, 1922

PROFESSOR COMMENDATORE CECCONI is the curator of the Academy of Santa Luca. He was loaned by the Italian Government to the Indian Government, at the request of the Foreign Office in London, to go to India to clean and restore the eighteen temples in the caves of Ajunta, in the Deccan. During his work there he brought to light original Greek frescoes painted over by Indians one hundred years after Alexander the Great invaded India. When the *Mona Lisa* of the Louvre was recovered in 1913, Prof. Cecconi was called by the Italian Government to examine the picture and ascertain whether it had received any damage. He therefore had a unique opportunity of knowing every detail of the Louvre picture. He called at the Grand Hotel and spent a considerable time minutely examining the Isleworth *Mona Lisa*, and his final words were: 'For me, this is an original of Leonardo: the "morbidizza," the condition of the "crepatura" are unique and exactly equivalent to that of the Louvre example.' His opinion is again expressed in the following letter:

'From an examination made of the picture representing *La Gioconda*, the property of Mr. J. R. Eyre, I have been able to observe that the technique of the picture resembles that of the picture representing the same subject existing in Paris.

'Regarding the originality of it, in some details it differs from that of the Louvre: in fact, observing the locks of hair falling on the right shoulder, these do not correspond exactly to the above-mentioned picture; as also the border around the neck differs in small details.

'What is remarkable is the fusion of the tints of the flesh, especially in the eyes; the line which designs the nose, the mouth, and the oval of the face.

'In my opinion, given the historical data collected by Mr. Eyre, this may be a second work of the Great Leonardo.

'(Signed) LORENZO CECCONI.'

OPINIONS OF ITALIAN EXPERTS

Dr. Colasanti, Director-General of the Beaux Arts, was highly taken with the picture but said that he could not declare that it was totally Leonardo and was inclined to think that Melzi had done a great part of it. The hair he thought was Leonardo and the upper part with the eyes and nose of the face, but the throat muscle was wrong and did not give the idea of being able to turn round which was extremely noticeable in all throats painted by Leonardo. He had read Eyre's book but thought that more documentary evidence was necessary. He was particularly strong on the question of the hair. As a picture he stated that the value was extremely great, leaving aside the authenticity of Leonardo. It was undoubtedly of the same period and from Leonardo's studio, but how much he had to do with it was difficult to say. The background did not worry him, it was not Leonardo, whilst that of the *Mona Lisa* in Paris undoubtedly was and can be compared with that of the *Madonna della Roccia*. He excluded Ambrogio de Predis, as the laying on of the paint was too fine.

Dr. Cantalamessa, the Chief Director of the Borghese Gallery, and one of the greatest authorities, although very ill, examined it briefly. He said: 'This is the best *Mona Lisa* that I have seen except the Louvre, which was in my hands for nearly two months. It is undoubtedly from Leonardo's studio, but I cannot give a further opinion. For this picture documentary evidence is of primary importance because the *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre has been there so long.'

Count San Martino di Valperga, for many years Honorary President of the Art Institutes of Italy and President of the 1911 Exhibition, was highly struck with the picture, and immediately exclaimed, 'Leonardia.' He refused to give a critical opinion of it, but thought it most magnificent, and much more beautiful than the *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre, and very valuable. He stated to other people, after he had seen the picture, that it was 'the most beautiful picture he had ever seen' and, in his opinion, Leonardo.

Prof. Adolfo Venturi said he thought the picture was mainly done on Leonardo's commencement by Ambrogio de Predis, who was Leonardo's partner (with Evangelisto de Predis) in the painting of the *Madonna della Roccia*, now in the National Gallery, London. He based this opinion on the hands, the heavy 'impasto' (laying on of paint) in the body portion between the bust and the hands. He stated the

THE TWO MONA LISAS

picture was more beautiful than the Paris one, the compactness, the beauty of the eye drawing, which he says is the principal portion done by Leonardo together with the line of the mouth, mark it as a gem in the art world.

Commendatore Marini, Inspector-General and Director-General of the Beaux Arts, highly praised the picture: said that it was undoubtedly from the studio of Leonardo da Vinci, but owing to the thickness of the paint on the hair, the texture of the tints on the hands, he could not say that it was from Leonardo's brush alone.

Professor Sciortino, President of the British Academy, expresses his opinion in the following letter:

' UNION CLUB,
23 PIAZZA DI SPAGNA,
ROME, 6.

' December 28, 1922.

' I have seen and examined the picture of *Mona Lisa*, property of Mr. J. Eyre, and in my opinion is a very beautiful picture and is in perfect state of preservation and in my opinion is school of Leonardo da Vinci, also " Bottega di Leonardo " (Studio of Leonardo).

' (*Signed*) ANTO SCIORTINO,
' Director of the British Academy
of Arts in Rome.'

Commendatore Corrado Ricci, Chief of the Institute of Historical, Archaeological, and Art Research, late Director-General of Beaux Arts, on seeing the picture, exclaimed, ' Che bella! Che bella! Che bella!' He is of opinion that the picture was painted in 1509 by some one who must have been an intimate acquaintance of Leonardo and then went to Raphael's studio (della bottega di Raffaello), perhaps even Raphael himself. The points of the tree, the thickness of the bodice paint seem to have fixed themselves in his mind. He thought that the background had been painted in by a Dutchman. He made strong objection to the throat muscle.

(It is to be noted that C. Ricci is a great judge and an acknowledged authority on the seventeenth-century Italian art but *not on earlier work*.)

Mr. Ludovico Spiridon, one of the best-known collectors of pictures in Italy and the owner of the original *Leda and the Swan* by Leonardo, examined the picture, with Mr. Syracuse,

OPINIONS OF ITALIAN EXPERTS

and was of opinion that 'the face has been painted by Leonardo; no doubt of this at all. It is most beautiful. The throat muscle has been spoilt by whoever finished the picture. The redness of the hands is probably due to a bad varnish that could be removed, although I am inclined to think the hands were painted by a different master to Leonardo, perhaps di Credo? But the difficulty with this picture is even worse than mine with the *Leda and the Swan*. I have the history of the *Leda* from the day it was painted, but you have only the history since 1760. And yet my *Leda* is not recognized, although J. P. Morgan came down to my house and offered me five million lira for it, because there is a *Leda* in the Louvre. You are in the same position but rather worse. But it is worth any amount if you can find some one who will believe that Leonardo painted another *Mona Lisa* besides the Louvre copy.'

Mr. Cesare Segre, a well-known collector and well acquainted with the *Mona Lisa* of the Louvre, spent a considerable time examining it and declared it was the most beautiful thing he had seen and that it 'would remain in my memory every night and when I go to Paris and see the other I shall mentally be comparing the two. And I know which I prefer.'

Mr. Wedder, the veteran American artist, at first could hardly believe that Leonardo would have painted a second picture of the same subject though he acknowledged that the handiwork was extremely Leonardesque. On learning the history of this picture, he very much weakened in his antagonism and suggested that we should see Mr. Cecconi, an art restorer and professor of great fame, whose opinion is given above.

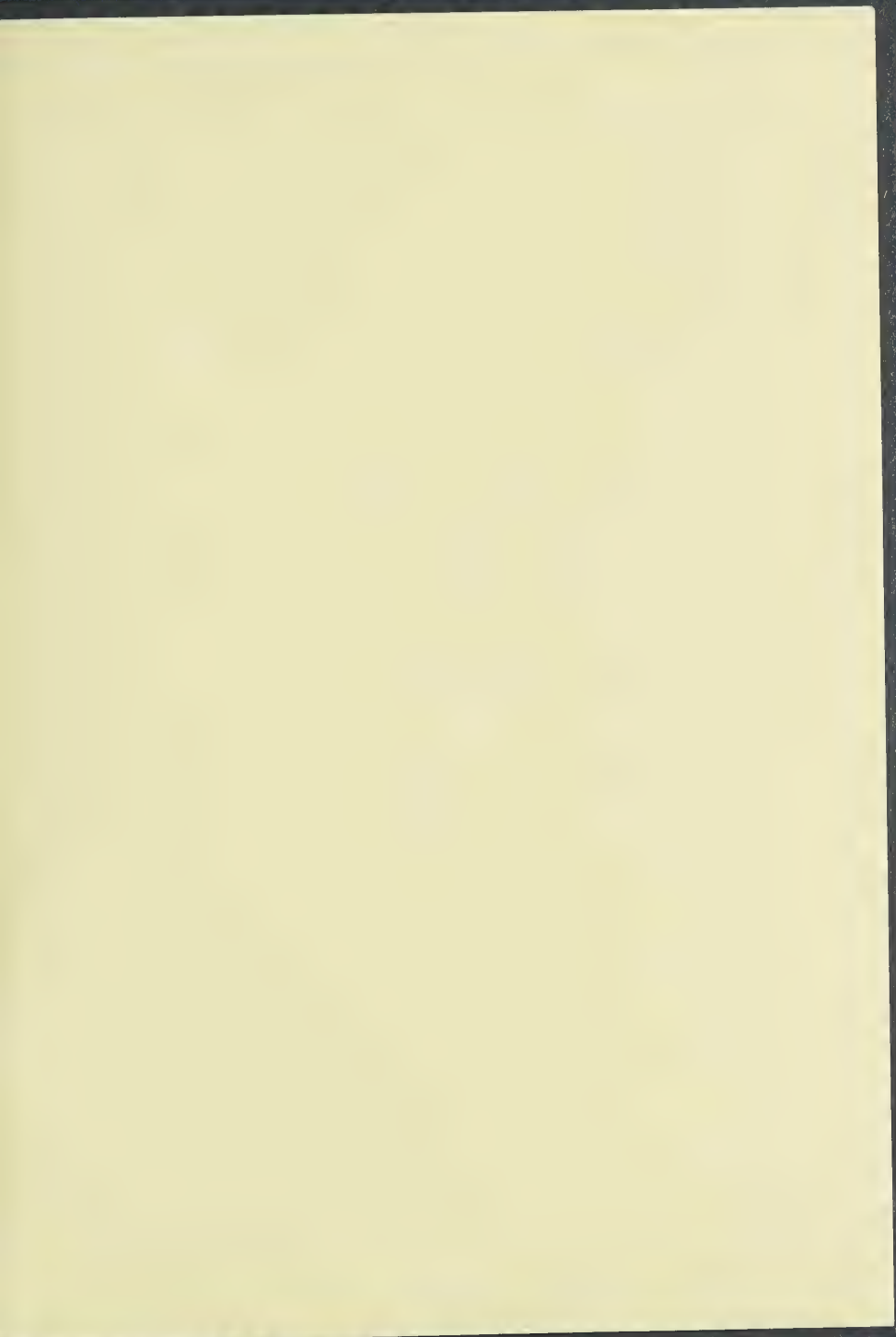
In the 'New York Times' of February 15, 1914, the well-known impartial art critic and connoisseur, Mr. P. G. Konody, after a close examination of the Isleworth picture described it in the following terms, which are endorsed by the above more recent Italian opinions:

'An exceptionally interesting version of the *Mona Lisa* has recently turned up at Isleworth, London. Let it be said at once the picture in question has nothing whatever to do with any of the innumerable early or late French copies which have from time to time been boomed into prominence.

THE TWO MONA LISAS

It is not only vastly superior to all of them, but it is of such superb quality that it more than holds its own when compared with the much-restored and repainted Louvre masterpiece. What is even more significant is that it is in no sense of the word a "copy," but varies in some very important points from the Paris *Mona Lisa*. The design is altogether different. There is far more background; the spacing is infinitely more pleasing; the head is inclined at a different angle; the background is quite different and far less assertive than in the Paris picture; the features are more delicate, and, let it be boldly stated, far more pleasing and beautiful than in the Louvre version.

'But there are more potent reasons to attach the greatest importance to the new discovery. There is in the collection of the old master drawings at the Louvre an original pen drawing by Raphael, which is reproduced in Müntz's great work on Leonardo, and which is generally admitted to be a memory sketch by Raphael of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*. Now this memory sketch is framed at both sides by two columns, of which no trace is to be found in the Paris *Mona Lisa*. These columns appear in the identical place in the Isleworth picture and are of immense value to the harmonious balance of the composition. . . . However, no specious arguments are needed for the Isleworth picture, the quality of which may speak for itself. A close investigation of the picture leaves the firm conviction that though not altogether from the hand of Leonardo da Vinci himself, it emanates most certainly from his studio and was very largely worked up by the Master himself. The hands with their careful and somewhat hard drawing and terra-cotta colouring, suggest at once the name of Leonardo's pupil, Marco d'Oggionno, whereas the inimitable soft and lovely painting of the head and bust, the exquisite subtlety of the expression, the golden glow of the general colouring, can be due only to Leonardo. The face shows none of the defects of the Louvre picture, which are probably due to clumsy repainting. . . . Needless to say, the acceptance of this work as a picture painted in part at least by Leonardo, does not in any way shake the authenticity of the Louvre *Mona Lisa*. But it is worth noting that the painting of two versions of the same subject would not be an isolated instance in the practice of Leonardo—witness *The Virgin of the Rock*, of which both the Louvre and the National Gallery in London own authentic versions.'





The
EDWIN F. GORDON
Collection

As curator of art at Concordia Teachers College, I am most pleased to note the gift of the Gordon collection featured and detailed in this brochure. Our campus must be a daily workshop in the appreciation and understanding of the plastic arts; this gift considerably advances this possibility for our faculty, students, staff and visitors.

The formal showing of the paintings is to take place in the Kretzmann Gallery. Upon the conclusion of this exhibit, the public display of these testaments to our international art heritage continues in the permanent mounting of the works in Concordia classrooms and library.

This brochure will hopefully serve the art scholar, as well as the art lover, in a growing appreciation of this collection. I am indebted to James St. Q. O'Toole, art appraiser, Paris, Venice, New York, for factual detail on the paintings and the artists.

As curator, and on behalf of the Art Department of Concordia Teachers College, and art students of every level, permit me to say, *Thank you, Dr. Gordon.*

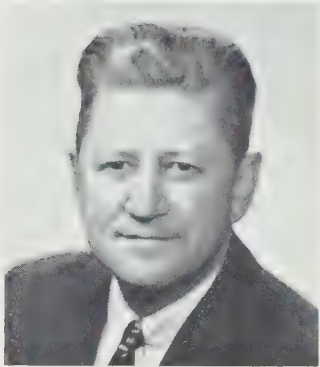
WALTER W. MARTIN
Curator of Art

Concordia Teachers College is grateful to Dr. Edwin F. Gordon, an alumnus of the Class of 1942, for his gift of seventeen paintings, which are more fully described elsewhere in this brochure.

The most notable feature of this gift, it seems to us, is the fact that it is given in honor of a distinguished professor of this college, Arthur E. Diesing. Professor Diesing's effectiveness in the classroom is still so vivid in the memory of his many students at Concordia that even after twenty-five years it has the power to bring forth such a gift from one of them.

*M. L. Koehneke
President*

August 1, 1967



ARTHUR E. DIESING, PROFESSOR EMERITUS

In making the collection available to Concordia, Dr. Gordon requested that the paintings be dedicated to Arthur E. Diesing, professor emeritus, who served in English, humanities, and the arts from 1923 to his retirement in 1958.

“Professor Diesing made a great contribution to the cultural sensitivity of each of his students; to keep alive and give impetus to that sensitivity among other students, I would like to share some of the fine art works from my collection with the faculty and students of Concordia.”

EDWIN F. GORDON
Pompano
Florida



EDWIN F. GORDON with "Portrait of a Nobleman"
by Nicolas De Largilliere

Edwin F. Gordon, after graduation from Concordia Teachers College in 1942, earned a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy degree at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

He is Director of:

Gordon, Hoover and Associates, Chicago.
Capital Investments, Incorporated, Milwaukee.

He is President and Director of:

Geuder, Paeschke and Frey Company, Milwaukee.
Metenamel Company.



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NICOLAS DE LARGILLIERE, "*Portrait of a Nobleman*"
From London Collection
French 1656-1746
Oil on canvas

This French master portrait painter was born in Paris, 1656, and died in the same city 1746. He studied at Antwerp with the able Flemish teacher M. Göbau. At 18 years De Largilliere left Antwerp for England and continued to Paris in 1678 where he immediately gained fame with a remarkable portrait of the Flemish painter Ven der Meulen. De Largilliere gained favor with King Louis XIV, and as early as 1686 was admitted to the academy as "Painter of History and Portraits."



"ELOPEMENT"—Philip Wouwerman
HUNTING PARTY

W. J. J. J. J.
1687 -
1750 -

PHILIP WOUVERMAN, "*Elopement*"
20" x 17"
From the Honolulu Museum
Dutch 1614-1668
Oil on panel
Original frame

PHILIP WOUVERMAN, "*Hunting Party*"
Signed
From the Honolulu Museum
Dutch 1614-1668
Oil on panel
Original frame
15½" x 19½"

Philip Wouwerman was born 1619 and died at Antwerp, 1668. He was a pupil of Jran Wijnants, from whom he learned to love horses and animals. He is famous for paintings of castles, feasts, hunts, and involved battles. Wouwerman works are hung in museums and art collections throughout the world.



Gordon Coultres
1850
4/100.

GORDON F. COULTES, "*Landscape*"

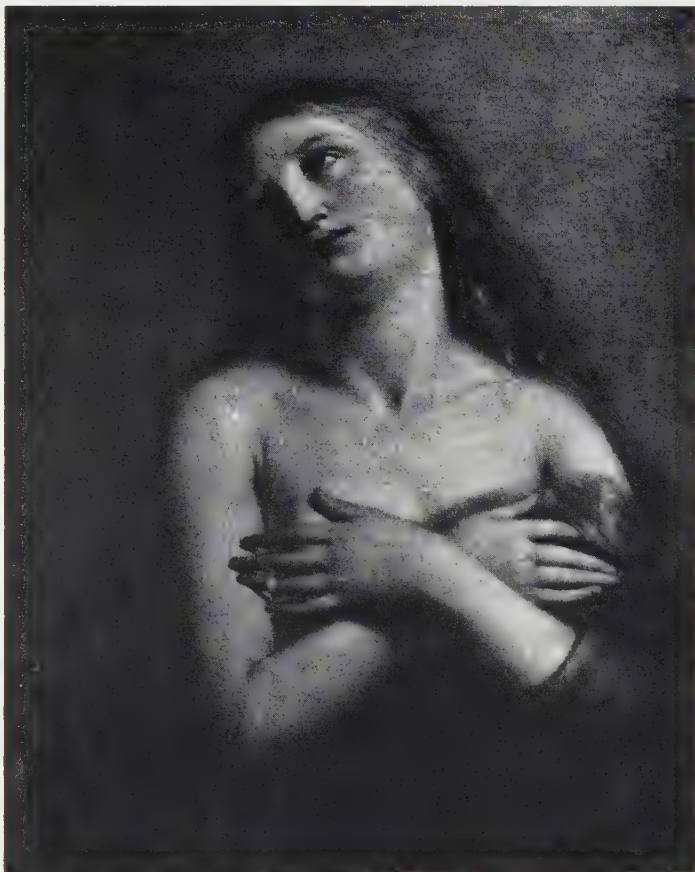
Signed

English 19th Century

Oil on canvas

30 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 40 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

This is an original work by an English late nineteenth century landscape painter, Gordon F. Coultres. He continues the great tradition of John Berney Crome in the use of sunlight throughout the landscape.



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GUIDO RENI, "Magdalene"
Bolognese 1575-1642
Oil on canvas

The Bolognese master, Guido Reni, was born in Calvenzano, Italy, 1575 and died at Bologna in 1642. As a young man he was apprenticed to the Flemish master Denis Calvaert. However, his artistic ability and his rapidity of execution brought the artist many enemies who persecuted him for jealous reasons, even the brothers Carracci to whose school he brought his talent. After leaving Bologna, his work in fresco in Rome brought him great renown. He was summoned to Naples for the decoration of the Church of St. Januarius; however the work was unfinished because of the jealousy of Ribera and Tanfranco. From the lists of museums throughout the world that mention works by Guido Reni in their collections, it is evident that his production was enormous. "Magdalene" is typical of the better works which European and American museums exhibit with great pride.



4178 -
4178
4750

CHARLES MARIN, "*Fish Market at Sea*"

Signed and dated 1849

26" x 35½"

French 19th Century

Oil on canvas

Charles Marin of Flemish parentage was a youthful companion of the master Eugene Boudin. Several of his signed paintings are in the Museum of Ostend, Dunkirk, and other seaport towns on the Northern coast of France and Belgium.



5000
2000
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PAUL BALTHAZAR OMMEGANCK, "*The Young Farmer*"

Signed

21¼" x 29"

Flemish 1755-1826

Oil on panel

Original frame

The artist was born at Antwerp, 1755. He enjoyed the favor of the Empress Josephine of France. Ommeganck was honored by election to the Institute of France, the academies of Amsterdam, Brussels, Ghent, Munich and Vienna. Examples of his landscape and animal paintings may be found in many European museums.



LEONARD BRAMER, "*Welcoming*"
Dutch, 1596-circa 1667
Oil on cradled wood panel
13½" x 33½"

Leonard Bramer was born at Delft in 1596 and died in the same city circa 1667. He traveled considerably and acquired his individual skills particularly in Italy and in France. Bramer lived in Rome for several years painting brilliant decorations for the Prince of Parma, Mario Farnese, and for Cardinal Chailly. On his return to Holland, he worked for the Prince of Orange and the Count of Nassau. While in Italy Bramer worked in Venice where, in the Gallery of the Royal Palace, there are two paintings by this artist, similar in size and subject matter to "*Welcoming*."

B. C. PRUCHA, "*Troika*"
Signed
Bohemian 19th Century
Oil on canvas
14½" x 23"

*B. C. Prucha
1855
1870*

This painting is an original work by the Bohemian artist B. C. Prucha, who was active in Prague and Bratislava in the latter years of the nineteenth century. A number of canvases signed in this same signature depicting family and farm life of the Eastern European plains are exhibited at the Czech National Museum.



JEAN JACQUES HENNER, "*Ideal Head*"
French, 1829-1905

This is an original work by the French master, Jean Jacques Henner, 1829-1905. This painting is a typical example of the artist's "Ideal Head" which he repeated frequently and for which he gained great renown.



JAMES STARK, "*Landscape*"
English, 1794-1859
Oil on canvas
32" x 42"

"Landscape" is a typical work by the eminent English landscape painter James Stark. This was a continuation of the landscape tradition of Thomas Gainsborough and the outstanding trees and sky of M. Hobbema.



JOHN CONSTABLE, "*Valley Farm*"

Oil Sketch

English, 1776-1837

Oil on canvas

21" x 17"

John Constable was born in the county district of England in 1776 and died in London in 1837. He studied at the Royal Academy of London and developed his style with portraits, historical works, and talented renditions of nature. He was elected a member of the Royal National Academy in 1819. Paris enthusiastically acclaimed Constable after an 1824 exhibit of three of his works. Eugene Delacroix wrote in his journal of the inspiration he received from Constable and Rosseau, and Dupre also was influenced by him. Paris success whetted the British appetite and several canvases were purchased by the National Gallery in London.

This oil sketch is for a large painting now hanging in the Tate Gallery, London. It is well known that often these spontaneous oil sketches of Constable were superior to the larger works completed in his studio which at times lacked the brightness, movement of the smaller pieces done in nature's view.



GEORGE INNESS, "*Landscape*"
American, 1825-1894
Oil on canvas
14½" x 18½"

This distinguished American painter studied in Europe and was pupil of the French artist Regis Gignoux. Inness enjoyed great success in the United States and was elected a member of the National Academy in 1868. He was awarded a medal in Paris in 1889 and another medal in Munich in 1892. Most of the important American museums exhibit works by Inness, particularly the Metropolitan Museum of New York and Boston Museum.



JAN STEEN, "Serenaders"
Dutch, 1626-1679
Oil on wood panel
15" x 14½"

This painting, full of life, movement and interest is an excellent example of the art of the Dutch master, Jan Havicsz Steen, born in Leyden, 1626, and buried there February 3, 1679. He was the son of a brass maker. Showing artistic ability at an early age, Steen studied with Adrian van Ostade at Haarlem and with Jan van Goryen at The Hague. His early works were not accepted, but today his paintings of life and customs of the early seventeenth century Dutch cities and towns are highly esteemed. Art museums all over the world exhibit his works.



CLAUDE MONET, "*Houses of Parliament*"
French Impressionist, 1840-1926
Oil on Canvas

This is an original painting by the French Impressionist Master Claude Monet, born in Paris, November 14, 1840. His first teacher was Eugene Boudin. After military service, Monet went to Paris and worked in the studio of Blyne and others. During the war of 1870, Monet moved to England, living with Camille Pissarro. After his 1873 return to France, Monet began his research into the effects of light on color, painting many views of the same scene at different hours of the day. From 1902 to 1904, Monet again worked in London. His works of this period are considered his best.



"Swiss Master of the Crucifixion"

Swiss, circa 1420

Painting on panel 19" x 30½"

Armor of the soldiers antique silver leaf

This painting is attributed to the Swiss Master of the Crucifixion, whose works are dated circa 1420. Figures and faces are heavily outlined in black while the costumes of the lay figures are those of the contemporary mid-fifteenth century. The effect of the painting is religious.



MAURICE DE VLAMINICK, "*Landscape*"
French "faure artist," 1876-1958
Oil on canvas

An original work by the contemporary French artist Maurice de Vlaminck, born in Paris, 1876, and died 1958. He was one of the first "faure" artists who believed in pure color and one of the few who persevered in this theory. His paintings are characterized with clear and bright color. Many international art museums hold his paintings.

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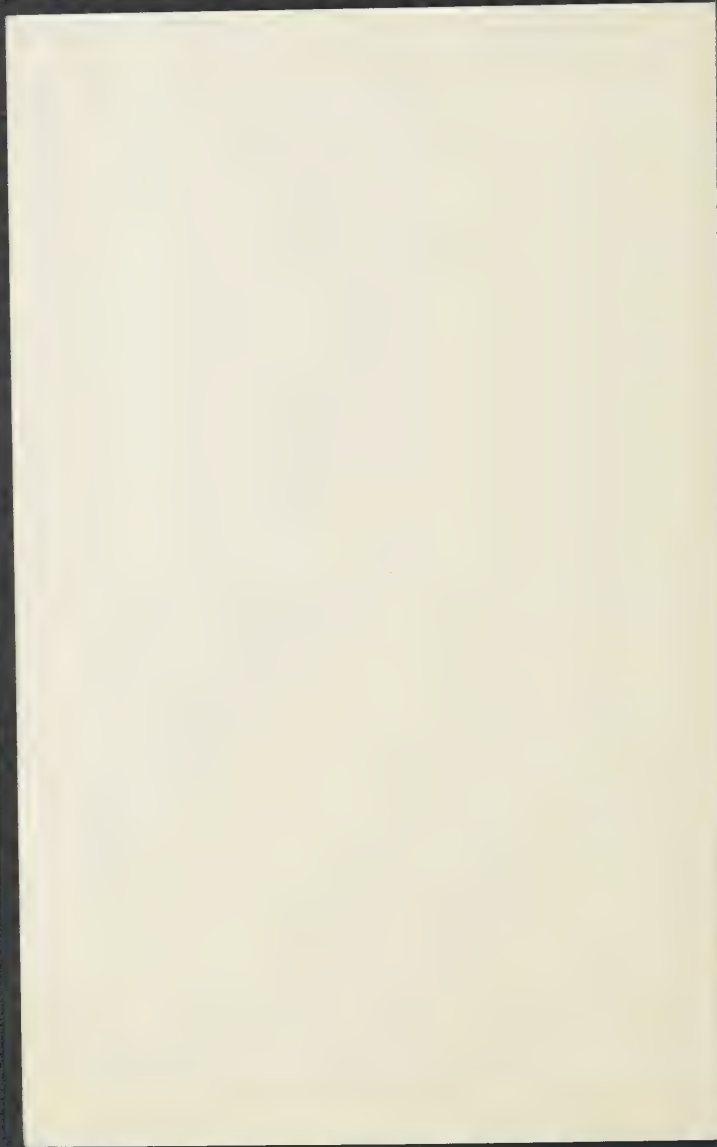
GEDÄCHTNISAUSSTELLUNG

BRONCIA KÖLLER

1863—1934

JULI 1961

STAATSDRUCKEREI WOLLZEILE 27 A





B. Pineil-Koller 1900

GEDÄCHTNISAUSSTELLUNG

BRONCIA KOLLER

1863—1934

JULI 1961

STAATSDRUCKEREI WOLLZEILE 27A

*Die Eröffnungsrede zur Ausstellung
hält
Herr Prof. A. P. Gütersloh
von der Akademie der bildenden Künste
in Wien*

Broncia Koller, 1863—1934, war eine Malerin aus dem Kreise Gustav Klimts.

In der Schule zeigte sie eine ungewöhnliche Deklamationsgabe, so daß ihre Lehrer in ihr eine zukünftige Schauspielerin vermuteten. Der alte Tanzmeister Rabensteiner hätte sie gerne für das Ballett ausgebildet. Erst als ihr Vater ihr starkes zeichnerisches Talent entdeckte, ging er auf die Suche nach einem Lehrer. Die Wiener Akademie empfahl einen jungen Bildhauer, Robert Raab, der schon als Schüler durch seine Arbeiten Aufsehen erregt hatte. Sein Unterricht begann mit genauen Kopien nach Holbeinzeichnungen. Nach seinem frühen Tode wurde B. Pinell — wie sich die Künstlerin vor ihrer Heirat unterschrieb — Schülerin von Prof. Alois Delug, der ihr Hauptlehrer blieb. Er veranlaßte sie mehrmals, nach München zu gehen, wo sie die Herterich-Schule besuchte. Sie stellte im Wiener Künstlerhaus und in München aus; zwei Bilder brachten ihr in dieser Zeit besonderen Erfolg: „Adagio“ und „Nachmittag bei der Großmutter“. Letzteres läßt sie als Zeitgenossin Uhdes erkennen.

Im Jahre 1896 heiratete Broncia Pinell Dr. Hugo Koller, einen jungen Physiker, der Assistent an der Wiener Universität war und den sein späterer Lebensweg in die chemische Industrie führte. Nach ihrer Verheiratung lebte Frau Koller zuerst in Hallein bei Salzburg, darauf mehrere Jahre in Nürnberg. Ein Sohn und eine Tochter kamen zur Welt und nahmen die Mutter so in Anspruch, daß die ersten Jahre ihrer Ehe beinahe eine Arbeitspause waren. Sie malte wenige Porträts und kleine Landschaften. In Nürnberg führte sie Prof. Kühn in die Technik des Radierens ein.

Frau Koller kehrte 1903 mit ihrer Familie nach Wien zurück, wo sie bis an ihr Lebensende blieb. Hier fand sie unter den bildenden Künstlern ein bewegtes Leben vor. Der Maler Gustav Klimt trat eben mit seinen Gesinnungsgenossen aus der Wiener Secession aus. 1897 hatte er zu den Gründern dieser Kunstvereinigung gehört und war gleichzeitig ihr Präsident gewesen. Sein kompro-

mißloses Vorwärtstreben hatte zu ernstesten Konflikten mit gesellschaftlich gebundenen Kollegen geführt. Unter den Getreuen Klimts wären die Namen Alfred Roller, Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser, Adolf Böhm, Rudolf von Larisch, C. O. Czeschka und der Bildhauer Franz Metzner zu nennen. Diese Gruppe von Künstlern war schon früher durch den damaligen Direktor der Wiener Kunstgewerbeschule Felician v. Myrbach durch Lehrstellen an sein Institut gebunden worden. Josef Olbrich, der Erbauer des Secessionsgebäudes, kehrte nach Deutschland zurück, Emil Orlik folgte einem Ruf nach Berlin. Prof. Hoffmann und Prof. Moser gründeten bald darauf die „Wiener Werkstätte“, die zusammen mit der Blütezeit der Kunstgewerbeschule der Ursprung des internationalen Rufes des Wiener Kunstgewerbes wurde. Prof. Orlik hatte aus Japan die dortige Holzschnittkunst und die dazugehörigen Werkzeuge mitgebracht. All diese Ereignisse beeinflussten Frau Kollers Schaffen. Sie befreundete sich bald mit dem Kreis Klimt-Hoffmann-Moser-Böhm. Es entstand die zweite Periode ihrer Malweise, deren man drei unterscheiden kann. Als erste muß die Münchener Art bezeichnet werden mit meist dunklen Hintergründen und feinen Fleischtönen. Unter dem Einfluß Gustav Klimts ging Frau Koller zu einer dekorativen Malerei über, mit hellerer trockener Ölfarbe. Die in schmalen Leisten gerahmten Bilder sollten wie ein Stück bemalte Wand wirken. Frau Koller erlernte auch die japanische Holzschnittkunst, und nach einigen Jahren intensiver Arbeit errang sie den größten Erfolg ihres Lebens in der sogenannten „Kunstschau“. Es lohnt sich, diese fast in Vergessenheit geratene Ausstellung ausführlich zu beschreiben. Da die Gruppe um Gustav Klimt, die der neuen Secession in Berlin oder München entsprochen hätte, in Wien kein eigenes Gebäude erreichen konnte, mieteten die kämpferisch gesinnten Künstler für zwei Jahre das unverbaute Grundstück des heutigen Konzerthauses in der Lothringerstraße, vergrößert durch einen Teil des Eislaufplatzes. Dort errichtete Prof. Josef Hoffmann mit Hilfe der Baufirma Eduard Ast ein wohlgelungenes Ausstellungsgelände mit einem Freilichttheater. Von den ebenerdigen Ausstellungsräumen trat man immer wieder in kleine Höfe und gegliederte Gartenanlagen, in denen plastische und kunstgewerbliche Arbeiten gezeigt wurden. Oskar Kokoschka, damals Assistent an der Wiener Kunstgewerbeschule, entwarf das Plakat und stellte das erste Mal aus: „Die Traum-

tragenden“, Entwürfe für Gobelins und den „Trance-
spieler“. Zwei seiner ersten Bühnenstücke wurden im Frei-
lichttheater aufgeführt, wo man auch Pantomimen von
Franz Schreker und Julius Bittner sah. Auf der reizvollen
Kaffeehausterrasse saßen mit ihren Freunden Peter Alten-
berg und Adolf Loos und auch ausländische Gäste, die der
schönen Ausstellung mehr Anerkennung zollten als die
eigenen Landsleute.

Frau Koller stellte eine Reihe von Bildern aus, welche
große Anerkennung bei ihren Kollegen und dem Präsi-
denten Klimt fanden. Auch mit mehreren Holzschnitten
war Frau Koller unter der Graphik vertreten. 1908 fand
eine österreichische, 1909 eine internationale Ausstellung
statt. In der zweiten Schau zeigten die Veranstalter, neben
eigenen Arbeiten, Werke von deutschen, Schweizer, engli-
schen und holländischen Gästen; von Van Gogh — der
kurz vorher gestorben war — eine kleine Kollektion, unter
zeitgenössischen Franzosen Matisse und Gauguin. Heute
klingt das ganz natürlich, damals galt es in Wien als eine
revolutionäre Tat

Nach dem Verschwinden dieser einmalig schönen Aus-
stellungsmöglichkeit blieb der Kunstsalon Mietke in der
Dorotheergasse das Heim der Klimt-Gruppe, wo auch Frau
Koller einige Jahre nach der Kunstschau kollektiv aus-
stellte. An jeder gemeinsamen, auch ins Ausland gesandten
Ausstellung nahm sie teil. Nach dem Tode Gustav Klimts
blieb sie die Kollegin der jüngeren Generation, die die
alte Gruppe fortsetzte. Sie und ihr Mann waren stets
Förderer dieser „Jungen“. Franz v. Zülow und Anton
Faistauer half Frau Koller in entscheidenden Jahren,
Paris Gütersloh malte ihr Bildnis, Egon Schiele schuf ein
Porträt ihres Mannes.

Es wäre noch zu erwähnen, daß Dr. Koller nach dem Tode
seines Schwiegervaters, 1904, dessen Fabriksbesitz in
der Nähe von Wien erwarb. Das stimmungsvolle Anwesen,
das aus einer alten Getreidemühle entstanden ist und zu
dem Josef Hoffmann einen harmonisch eingefügten Anbau
erdachte, blieb Frau Kollers und ihrer Familie ständiger
Landsitz. In dieser niederösterreichischen Umgebung malte
sie einen großen Teil ihrer Bilder. Das Porträt ihres Wohn-
hauses zeigt ein Atelierfenster, das ihr Vater als Über-
raschung für seine Tochter in das alte Gebäude einfügen
ließ.

Auf gemeinsamen Reisen mit ihrem Mann sah Frau Koller Italien, verbunden mit einem längeren Aufenthalt in Rom, und war mehrmals in Paris. Wenn auch das Wiener Kunstleben Frau Koller viele und wesentliche Anregungen brachte, ist ihre malerische Entwicklung ohne die Kenntnis der künstlerischen Strömungen in Paris und Berlin nicht denkbar. Hier ist vor allem die Bewegung der französischen Impressionisten mit den Malern Manet, Monet, Renoir zu nennen; in Berlin Liebermann und Corinth und ebenso wichtig wie diese der Norweger Edvard Munch.

In den letzten zwanzig Jahren ihres Lebens entwickelte Frau Koller ihre dritte, endgültige Malweise. Sie behält die trockene Ölfarbe bei, doch wird sie tiefer und satter. Kontur und Tönung sind bewegt, manchmal temperamentvoll willkürlich, wie es ihrem ewig jungen Wesen entsprach. Neben Bildnissen und Landschaften entstehen große Stillleben, auf denen sie ihren mit Liebe gesammelten Hausrat und die Bücher ihres Mannes verewigt.

Eine Lieblingsaufgabe, die Frau Koller sich selbst stellte, war die Einrichtung und Gestaltung von Wohnräumen. Ihre Wiener Wohnungen und das von ihrem Mann umgebaute und vergrößerte Landhaus boten ihr dazu genügend Gelegenheit. Das Reizvolle ihrer Anordnung bestand oft in der Gegenüberstellung von ganz modernen und antiken Gegenständen.

Neben ihren künstlerischen Talenten war ihre größte Gabe, auf Kinder wie auch auf reife Menschen in einem guten Sinne einzuwirken und jedem, der mit ihr in Berührung kam, Lebensmut einzuflößen.

Trotz ihres schweren Krebsleidens, an dem sie eineinhalb Jahre litt, malte sie noch zwei Bilder: einen roten Gloxinientopf und ein Porträt ihres Bruders, der als Arzt die Pflege ihrer Krankheit leitete.

Als sie sich ihres nahen Endes bewußt wurde, waren ihre ermahnenden Worte an ihre nächste Umgebung: „Weint keine Träne um mich! Nur wer glaubt, etwas versäumt zu haben, stirbt schwer. Wer so schön gelebt hat wie ich, stirbt gern und leicht.“

S. Koller
1961

BILDERVERZEICHNIS

Ölbilder

- 1 Mädchen mit Puppe
- 2 Porträt Frau J. S.
- 3 Aulandschaft
- 4 Porträt meiner Mutter
- 5 Blumengesellschaft
- 6 Naschmarkt im Schnee
- 7 Porträt H. S.
- 8 Frühmarkt
- 9 Mädchen mit Vogelkäfig
- 10 Ernte
- 21 Silvia
- 22 Stadtbild
- 23 Junge Frau
- 24 Botanik
- 25 Porträt Prof. Karl Stiegler
- 26 Stilleben
- 27 Himmel und Erde
- 28 Porträt Frau Dr. B.
- 29 Stilleben mit Glasmadonna
- 30 Gloxinien
- 31 Mary
- 32 Holzmadonna
- 33 Selbstporträt
- 34 Karpfen
- 35 Porträt F. E.
- 36 Knabenbildnis
- 37 Arbeitstisch des Gärtners

- 38 Altes Haus
- 39 Porträt Prof. F. P.

Graphik

Holzschnitte

- 11 Böheimkirchen
- 12 Meine Mutter
- 13 Dach des Theaters a. d. Wien
- 14 Karlskirche
- 15 Dächer des Freihauses
- 16 Porträt Frau E. St. G.
- 17 Einkauf
- 18 Felsen im Helenental

Zeichnungen

- 19 Mädchenkopf — Kohle
- 20 Apfel und Birne — Kohle

Auf der Staffelei:

Porträt Broncia Koller, gemalt von Prof. A. P. Gütersloh



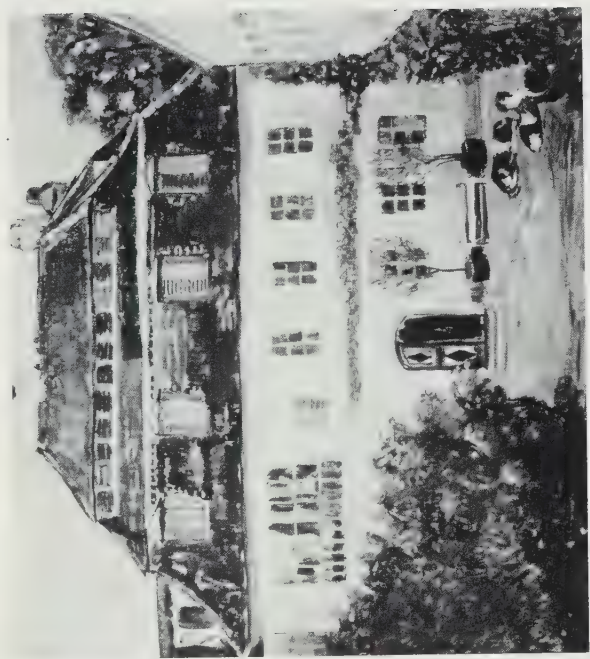
Mädchen mit Puppe

1893

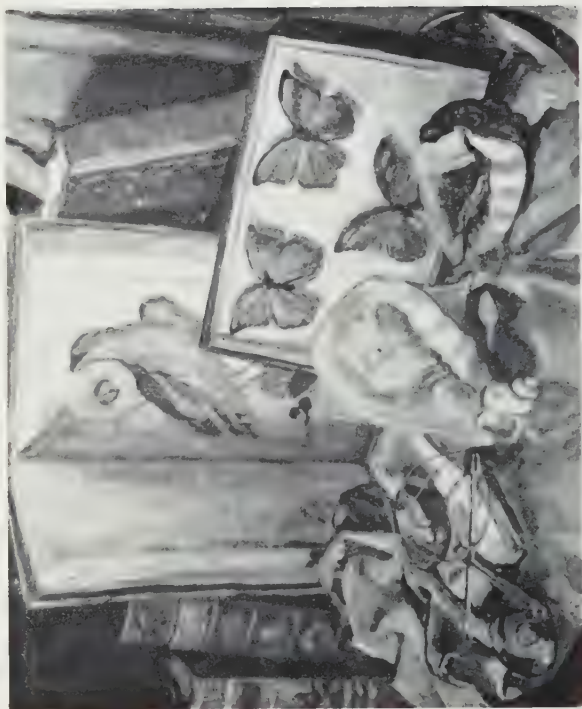
*Königsberg
Königsberg - 1893*



Frühmarkt



Altes Haus



Stilleben mit blauen Schmetterlingen



Prof. Karl Stiegler

1932

