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FINE ART CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION INC.
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NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021

January 30, 2015

Re: Edouard Manet
Berthe Morisot on a Divan
19 7/16 x 25 ¼ in. (49.4 x 64.2 cm)

As you have requested, I am setting forth my observations about the above painting which I examined in detail prior to embarking upon some minor restoration, cleaning, and re-varnishing. As a part of this process I also looked over four separate studies that were made in prior years, beginning in 1978 by two prominent conservators and two researchers.

Historical Record

I examined a number of historical documents prior to commencement.

1. The painting, entitled "*Femme couchée*," is included in Leon Leenhoff's *Register of Manet Works* as No. 291, compiled about 1880, with correct dimensions, with the notation "*attribué à la Duchesse Colona*." (Exhibit #1)
2. An unpublished letter from Berthe Morisot to Suzanne Manet in 1883 explains that Edouard Manet had promised the painting to (Adèle d'Affry), the Duchesse de Castiglione-colonna (who had died in 1879) and requests that it be given to (her mother) the Comtesse d'Affry who was passing through Paris. (Exhibit #2)
3. The painting was photographed by Fernand Lochard, the Manet estate photographer, using a wet plate collodion process that was common in the late nineteenth century.. A record of this photograph (described as "de mauvaise qualité" in the letter of transmittal) exists at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. It accurately depicts the figure of Berthe Morisot and very limited portions of the rest of the painting, but the blue-green canopy and the brown background are substantially missing. (Exhibits #3 and #4)

4. The subject painting, represented by the 1883 Lochard photograph, is included as No. 210 in the Rouart-Wildenstein 1975 *Catalogue raisonné of the work of Édouard MANET*. (Exhibit #5)

Report of William Young, Chief Conservator, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Sept 1, 1978

The painting was examined by "ultra-violet, x-ray, refracted infrared, transmitted infrared, energy dispersive x-ray fluorescence, and microscopic" study. I have quoted Mr. Young's conclusions below.

Biography: *Founder and Chief, Museum of Fine Arts Laboratory, Boston, Massachusetts. In 1929, William Young emigrated from England, leading the division (then called Objects Conservation and Scientific Research Laboratory) until his retirement in 1976. During his tenure, Young pioneered dramatic restoration techniques and contributed immeasurably to the understanding of the methods of manufacture and the materials used in works of art by systematic scientific analysis. He also instituted some of the earliest international symposia devoted to conservation science, including the renowned series, "Application of Science in the Examination of Works of Art." After his retirement, Mr. Young became a conservation consultant.*

Conclusions:

1. "The canopy fluoresces, in general, the same yellow-green tone as the rest of the painting and gives no indication of modern repaint, except for the lower left area of the canopy where a few vertical brush strokes appear to have been strengthened. The proper extreme lower right area of the painting has some old re-touching in an area measuring approximately 2 ½" x 1 ½"."
2. "Two infra-red photographs were made and the exposure time arranged to bring out the darker brush strokes. When the negative was printed, the print was identical to the one taken by Lochard in the artist's studio (Fig. 3). In comparing the brush strokes of the painting in the two photographs, one can say with certainty that the painting in question is the one that Lochard photographed."
3. "Ten (pigment) analyses were made by this method (energy dispersive x-ray fluorescence) in order to determine the consistency of the palette, the date of origin of the pigments and the overall continuity of the painting."
 - a. "There is a consistency in palette throughout the painting."
 - b. "The pigments all date from the period when the painting was executed."
 - c. "No modern pigments are in evidence."
 - d. "No evidence was uncovered to indicate that the canopy was of a later date."

4. "The painting was examined under a binocular microscope... to continue to question whether the canopy was of a later date. Under magnification of 20 to 40 X, one could observe a crackle running through the green of the canopy into the area of the figure."
5. "A transmitted infra-red photograph was made of the painting which indicates that the painting, in general, is in good condition without major losses."
6. "From the above examinations, I can make the following conclusions about the subject painting:
 - a. This painting is the same painting which Lochard photographed and which appears as illustration #210 in the Rouart and Wildenstein Catalogue Raisonné.
 - b. The chemical analyses of the pigments throughout the painting indicate pigments that were used at the time of Manet. No modern pigments are in evidence.
 - c. Microscopic observation and energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence do not provide any evidence to indicate that the canopy and foreground are of a later date.
 - d. Two raking light photographs were made which substantiate the microscopic interpretation of the impasto of the painting indicating that the canopy was part of the original composition. One can observe in the raking light many black areas that were found to be painted over the blue-green areas of the canopy.
 - e. As a consequence of my study, it is my opinion that the subject painting is executed by the hand of Edouard Manet."

Report of Dr. Nicholas Eastaugh, Ph.D.: Manet's Femme Allongée sur un Canapé: A Comparison of the Lochard Photograph and the Extant Painting, April 20, 2005

Biography: *Dr. Eastaugh studied conservation and art history at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. His doctoral studies, on the history and analysis of artists' pigments, were also conducted at the Courtauld Institute of Art. He held posts at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, the Textile Conservation Centre, and was a Fellow at the Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa, Canada. Dr. Eastaugh is currently an Honorary Fellow at the University of Oxford. Dr. Eastaugh also jointly established (and now co-leads) the Pigmentum Project, an inter-disciplinary programme aimed at harnessing both science and art history to further the study of historical pigments. In addition to numerous papers, Dr. Eastaugh has published two volumes under the general title *The Pigment Compendium: A Dictionary of Historical Pigments and Polarised Light Microscopy of Historical Pigments*. He is currently working on a definitive book about authenticity in art.*

Since 1988 Dr. Eastaugh has been a consultant in the scientific study of paint and paintings. Clients from the UK and worldwide include numerous national museums, galleries and other organisations, all major auction houses as well as many leading dealers, numerous private collectors and conservation studios. Dr. Eastaugh has wide research interests that include the study of historical pigments, mathematical modelling in art history, imaging, and software applications for the scientific art history community.

Conclusions: I have taken the liberty of highlighting the principal observations and conclusions in Dr. Eastaugh's 28-page report which includes color photographs and scans, tabular data, scientific analysis of pigment samples, and microscopic examinations:

1. "It is sufficient to report here that the probability is very high that the Lochard image is of the same painting—it was found that overlay images of the Lochard photograph scaled remarkably well to match the painting." (Exhibit #6)
2. "By study under magnification it is possible to see that there is no evidence (especially where there are denser layers present such as the white/lighter blue) of either in-filled or overlain cracks. Consequently there is no evidence of later additions of paint from this."
3. "Pigments were identified from a series of samples taken from a wide range of locations so as to determine whether there were consistent similarities or differences across the painting. All such pigments identified appear to be consistent with those that might have been used in France in the 1880's. None are of types with known dates of introduction post-1883."
4. "There was also no discernable pattern such that some areas had significantly different composition in terms of pigments used. That is, there were no obvious instances of similar colours in different parts of the painting having been executed using markedly different combinations of pigments."
5. In terms of paint media, "in essence, no significant differences were found among the four samples analysed—all were largely consistent in terms of the ratios of principal components of fatty acids and presence of minor compounds."
6. In terms of stratigraphy, "the conclusion should be that the painting was to all intents and purposes produced continuously, without significantly later alteration."
7. "It has been possible to demonstrate that there are basic features of the painting's composition that align very precisely with the Lochard image. Specifically, we might highlight the numerous details of the figure that coincide exactly with features picked up through techniques such as the infrared transmittography."

Digital Comparison of the Lochard Photograph and the Corresponding Painting by Thomas Arter, Commercial Photographer, Damariscotta, Maine, 2010

Biography: Thomas Arter is a commercial digital photography who was engaged to employ high definition digital imaging and various software programs to create overlays of the Lochard photograph over the subject painting. The goal was to determine correspondence and also to identify trace black pigment remnants in the lower field of the Lochard photograph to determine if they relate to the painting composition.

Conclusions:

1. "There is positive, trace evidence in the Lochard photograph—in the apparently blank areas—that aligns precisely with brush strokes in the painting, clearly indicating that the subject painting was a completed composition in 1883 when it was photographed by Fernand Lochard. These critical areas, not previously noticed, were revealed in the Lochard photograph as follows:
 - a. The top edge of the canopy
 - b. Folds of the canopy skirt
 - c. Three shadows below the canopy
2. "Image 1 shows an area of the canopy between the two horizontal lines near the figure of Berthe Morisot that corresponds precisely with trace elements found in the Lochard photograph (Image 2). These image remnants show that the canopy composition was photographed by Lochard, but did not fully show up in the development process."
3. "By superimposing the Lochard photo precisely over the image of the painting, we found that several ruffles of the canopy aligned precisely with darker trace areas in the Lochard photograph. We also found that three dark shadows below the canopy aligned precisely with trace areas in the Lochard photograph.

Wet Plate Collodion Research Report prepared by Eric Taubman, founder of the Center for Alternative Photography, New York, New York, April 28, 2011.

Biography: Eric Taubman is the founder of the Center for Alternative Photography at 36 East 30th Street, New York City, and an instructor in wet plate collodion photography, a nineteenth century technique that has had a rebirth in recent years in the United States. He gives frequent workshops on this subject at the center.

Assignment: Eric Taubman was asked to provide an explanation for the failure of an 1883 wet plate collodion photograph (i.e. the Lochard photograph) to reproduce a complete image on an albumen print. The subject Lochard photograph failed to reproduce the blue divan upon which the subject, Berthe Morisot, is reclining, as well as portions of the brown background.

Conclusions:

1. "The entire wet collodion process, from coating to developing, had to be done before the plate dried. This requirement gave the photographer no more than ten minutes to complete everything, and therefore made it inconvenient for field use, as it required a portable darkroom. The plate dripped silver nitrate solution, causing stains and troublesome build-ups in the camera and plate holders."
2. "The silver nitrate bath itself was also a source of problems. It gradually became saturated with alcohol, ether, iodide and bromide salts, dust, and various organic

matter. It would lose effectiveness, causing plates to mysteriously fail to produce an image.”

3. “Warm colors appear dark, cool colors (i.e. blue) uniformly light. A sky with clouds is difficult to render... a blue and white tablecloth appears plain white.”
4. “Albumen prints are “printed-out,” meaning that the image is created solely by the action of light on the sensitized paper without any chemical development. The printing-out process requires long exposures and results in prints that are susceptible to fading.”
5. “The very same photographic shortcomings that appear in the Lochard photograph relative to the subject (Manet) painting also were found to appear in many other photographs taken by Fernand Lochard when he recorded the Manet Estate paintings. (Exhibit #7)

Examination of the Manet Painting by David Bull, January 15, 2010

Biography: I am currently the Visiting Director of the Timken Museum of Art, Balboa Park, San Diego, California and also offer conservation services with my wife, Teresa Longyear, through Fine Art Conservation and Restoration Inc. in New York City. Previously I served as the chairman of painting conservation at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.,

Earlier in my career I was a conservator at the National Gallery in London, and later served as director at the Norton Simon Museum and then head conservator at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

The following statements were included in an evaluation in 2010 in conjunction with my cleaning and restoration.

My Observations:

This painting was examined under high magnification and ultra-violet light to determine whether any passages of the work had been overpainted, or whether another hand, other than Manet’s was evident.

It was quite clear after a careful examination that the entire painting was made in one sitting and by a single hand.

For example, Berthe Morisot’s hair was clearly painted over the brown background in some locations, and in other locations the reverse was seen where the brown background paint lay over her hair. This established that both hair and background were painted while the paint was wet.

Similar passages were seen in the blue cushion on which she leans and the brown background, the black portions of her dress and the blue divan and parts of her dress and the brown background.

These observations fully support the proposal that the entire painting was completed swiftly and in one session.

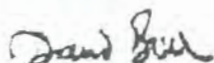
Overall Conclusions:

From the first study of this painting by the Museum of Fine Arts Conservation Laboratory in 1978 until the present, conservators who have examined this work in detail have arrived at the same conclusion: that the painting was always a completed composition, as it exists today, but the 1883 Lochard photograph—which was the only visual record for many years— gave a misleading impression because it failed to pick up the blue-green canopy and portions of the brown background, both of which were typical failings of wet collodion photography in the late nineteenth century.

The painting itself is in a good, solid condition, and we cleaned it, removed some old minor restoration from many years ago, and applied a light varnish coat.

I hope this summary is useful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Bull".

David Bull