Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun
1755 - 1842

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1819

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PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN, 1819
Oil on canvas
24 x 20 inches (61 x 51 cm)
Signed and dated lower right L. E. vigee /Le Brun/ 1819
Collection Paul Underwood

At the age of sixty-four, vigee Le Brun was still capable of producing a handsome and sensitively modeled portrait. The sitter has been presumed to be the wife of the Polish mercenary, General Joseph Zaionczek (1752-1826) who, following his country's War of Independence, served with the French in the Egyptian and Prussian campaigns and who in 1818 was accorded the title of Prince by Czar Alexander I. The identification seems highly implausible since in 1819 Princess Zaionczek was approximately sixty years old. (See Countess Anna Potocka, Memoires, Paris, 1911, pp. 386-390.)

Figure 40

1789

Madame Adelaide Perregaux
Wallace Collection, London

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The black beret topped with a red plume recalls the coif worn by Adelaide Perregaux in her portrait of 1789 (fig. 40). The pointed lace ruff exemplifies the seventeenth-century accessories that had been in vogue since the early years of the Empire.

PROVENANCE: Grand Duchess Anastasia Mikhailovna; with the Galerie Cailleux, Paris; with the John Levy Galleries, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Richard V. Nuttall, Pittsburgh, by 1939; New York, Parke-Bernet, Nuttall Sale, May 21, 1952, lot 34 (bought by L. Orlowski); M.B. Sinskey, New York; acquired from him in 1977 by the present owner.

EXHIBITION: Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh, Department of Fine Art, French Painting of the 19th Century, Apr 22-May 7, 1939, no number.

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