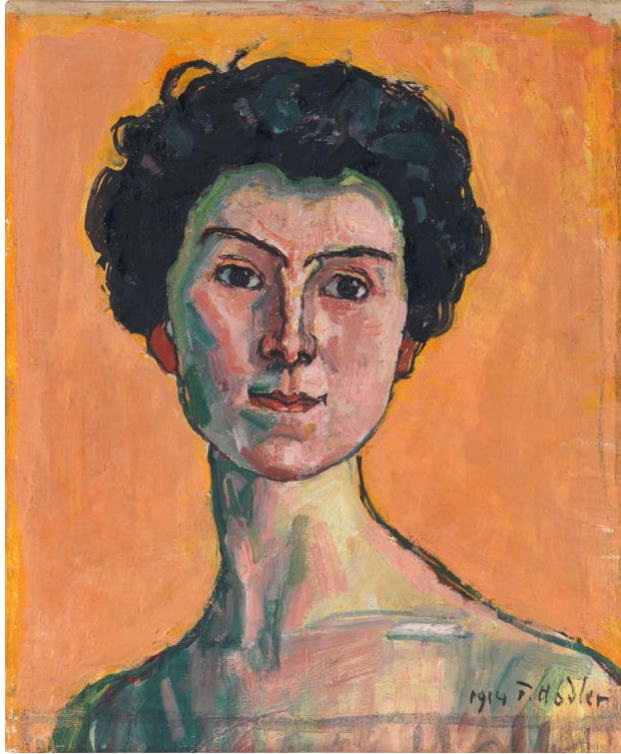


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FERDINAND HODLER

(Bern 1853-1918 Geneva)

*PORTRAIT OF CLARA PASCHE-BATTIÉ*

signed and dated lower right: '1914 F. Hodler'

oil on canvas

49.5 x 39 cm; 19 1/2 x 15 1/3 in.

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## Provenance

François Monnard, Geneva, 1921–1946;  
Private collection, Switzerland, 1946-2012;  
Private collection, USA;  
Sale, Koller Auktionen, Zurich, 2 July 2021, lot 3041;  
Private collection, Germany.

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## Literature

*Hodler Gedächtnis-Ausstellung*, exh. cat. Bern (Kunstmuseum) 1921, no. 505 [titled *Frauenkopf mit schwarzen Haaren, 1914*].

Loosli, Carl Albert, "Generalkatalog", in: *Ferdinand Hodler. Leben, Werk und Nachlass, Suter 1921–24*, no. 1040 [titled *Italienerin (Kopf mit schwarzen Haaren), 1914*].

*René-Louis Piachaud 1896–1941. Cinquantième anniversaire de sa mort 1991*, exh. cat. Carouge (Musée de Carouge) 1991, no. 97 [titled *Portrait de Mme Pasche-Bathier*].

Bätschmann, Oskar and Paul Müller, *Ferdinand Hodler. Catalogue raisonné der Gemälde, vol. II, Die Bildnisse*, Zurich 2012, no. 946, p. 286.

# COLNAGHI

## Exhibited

*Hodler Gedächtnis-Ausstellung*, Kunstmuseum Bern, 20 August. - 23 October 1921 [titled *Frauenkopf mit schwarzen Haaren, 1914*].

*Ferdinand Hodler*, Kunsthalle Bern, 09 May - 05 July 1936, no. 121 [titled *Frauenkopf*].

*F. Hodler. Exposition commémorative à l'occasion du XXe anniversaire de sa mort*. Galerie Moos, 19 May - 19 June 1938, no. 98 [titled *Portrait Mme Pasche*].

*Cent ans de peinture genevoise, 1830-1930*. Collection privées carougeoises. Salle de fêtes, 13 May - 03 June 1966, no. 46.

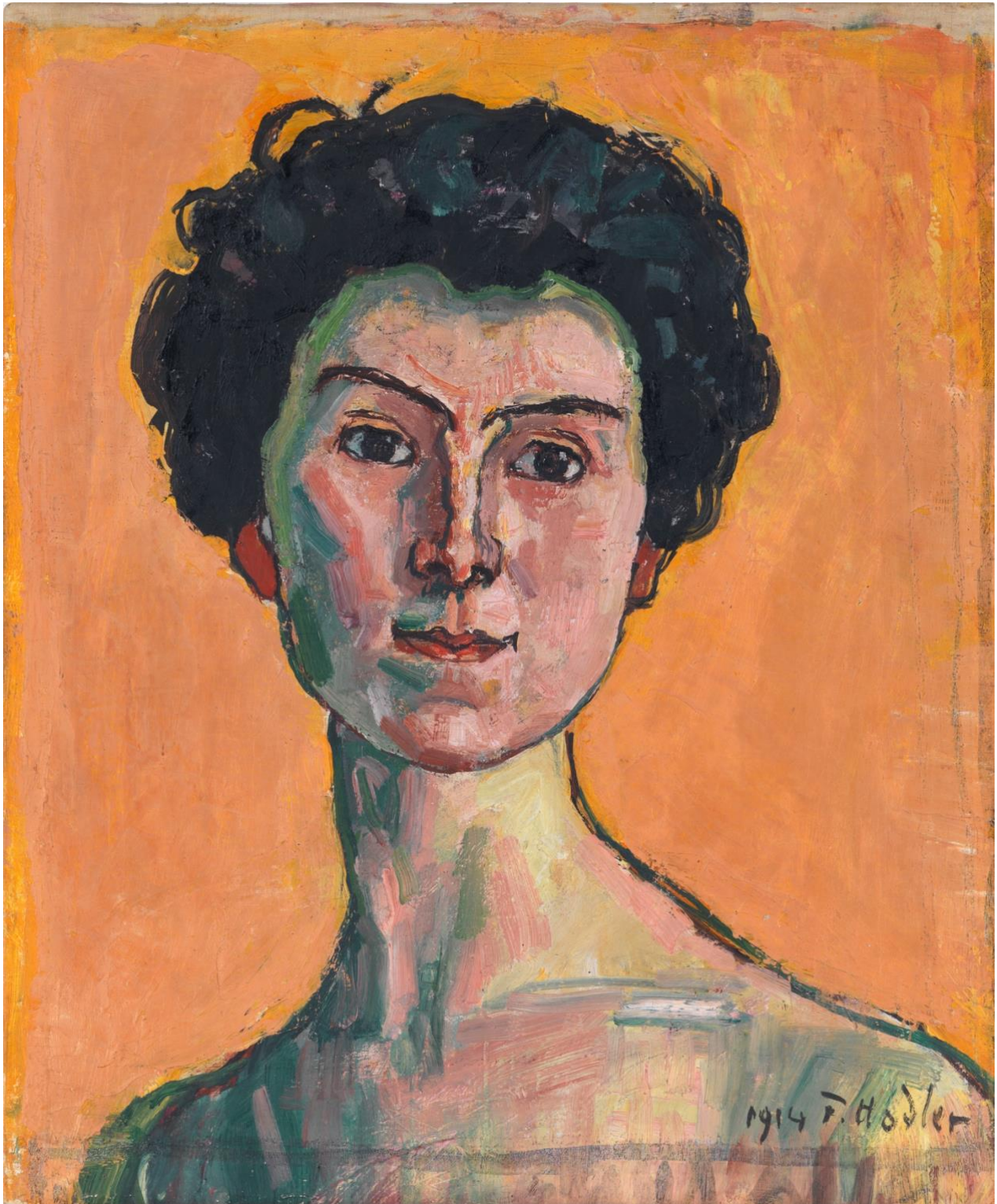
*René-Louis Piachaud 1896-1941. Cinquantième anniversaire de sa mort 1991*. Musée de Carouge 02 October - 10 November 1991 [titled *Portrait Mme Pasche-Bathier*].

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## Expertise

The painting is listed in the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) Zurich, under the archive number 80613.

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LONDON

NEW YORK

MADRID

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A vision of vibrant orange and forest green, this elegant painting of the model Clara Pasche-Battié is amongst the very finest portraits by Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918). One of Switzerland's most seminal artists, Hodler has recently been re-evaluated by international institutions as a modernist of fundamental importance due to his creativity independence from the Parisian art scene (see the National Gallery's recent acquisition of *The Kien Valley with the Bluemlisalp Massif*, Fig. 1).

Working up the likeness of his sitter by using bright, contrasting colours and an incisive outline, Hodler's portrait exudes vibrancy and energy. Pasche-Battié's gleaming eyes, which stare out towards the spectator, are surrounded by areas painted with green to provide depth and contrast to her countenance.

This magnificent work is part of a series of five portraits (Figs 2-6) of Pasche-Battié that the artist made in connection with *Blick ins Unendliche (Gaze into Infinity)*, a composition commissioned in 1910 for the monumental staircase in Kunsthaus in Zürich.

Today, two monumental versions of the work exist – the original, deemed too large for its intended hanging place in Zürich – is now held in the Kunstmuseum Basel (Fig. 7), and a slightly smaller second version has happily remained in the Kunsthaus Zürich since 1917 (Fig. 8). Three other, slightly smaller oil versions are known, which are in the Peter Steiner Collection, Zurich (SIK-ISEA no. 29220), the Art Museum Solothurn (SIK-ISEA no. 23477) and the Art Museum Winterthur (SIK-ISEA no. 35062). Both large versions depict Pasche-Battié towards the centre of the work, alongside the models Letitia Raviola, Jeanne Charles, Gertrud Müller and a woman yet to be identified.<sup>1</sup> Amongst these strong, muscular women draped in sheer blue dresses, Pasche-Battié stands out for her fine features and delicate constitution,

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<sup>1</sup> Gabriele Englisch, 'Blick in die Unendlichkeit. Zur Entstehung von Ferdinand Hodlers symbolistischer Komposition und ihren fünf Fassungen', In *Kunsttechnologische Forschungen zur Malerei von Ferdinand Hodler*, edited by Karoline Beltinger, Zürich 2007, p. 11.

# COLNAGHI

which are unmistakable in all of her portraits by Hodler (especially in the one painted twenty years before the *Blick ins Unendliche* series, Fig. 9).

The present preparatory portrait was immediately appreciated and quickly entered the collection of François Monnard, a Swiss collector who held roughly 400 Modern Swiss artworks in his apartment at the place du Pont-Neuf in Carouge (near Geneva). A photograph of his apartment dating from 1946 shows the present picture in pride of place, hung centrally over a chest of drawers in his coffee room (Fig. 10).



# COLNAGHI

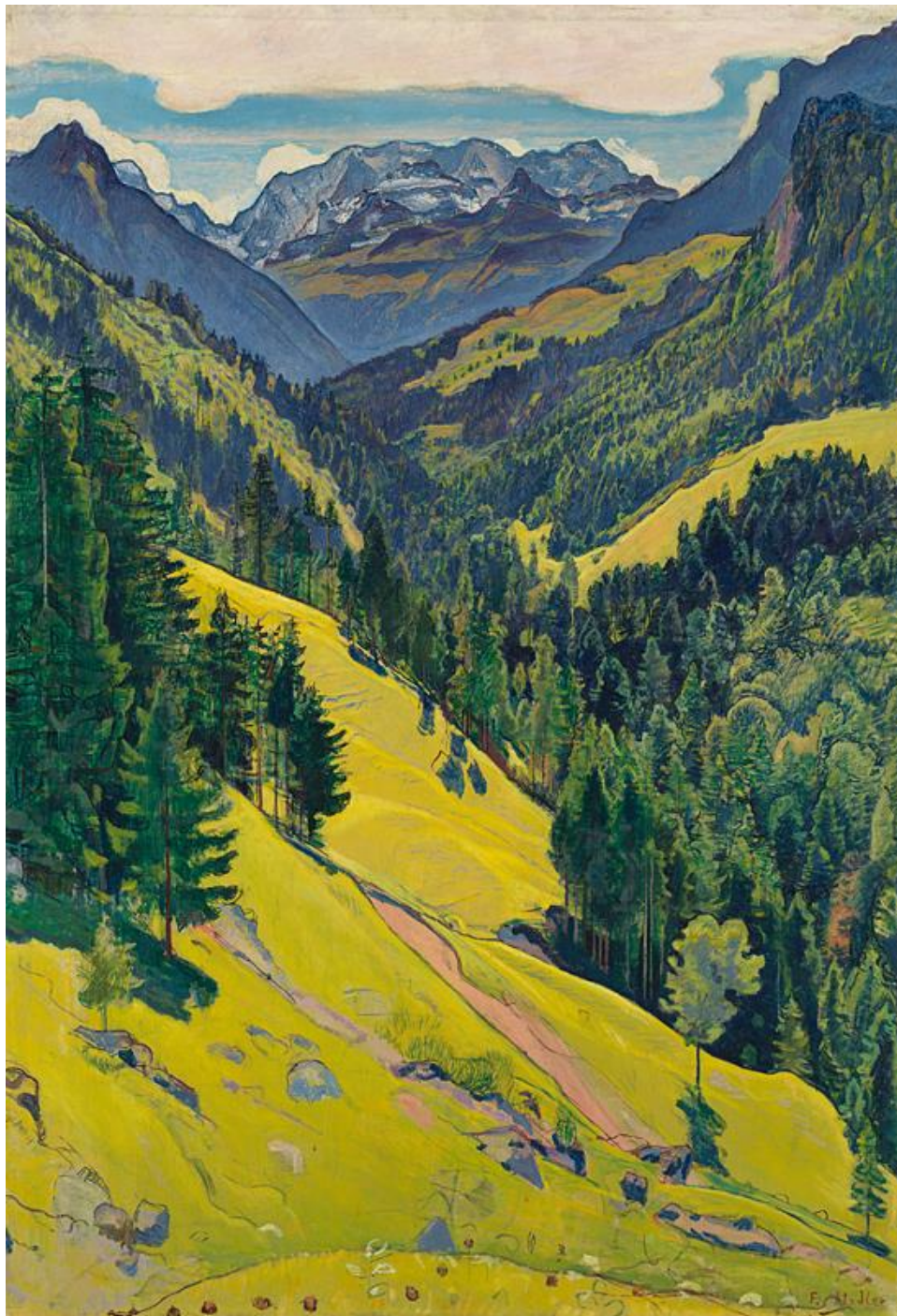
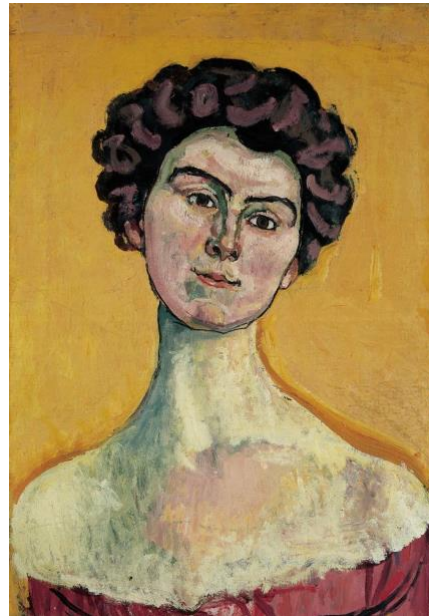
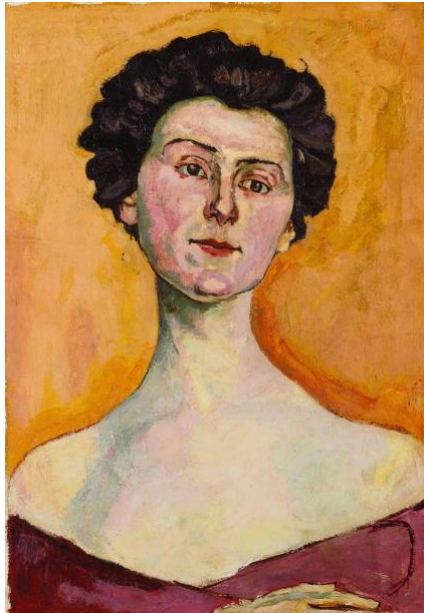
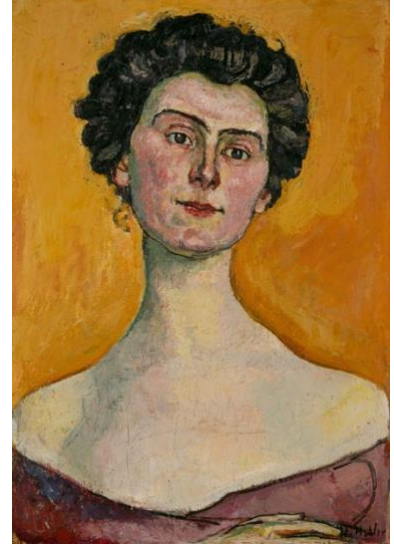
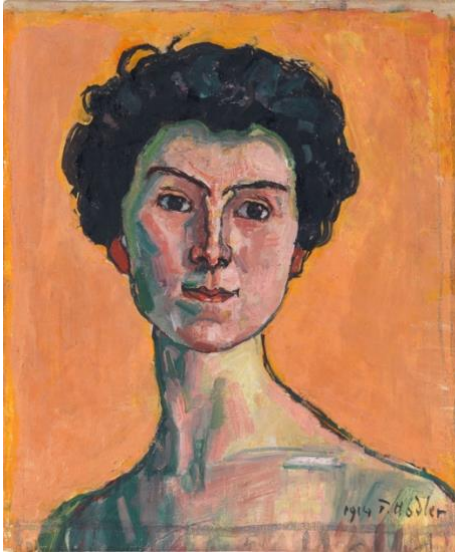


Fig. 1. Ferdinand Hodler, *The Kien Valley with the Bluemlisalp Massif*  
Oil on canvas, 102 x 70.7 cm  
London, National Gallery

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Figs. 2-6 Portraits of Clara Pasche-Battié by Hodler made around 1916.

Clockwise from left: the present painting (47.5 x 39, SIK-ISEA no. 80613); private collection (a copy after an earlier portrait [see fig. 9], 45.5 x 33 SIK-ISEA no. 8724); private collection (59 x 41 cm, SIK-ISEA no. 78478); Kunstmuseum Bern (59 x 41 cm SIK-ISEA no. 80061); private collection (59 x 41 cm, SIK-ISEA no. 78405)



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Fig. 7. Ferdinand Hodler, *Blick ins Unendliche* [original title *Blick ins Unendlichkeit*] (*Gaze into Infinity*), 1913-17. Oil on canvas, 446 x 895 cm.

Basel, Kunstmuseum Basel

\*Clara Pasche-Battié is second from the right

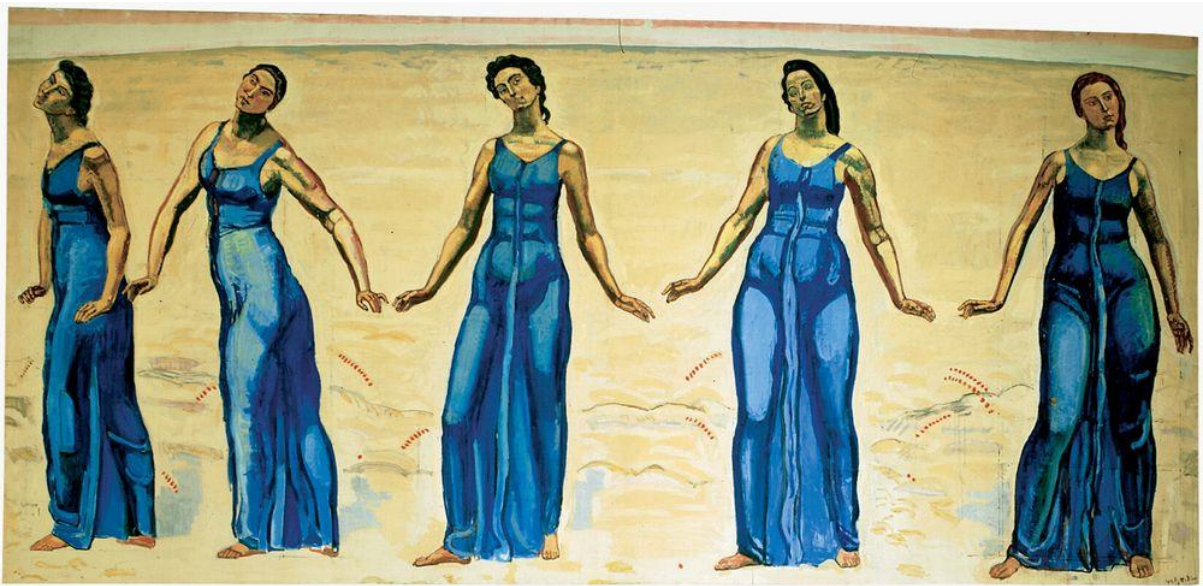


Fig. 8. Ferdinand Hodler, *Blick ins Unendliche* [original title *Blick ins Unendlichkeit*] (*Gaze into Infinity*), 1916. Oil on canvas, 343 x 723 cm.

Zürich, Kunsthaus Zürich



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\*Clara Pasche-Battié is in the centre



Fig. 9. Ferdinand Hodler, *Portrait of Clara Battié (le Sourire)*, 1898  
Oil on canvas, 46.5 x 33.5 cm  
Private collection [SIK-ISEA no. 1913]

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Fig. 10. François Monnard's apartment in 1946, featuring the present portrait of Clara Pasche-Battié (source: *René-Louis Pichaud 1896-1941. Cinquantième anniversaire de sa mort*, exh. cat. Musée de Carouge, Carouge 1991, p. 40)