

# COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Zélie-Julie D'Leindre  
(Blois 1795 – 1858 Paris)

*A vase of flowers on a marble table*

Signed and dated lower left of table: *ZJ D'Leindre / 1819*

Gouache on vellum

59.5 x 43.2 cm. (23 ½ x 16 ¾ in.)

Provenance :

Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry (1798-1870);

Her sale, Provenant du château de Rosny, M<sup>e</sup> Bataillard, Paris 22 February 1836, lot 288;

Rouillac, Cheverney, 6 June 1999, lot 7;

Hubert Guerrand-Hermès, Duke of Cadaval-Hermès (1940-2016), Paris;

His sale, Sotheby's, Paris, 18 December 2023, lot 893.

Literature:

E. Hardouin-Fugier, *The Pupils of Redouté*, Leigh-on Sea 1981, p. 42;

E. Hardouin-Fugier and E. Grafe, *French Flower Painters of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, New York 1989, p. 170;

E. Hardouin-Fugier and E. Grafe, *The Flower Painters*, North Dighton 1996, p. 147.

Exhibited:

*Entre Cour et Jardin : Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry*, Musée de l'Île-de-France, Sceaux, 23 April – 23 July 2007.



In this exceptionally delicate sheet, Zélie-Julie D'Leindre offers the viewer an exquisitely arranged bouquet. Tulips, peonies, daisies, forget-me-nots, hyacinths, and many other flowers have been carefully arranged in a stone vase, with their disposition communicating an air of studied naturalism. Using minute strokes of gouache, the artist perfectly renders both the tender plants and the marble vase and ledge that support them.

D'Leindre is documented as being the first student of Pierre-Joseph Redouté, when she was just twelve years old.<sup>1</sup> Through her skilled compositional ability and light blushes of colour, the artist shows the influence of her teacher, one of the most successful and sought-after botanical artists in France. Redouté served as draughtsman to the cabinets of Queen Marie-Antoinette and Empress Joséphine and was renowned for his teaching abilities-- with a notable number of his several hundred students being women.

Students came to him with a variety of abilities and were guided through progressively harder tasks. The beginners were taught how to copy floral arrangements from engravings or other drawings, then progressing to drawing from life. An illustration made by Julie Ribault shows the implementation of this method: many ladies can be seen copying from drawings but two (presumably more advanced) students draw from real flowers (Fig. 1). The work of one of the the more skilled students is carefully critiqued by Redouté, who by all accounts was highly effective in this skill, expressing his thoughts in a clear, incisive, and exciting manner.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1. Julie Ribault, *Redouté's school of botanical drawing in the Salle Buffon of the Jardin des Plantes*, 1830. Fitzwilliam Museum.

Though many of the women Redouté taught were aristocrats who took up painting as a hobby, D'Leindre-- the daughter of a civil servant-- truly became an artist in her own right

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<sup>1</sup> Hardouin-Fugier 1981, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Hardouin-Fugier 1981, 16.

and had work exhibited at the 1835 Salon.<sup>3</sup> In the case of the present sheet, a close comparison can be made with a watercolour by Redouté that was sold at Christie's in 2016 (Fig. 2). Though both works are close in terms of composition, D'Leindre's work is slightly more pared back, employing lighter, cooler colours and fewer flowers overall.

Though the profession of painter was almost entirely reserved for men for most of history, still life was one of the few genres to have a small, yet steady stream of women artists. Women like Fede Galizia and Rachel Ruysch were able to carve a career for themselves as still life painters, as the genre was (wrongly) viewed as the most domestic and trivial form of art.

Though not much is known about D'Leindre's career besides her tutelage under Redouté, she must have been of some renown during her lifetime, as the present work ended up in the collection of Marie-Caroline of Bourbon-Two Sicilies, Duchesse de Berry (Fig. 3). Though the Duchesse is best known for her failed plot to depose king Louis Philippe I to install her son on the throne, she was also an avid art collector; works by Velazquez, Hubert Robert, Pietro da Cortona, and François Gérard are listed in her 1836 sale.<sup>4</sup>



Fig. 2. Pierre-Joseph Redouté, *A bunch of flowers in an alabaster vase*, graphite, watercolour, and gum Arabic on vellum, Christie's London, 5 July 2016, lot 52.



Fig. 3. Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Marie-Caroline of Bourbon-Two Sicilies, Duchesse de Berry*, 1825. Palace of Versailles.

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<sup>3</sup> Hardouin-Fugier 1981, 42.

<sup>4</sup> See the catalogue of her 1836 sale: *Catalogue des tableaux, dessins, aquarelles, goaches, estampes, lithographies, groupes, statues [...]* Provenant du château de Rosny, M<sup>e</sup> Bataillard, Paris 22 February 1836.