

COLNAGHI

Est. 1760



Carlos Vázquez Úbeda
(Ciudad Real 1869 - 1944 Barcelona)

Portrait of a Parisian Woman

c. 1891 - 1895

pastel on paper

31 x 44 cm.;

12 1/4 x 17 3/8 in.

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Carlos Vázquez Úbeda was a Spanish painter, illustrator and poster artist who specialised in landscape and genre painting. His artistic training began with his mother, Matilde Úbeda, his first drawing teacher. In 1886 Vázquez enrolled at the Escuela Especial de Pintura in Madrid, where he studied under Carlos de Haes. Only three years later, following the example of most Spanish artists of the time, he moved to Paris, where he studied for four years in the studio of Léon Bonnat. In 1891 he came into contact with the artistic circle of Els Quatre Gats, which included Santiago Rusiñol, Ramon Casas and Pablo Picasso.

He worked for numerous Spanish magazines of the period, including *Hispania*, *Hojas Selectas* and *Blanco y Negro*. He often sent his works to domestic and foreign competitions and was awarded the third medal at the National Exhibition of 1892 for *Recuerdos de amor* ('Love Memories'), as well as the second medal in 1899 and 1901 for his paintings *Mes de María* ('Month of Mary') and *Recolección de higos chumbos en Granada* ('Picking Prickly Pears in Granada'), and the first medal in 1910 for *El torero herido* ('The Wounded Bullfighter'). He took part in the Paris Salons, where he was awarded an honourable mention in 1890, a third medal in 1904 and a second in 1907. He was also awarded a first medal at the Barcelona International Exhibition of 1899, a silver medal at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1910 and at the Buenos Aires Exhibition of 1915, the year in which he won a gold medal at the San Francisco Exhibition. In short, he achieved numerous successes that make him one of the most significant Spanish artists of the late 19th century.

Carlos Vázquez was above all multifaceted. His work is very difficult to classify. He was a great book illustrator and poster artist, but he also excelled in painting and drawing. As a painter and a draughtsman, he focused on two main subjects: elegant women and folkish scenes. Vázquez's women are very much his own, a subject that he sublimated throughout his career.

Carlos Vázquez's female figures are unmistakable. They seem to float in a subtle, weightless, spiritual way, in delicate transparencies and refined combinations of fine tonalities. A painter of courtesans, aristocratic ladies and gentle, candid girls, he gives each of these

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three very different types of women their own unique features, their own particular atmosphere, without falsifications or flattering concessions.¹

This work depicts a very elegant Parisian woman. An industrial landscape can be seen in the background, with the river very much in view as well. However, the most striking feature is her gaze, which is directed at the viewer. Her clothing is typical of late 19th-century Parisian society, with a veiled hat covering half of her face. This is a highly representative work by the artist, who allows us to enter fully into the Paris of the Belle Époque through the clear gaze of this lady.

¹ J. De la Puente, J. Saiz de Luca de Tena & M. Vázquez Garriga, *Carlos Vázquez: Ciudad Real 1869 – Barcelona 1944*, Ciudad Real 1990, p. 35.