

# COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Charles-Louis Bazin  
(Paris 1802 – 1859 Yssingaux)

*Portrait of the comtesse Regnaud de Saint-Jean-d'Angély*

Signed lower edge: *Charles Bazin / d'après F Gérard*

Pencil on paper

20.5 x 14.5 cm. (8 x 5 ¾ in.)

Provenance:

Private Collection, Paris;

Giquello, Paris, 5 July 2024, lot 109.



Charles-Louis Bazin's drawing is a copy of François Gérard's portrait of Augustine-Françoise-Eléonore de Guesnon de Bonneuil (fig. 1), wife of the comte Regnaud Saint-Jean d'Angély. Gérard's portrait was exhibited for the first time at the Salon of 1799 and was a great success. Praised by critics, the work was, as contemporary commentators noted, a perfect likeness of the model, who was universally lauded for her 'antique' beauty.

After her marriage in 1795, Mme Regnaud soon became one of the most fashionable women of the Directory period. She was renowned for her looks and culture, and her salon was one of the most brilliant of the Consulate and Empire periods. Rumours attributed to her many lovers, although most of this gossip was propagated by chief of police Fouché in his attempts to politically damage her husband, a devoted servant of the emperor. Napoleon, however, as a result distrusted her and distanced her from the imperial court.

Although suspected of conniving with royalists, she was nevertheless an ardent supporter of the Empire when it was threatened and bore no grudge for the ostracism to which she had been subjected. Arrested by the Bourbons in 1817 and held in the Conciergerie, the Comtesse Regnaud was compelled into exile in Belgium the following year. Able to return to France in 1821, she had the pleasure of seeing the re-establishment of the empire under Napoleon III, before dying in 1857.

Bazin's drawing likely dates to 1852, given its shared provenance with his dated copy of another Gérard painting, the portrait of Emilie Brogniart. At this point, the portrait was still in the comtesse's collection and, as a pupil of Gérard, Bazin may well have been granted access to study it.



Fig. 1, François Gérard, *Portrait of the comtesse Regnaud Saint Jean d'Angély*, 1798, oil on canvas, 103 x 91 cm, Musée du Louvre