

# COLNAGHI

Est. 1760



Isidre Nonell

(Barcelona 1872 - 1911)

*Indiscreet*

1897

pastel, watercolour, charcoal and  
pulverised ink on paper

33.5 x 22 cm.;

13 1/4 x 8 5/8 in.

signed and dated in the lower right

corner: *nonell / 97*

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## Literature

F. Fontbona (ed.), *El Modernisme. Pintura i dibuix*, Barcelona 2002, reproduced on p. 222;  
*L'últim xix i el primer xx dibuixen*, exh. cat., Artur Ramon Col·leccionisme, Barcelona 2002,  
p. 13.

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## Exhibited

Barcelona, Artur Ramon Col·leccionisme, *L'últim xix i el primer xx dibuixen*, 19 September -  
2 November 2002 (cat. no. 9).



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LONDON

NEW YORK

MADRID

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The son of a small manufacturer, Nonell managed to free himself from the obligations of the family business to devote himself to painting. At the age of twelve he entered the drawing academy of Josep Mirabent, and later the painting school of Gabriel Martínez Altés. In 1889 he enrolled in the private classes of Lluís Graner, an artist well known for his works on social themes, which undoubtedly had a profound influence on the young artist.

In 1893 Nonell embarked on a new stage in his life when he entered the Escola d'Arts i Oficis de Barcelona (Barcelona Arts and Crafts School), popularly known as the Llotja, where he coincided with future artists Ramon Canals, Juli Vallmitjana, Ramon Pichot and his old friends Joaquim Mir and Xavier Nogués. Dissatisfied with the academicism of the courses, these artists organised trips to the countryside on the outskirts of Barcelona in search of uncontaminated landscapes to paint from life.

Between 1897 and 1900, Nonell made two long stays in Paris to become acquainted with modern painting, of which he particularly appreciated the works of Puvis de Chavannes, Whistler and the Impressionists. During his first stay, he exhibited several drawings at the Salon du Champ de Mars, and some paintings in the group exhibition at Le Barc de Boutteville gallery, which also included works by Gauguin and Toulouse-Lautrec. Nonell's most important presence in Paris, however, came in January 1898, when the same gallery presented more than a hundred works by Nonell and his friend and artist Ricard Canals.

Nonell gradually abandoned Luminism and landscapes because of his strong interest in the human figure, which eventually played a predominant role in his painting. In particular, he was interested in ordinary people, the most humble, disadvantaged or marginalised members of society. When he returned to Barcelona for good at the beginning of the new century, his interest turned to portraits of gypsy women, the series of paintings that made him most famous, characterised by his small vermicular brushstrokes.