

COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Jean-Baptiste Paulin Guérin
(Toulon 1783 – 1855 Paris)

Portrait of Marie-Thérèse-Baptistine Hains, at her tambour frame

Signed lower right: *Paulin Guérin*
Dated lower left: *fait à... Decembre 1810*
Pencil and crayon on paper
29.8 x 23.8 cm.

Provenance:
By descent in the family of the sitter;
By whom sold, Collin du Boccage, Paris, 21 June 2024, lot 9.



In this beautifully detailed and technically accomplished drawing, Paulin Guérin depicts Marie-Thérèse-Baptistine Hains at her tambour frame. The portrait is dated to December 1810, seven months after the birth of the first of Marie-Thérèse's eight children, and the year of Guérin's first Salon. The daughter of a Marseillais négociant, Marie-Thérèse, née Truilhier, married Romain François Hains in April 1809. The portrait may have been commissioned by the couple to celebrate their marriage and the birth of their eldest son. Romain François was a prominent figure in Marseille, as *directeur des douanes*. He was eventually appointed to the *Légion d'honneur* and the *Ordre de Saint-Louis*.

As a friend of the family and a fellow Marseillais, it would have been natural for the couple to commission Guérin to carry out the portrait, though they may also have been capitalising in some respects on the artist's newfound fashionableness, following on from his successful inaugural Salon. In Guérin's image, Marie-Thérèse is seated in a simple wooden chair, at her tambour frame. With one hand placed in a relaxed manner on her knee, with the other she delicately holds the tambour hook used for embroidering. The wide and rectangular frame, drawn with precision, allowed for larger pieces of fabric to be stretched and wound on a roller as the work progressed.

A popular pastime, embroidery was considered a virtuous act for bourgeois women, and could be done when socialising. Indeed, Madame de Pompadour famously liked to receive



visitors whilst embroidering. The most celebrated portrait of her, by François-Hubert Drouais (fig. 1), shows her in a sumptuous rococo dress at her tambour frame. Although her appearance is much more sober, in keeping with the style of the Empire period, Marie-Thérèse is just as fashionable for her time and, with her lightweight chemise dress and short, layered curls *à la Titus* (fig. 2) she is no less ready to receive visitors.

Born in Toulon in modest circumstances, Guérin moved to Marseille in 1794 when his father purchased a locksmith business. Guérin himself learned this trade from his father and, while apprenticing, began studying at the free drawing school in 1796 and dedicated his spare time to painting. He befriended the Marseillais painter Augustin Aubert and, in October 1802, joined him in Paris to begin his artistic career.

Fig. 1, François-Hubert Drouais, *Madame de Pompadour at her tambour frame*, 1763-64, oil on canvas, 217 x 156 cm, National Gallery, London

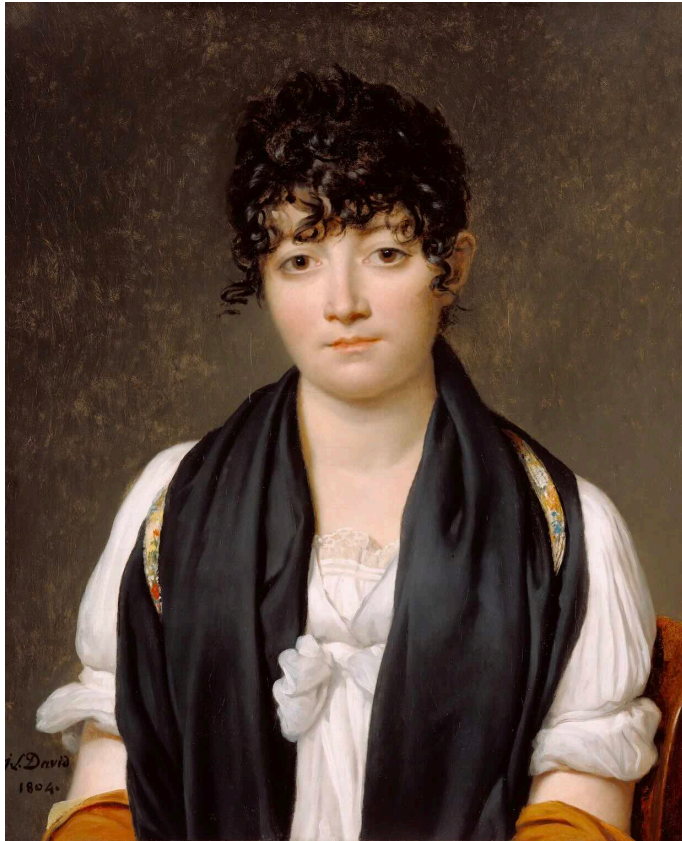


Fig. 2, Jacques-Louis David, *Suzanne Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau*, 1804, oil on canvas, 60 x 59.5 cm, J Paul Getty Museum

Guérin worked briefly as an assistant to François Gérard and then as an unpaid apprentice in François-André Vincent's studio. Needing to support his family, he returned to Gérard's studio, where he prepared canvases and undertook other odd jobs. Concurrently, he developed his personal work, submitting his first paintings to the Salon of 1810. Though best known as a portraitist, Guérin enjoyed considerable success as a history painter too, winning a Salon gold medal in 1817 for his *Mother of Sorrows*. His *Anchises and Venus*, exhibited in 1822, was much admired by Louis XVIII, who awarded Guérin the *Légion d'Honneur* and commissioned an official portrait from him in 1824. Guérin continued to work and exhibit successfully until his death in 1855.