

COLNAGHI ELLIOTT

MASTER DRAWINGS

Marie-Marguerite Jaser
(Nancy 1782 – 1873)

Two young women in a landscape, one sketching

Signed lower right: *M^{te}. M. Jaser*

Watercolour on paper

26 x 19 cm. (10 ¼ x 7 ½ in.)

Provenance:

Mme. Dereux (according to inscription on old mount);

Private Collection, Villefranche-sur-Saône, until 2024.



Marie-Marguerite-Françoise Jaser, also known by her married name of Rouchier, was born in Nancy in 1782. Nothing is known of her early life, though by 1808 she was living in Paris and exhibiting at the Salon. Jaser studied under Jean-François Aubrey and Jean-Baptiste Isabey, two of the leading miniaturists of her day. She also received some instruction from Jean-Baptiste Regnault, who ran a successful *atelier de dames* along with his wife Sophie Meynier.

For whatever reason, Jaser took a long Salon hiatus, not exhibiting again until 1822, where she is listed at a different Parisian address. Up to 1844, Jaser would exhibit at a further eleven Salons, winning a third-class medal in 1835.¹ Her entries consisted primarily of portraits, either in miniature (fig. 1) or watercolour. Her surviving works possess impressive technical merit and it therefore comes as no surprise that Jaser received patronage from the upper echelons of society: at the Salon of 1822 she exhibited a portrait of a Danish princess and at the Salon of 1827 a depiction of the Duc de Bordeaux was listed amongst her entries.



Fig. 1, Marie-Marguerite Jaser, *Portrait of a young girl*, miniature, 3.4 x 2.4 cm, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm



Fig. 2, Agustin Pajou, *Mesdemoiselles Duval*, 1814, oil on canvas, 130.5 x 97.5 cm, Musée du Louvre

Sometime between 1827, when she appears in the Salon catalogue of that year as Jaser for the final time, and 1835, by which date she appears as Rouchier-Jaser, the artist married. By 1844, Jaser had moved back to Nancy, living in the centre, on the fashionable place d'Alliance. It seems that she spent the rest of her life in her native city, dying there in 1873, at the age of 91.

The present work depicts two young ladies in a landscape, one of whom is seated and sketching. The other stands slightly behind, looking over her shoulders to observe the work in progress. Sketching *en plein air* was a popular pastime amongst well-brought up young ladies from the higher social strata, as attested by numerous other depictions from the early

¹ Jaser also exhibited at the Salons of Douai and Lille in 1825.

decades of the 19th century. Augustin Pajou's portrait of the *Mesdemoiselles Duval* (fig. 2), now in the Louvre, is a particularly beautiful, and comparable, example.

With their gigot sleeves and hair styled in Apollo knots, the young ladies in the watercolour wear the fashions of the mid 1830s. The double portrait may have been shown at one of the Salons around this time: most of Jaser's Salon entries list her submissions as groups of works, without identifying individual watercolours and miniatures.