

One Year of Research

Part I



FERLI

Antoine Feix - Nicola Sarli

Cover:
Clément Massier (1844-1917),
Dante and Beatrice
Faïence with iridescent glaze and metallic lustre
H. 53 cm; W. 40 cm (20 ⁷/₈ x 15 ³/₄ in)
Signed and dated « M. Clément Massier/ Golf Juan / MCM »

N° 1
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Preface

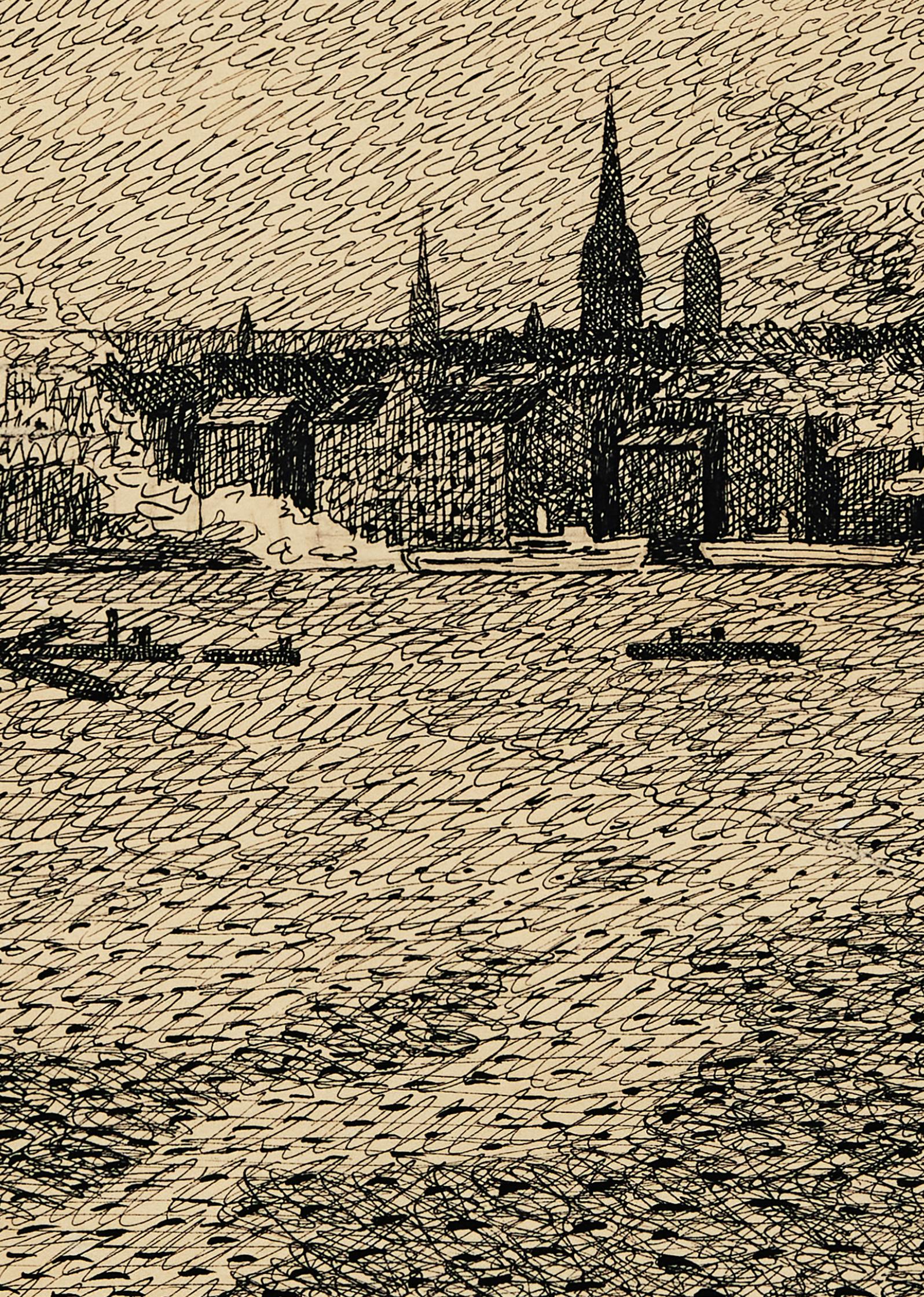
One year ago, born from the friendship and mutual esteem that developed at the Sorbonne between Antoine Feix and Nicola Sarli, Ferli came to life. What began as shared conversations and discoveries soon grew into a dynamic partnership, a natural alliance between two people with a common vision of the art market and a shared sensibility for certain works and images. From the very start, our approach has been guided by curiosity and humility. We dive headfirst into surprises, challenges, and research, always eager to learn and to share the results of our investigations. Beyond well-known names and established artists, we seek out works that encapsulate the enduring beauty of an era ; pieces that still speak to the present with grace and intensity. What we present here is our first selection: a group of works on paper and ceramics gathered over these early months. Each piece, in its own way, reflects our sensibility and the direction Ferli has begun to take.

Antoine Feix & Nicola Sarli

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At Dusk. View over Gamla Stan, Stockholm (det.)
Ink on paper
185 × 255 mm (7 ¼ x 10 in)
Signed lower right « Olof Thunman »



Albert Lynch

Gleisweiler 1861 - 1950 Monaco

The Possessed Woman

1891

Graphite, India ink, watercolor and gouache on paper

Signed lower « A. Lynch »

H. 23.6 cm; W. 31.5 cm (9 ¼ x 12 ⅜ in)

Bibliography:

- M. Spronck, « La Légende de Juan Garin », in *Le Figaro Illustré*, May 1891, p.82

Provenance:

Private collection, France

Vente *Symbolist Sale*, Bonhams, Brussels, Chaussée de Charleroi, 7 november 2024

In this striking illustration for *Le Figaro illustré*, Albert Lynch displays all his technical mastery to capture a scene that is both dramatic and mystical from « The Legend of Juan Garin ». The story of Juan Garin unfolds on Mount Montserrat and tells of the dramatic transformation of a soldier who becomes a hermit to atone for his sins. Juan Garin, once a brave soldier, is imprisoned and tortured by the Saracens. He makes a vow to God: if he is freed, he will renounce the world to devote himself to solitude and prayer. Miraculously saved, Juan retreats to Montserrat, where he lives as a hermit. He leads a life of isolation and austerity, gaining a reputation for sanctity that draws pilgrims from all over the country. His life takes a tragic turn when one day Count Wilfred of Barcelona entrusts him with his daughter Riquilda, who is possessed by demons, so that Juan may liberate her. Despite all his spiritual efforts, Juan eventually succumbs to an uncontrollable passion for the young woman. In a moment of extreme temptation, he kills Riquilda, overwhelmed by shame and remorse. After the murder, he wanders in despair and ultimately travels to Rome to seek forgiveness from the Pope. The Pope imposes a long penance: to live like an animal in the solitude of Montserrat until he receives a sign of redemption. After decades of atonement, Juan is captured by Count Wilfred's hunters and brought back to the court of Barcelona as a curiosity. During one of these exhibitions, a child announces that God's forgiveness has been granted to him. When Riquilda's body is exhumed, it is found to be intact, and she miraculously returns to life with no memory of what occurred. Now redeemed, Juan returns to Montserrat to live out his days in peace, venerated as a saint. This story is rich in religious and moral themes such as redemption, the struggle against temptation, and divine mercy.

The quality of the drawing is remarkable: every detail, from the armor of Count Wilfred of Barcelona's soldiers to the troubled expression of his possessed daughter demonstrates Lynch's finesse and precision. On the right, the solitary shadow of Juan Garin, kneeling in his cave and praying before a cross, powerfully contrasts with the foreground scene. The image tells a timeless story: the struggle between the forces of good and evil. Beneath the hermit's silent prayers, the demons abandon the young woman's body, depicted as snakes, frogs, and other repulsive creatures visible signs of possession. This symbolism of spiritual deliverance, mingled with allegorical representations of infernal forces, vividly evokes the inner battle dear to the sensitivities of the late 19th century. Lynch's work does more than depict a scene; it touches a collective imagination in which possession, exorcism, and redemption reflect the mystical and moral obsessions of French culture at the time.

Albert Lynch was a Peruvian-born painter and illustrator who became a naturalized French citizen. Although he was well-known for his refined illustrations in Parisian novels and magazines, his favorite subject was the female figure, which he painted with great delicacy and particular sensitivity. His works often reflect a late 19th-century aesthetic influenced by Art Nouveau, and are distinguished by detailed finesse and a subtle color palette. He excelled in depicting emotions and intimate atmospheres, capturing the grace, beauty, and mystery of his female characters. Among his most notable collaborations was *Le Figaro illustré*, which regularly commissioned him for his sensitive and narrative drawing style.



Reproduction of our watercolour in M. Spronck, *La Légende de Juan Garin*, in *Le Figaro Illustré*, May 1891, p.82





Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat (1844-1910)
Three-handed vase
1900 circa
glazed stoneware
Signed « Dalpayrat »
H. 23 cm; W. 26 cm (9 x 10 ¼ in)

Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat

Limoges 1844 - 1910 Limoges

Three-handled vase

1900 circa

Glazed stoneware

Signed « Dalpayrat »

H. 23 cm; W. 26 cm (9 x 10 ¼ in)

Provenance: French Art Market, 2024

This glazed stoneware vase by Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat is remarkable for the purity of its form and the richness of its surface. The simple, compact shape likely inspired by Japanese sake vases reveals a refined balance between function and sculptural presence. Its medium-to-large scale enhances its physical impact, while the glaze displays a captivating interplay of flowing, organic tones: deep greens, smokey blues, and mineral iridescences that shift with the light. Dalpayrat referred to these complex chromatic effects as *agatines*, after agate, the semiprecious stone whose layered translucencies and natural striations they evoke. This masterful glazing technique, combined with the sober elegance of the form, makes this piece a quintessential example of Dalpayrat's unique contribution to Art Nouveau ceramics. A prominent French ceramist of the late 19th century, Dalpayrat transformed the art of ceramics through his meticulous attention to the expressive potential of both color and material. His reputation is built on the abstract tones of his glazes and his wide repertoire of forms, which elevate his vases to the status of true sculptures. His works reflect a perfect balance between stylisation and naturalism, fully embodying the aesthetics of Art Nouveau. Dalpayrat's critical recognition came in 1892 with a solo exhibition at the prestigious Galerie Georges Petit. Critics were astonished by ceramics that combined the grace of classical art with the naturalism of Japanese aesthetics. The multicoloured tones of his glazes – fruits of his mastery of firing and cooling processes – make his works instantly recognisable. Today, they are highly sought after by major institutions and museums such as the Peter Marino Art Foundation, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.



Olof Thunman

Uppsala 1879 - 1944 Noor

At Dusk. View over Gamla Stan, Stockholm

First quarter of the 20th century

Ink on paper

H. 185 mm; W. 255 mm (7 ¼ x 10 in)

Signed lower right « Olof Thunman »

Provenance:

Swedish Art Market

A multi-talented artist, Olof Thunman was at once a poet, painter, draftsman, and composer, a bohemian and radiant figure of the Swedish art scene at the turn of the century. Trained at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm between 1902 and 1906, he received several major distinctions and developed a fascination with landscapes from an early stage. In this ink drawing, likely executed during his years of study, Thunman offers a misty and almost sonorous vision of Gamla Stan, the historic heart of Stockholm. The smoking chimneys, the slender silhouettes of church spires, and the shimmering surface of the water subtly convey the evening atmosphere of the Swedish capital. Through a meticulous network of hatching and curves, the artist manages to render the density of the air, the movement of the currents, and the breathing rhythm of a city at dusk. This work, both restrained and rhythmic, reveals a rare graphic sensitivity, where attentive observation of the world merges with an almost musical stylisation of matter. It stands as a precious testament to the early, still-forming style of an artist who, though he would later move away from painting to devote himself to poetry and song, left his mark on his time with a deeply personal vision of the Swedish landscape.



Olof Thunman

Uppsala 1879 - 1944 Noor

Björk i blåst

First quarter of the 20th century

Ink on paper

H. 400 mm; W. 540 mm (13 ¾ x 21 ¼ in)

Signed lower right « Olof Thunman »

Provenance: Swedish Art Market

Björk i blåst perfectly illustrates Thunman's sensitivity to Nordic landscapes. This work demonstrates a perfect mastery of line, where the delicacy of the ink captures both the suppleness of the foliage and the resilience of the trees against the elements. Through a subtle play of light and shadow, the artist lends the composition striking depth, capturing not only the appearance of nature, but also its dynamism and essence. Far from being a mere topographical depiction, this drawing conveys the ethereal atmosphere characteristic of Swedish landscapes, imbued with solitude and melancholy.



Gilbert Méténier

Moulins 1876 - 1957 Saint-Raphaël

Colocynth-shaped vase

circa 1917-1920

Glazed stoneware

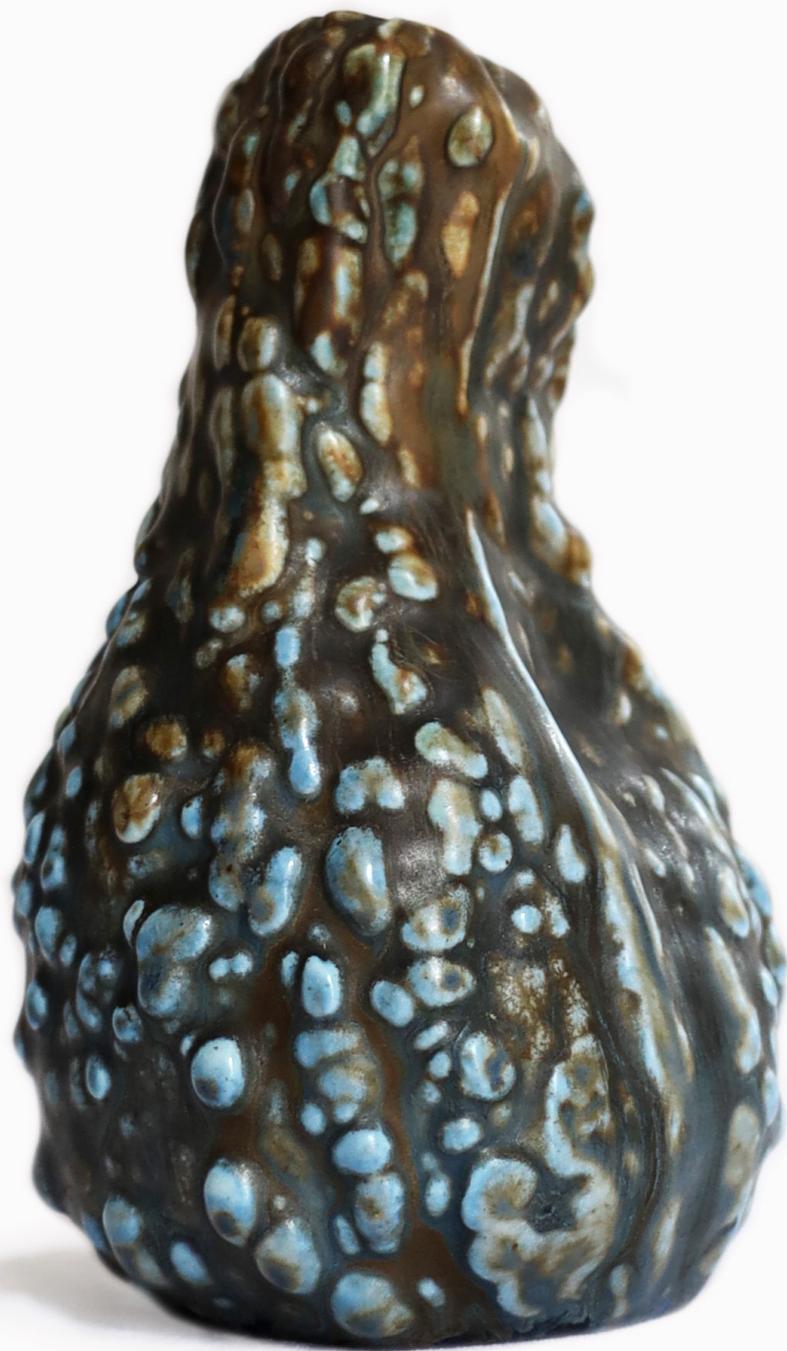
H. 14 cm (5 ½ in)

Signed « Metenier »

Provenance:

French Private Collection

This colocynth-shaped vase, rare in Gilbert Méténier's production, draws direct inspiration from the plant world, echoing the spirit of late Art Nouveau. Its organic silhouette appears to have been shaped by nature itself – like a mineral outgrowth or an imaginary fruit. The magic also lies in the glazes: they flow across the surface, settle into the recesses, and stretch into smooth, glossy streams, creating subtle plays of transparency and depth. A piece that, on its own, embodies all the boldness and poetry of early 20th-century French ceramics. Gilbert Méténier was a French ceramist known for his refined stoneware creations distinguished by inventive glazing techniques and simplified, nature-inspired forms. Born into a family deeply rooted in ceramic traditions, he was the son of Louis Méténier, a potter and kiln innovator. After gaining experience across various facets of ceramic production, Gilbert established himself in Gannat, where he co-directed a ceramic factory with his father before founding his own workshop: *Grès d'Art Méténier*. Active from the 1910s to the late 1930s, Gilbert Méténier developed a distinctive style, producing vases, pitchers, lamp bases, and decorative objects in a wide variety of shapes and glazes. His work is particularly noted for its expressive "bleu de Gannat", metallic sheens, and the use of copper and iron oxides. Each piece was carefully hand-finished and glazed under his direct supervision, reflecting his passion for color, chemistry, and kiln firing. Rather than relying on a printed catalogue, Méténier distributed his pieces through photographic documentation and miniature glaze samples. His ceramics were sold in prestigious Parisian department stores such as Le Bon Marché and La Samaritaine, as well as in spa towns like Vichy and Roanne. Production ceased in June 1940, with the arrival of German forces. Determined to prevent the appropriation of his designs, Gilbert Méténier reportedly destroyed all his molds before relocating to the south of France, where his trail fades from public record.



Gilbert Méténier

Moulins 1876 - 1957 Saint-Raphaël

Gourd-shaped vase

circa 1917-1920

Glazed stoneware

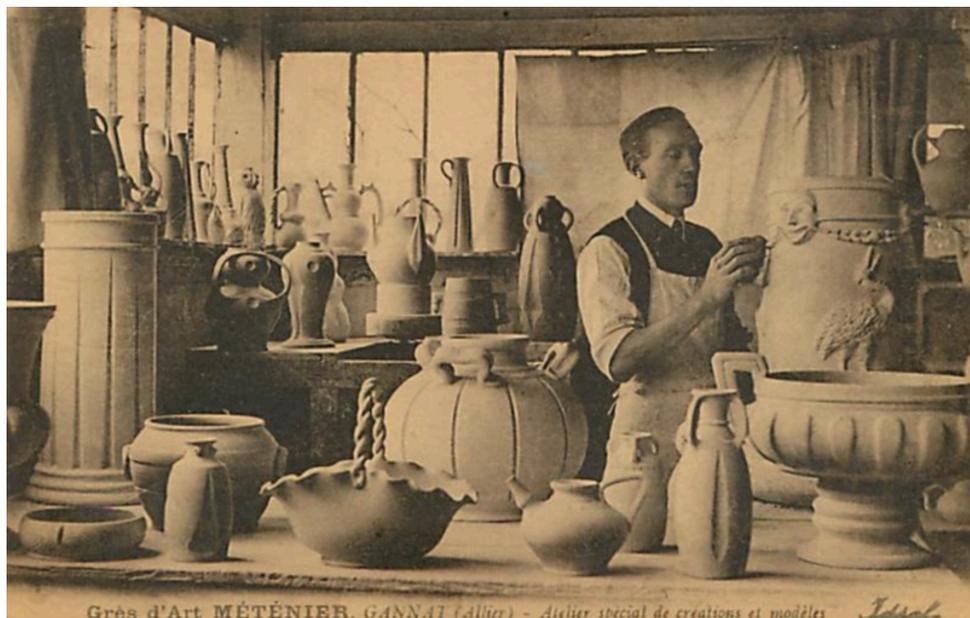
H. 17,5 cm (6 7/8 in)

Signed « Metenier »

Provenance:

French Art Market

Shaped in an organic form reminiscent of a gourd, this striking and rare work by Gilbert Méténier dates from around 1917-1920. Its textured, almost living surface seems to emerge from the earth, while the iridescent glazes interact with the light—coppery highlights, verdigris hues, bluish tones—creating a true alchemy of colors. Every detail reveals Méténier's technical mastery and his deep sensitivity to natural textures. A sculptural object, closer to sculpture than to a traditional vase.





Edgard Maxence

Nantes 1871 - 1954 La Bernerie-en-Retz

Head of an Angel

circa 1895

White gouache on paper and red chalk

D. 115 mm (5 7/8 in)

Signed « E. Maxence »

Provenance: Auction Estampes - Dessins - Tableaux anciens et modernes, De Baecque, Lyon, 12 juin 2025

The delicate touch of red chalk here traces the gentle face of a cherub with remarkable softness. Subtle shading carefully models the volumes, while white highlights in gouache discreetly illuminate the halo with a gentle glow. Together, these elements compose a small, refined work that fully reveals the graphic sensitivity of Edgard Maxence, a key figure of French Symbolism. Maxence represents an elegant and precious style of painting, often described as "decadent" in the refined and ornamental sense the term acquired in the late 19th century. Edgard Maxence was a French Symbolist painter, born into a well-off bourgeois family in Nantes on September 17, 1871. This privileged background allowed him to pursue his artistic training early and with focus. He studied first at the École régionale des beaux-arts in Nantes, then entered the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1891. There, he studied under Élie Delaunay (1828-1891) and Gustave Moreau (1826-1898), the latter being a major figure of the Symbolist movement and a decisive influence on Maxence's artistic vision. Maxence inherited from Moreau a taste for mystical subjects, idealized figures, and meticulous technique, which he developed into a personal and elegant Symbolist style. His work often explores spiritual and allegorical themes, with references to medieval, Byzantine, and Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics. Female figures—saints, muses, or mythological beings—are central to his compositions. Maxence exhibited regularly at the Salon des Artistes Français from 1894 to 1939, earning several distinctions. He was also a participant in the Salons de la Rose+Croix from 1895 to 1897, aligning himself with a current of Symbolism focused on mysticism and anti-materialism, under the influence of Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918). He received public commissions, including decorative murals for institutions such as the Sorbonne and the Palais de Justice in Rennes. His paintings are now housed in major French collections, including the Musée d'Orsay and the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes.



Oskar Bergman

Stockholm 1879 - 1963 Saltsjöbaden

1. *Snowy lakeside*

1940

Watercolor on paper

H. 37 cm; W. 47 cm (14 5/8 x 18 1/2 in)

Signed and dated lower right « Oskar Bergman / 1940 »

Provenance: Swedish Art Market

2. *Farm in the Snow*

1941

Watercolor on paper

H. 24 cm; W. 35 cm (9 1/2 x 13 3/4 in)

Signed and dated lower right « Oskar Bergman 1941 »

Provenance: Swedish Art Market

We are pleased to present these two watercolours by Oskar Bergman, created just one year apart and both centered on winter landscapes. Displayed together, they reveal the full extent of Bergman's artistic sensitivity and technical refinement. These two works reveal Oskar Bergman's deep interest not only in landscape, but in the rhythm of nature itself its slow transformations through days, months, and seasons. For Bergman, nature is never static; it changes constantly, yet remains familiar and recognisable. Artiste autodidacte, Oskar Bergman s'inspire du romantisme allemand de Caspar David Friedrich et des grands maîtres suédois qu'il admire lors de ses visites régulières aux musées. Son style unique, teinté d'une influence japonaise, simplifie les formes naturelles sans les appauvrir, révélant leur richesse et leur caractère changeant. Ses œuvres capturent des paysages empreints de calme, où la nature s'immerge dans le rythme solennel des saisons. Maître dans la représentation des paysages hivernaux, il nous transporte ici dans une scène baignée par la douce lumière d'un soleil déclinant. Les vagues d'un lac ou d'une rivière scintillent sous cette lumière rasante, comme caressées par une poudre dorée. La rive, entièrement recouverte de neige immaculée, laisse émerger çà et là les silhouettes délicates de quelques arbres, leurs branches noires et fines se détachant dans une atmosphère paisible.

Self-taught artist Oskar Bergman draws inspiration from German Romanticism, particularly the work of Caspar David Friedrich, as well as from the great Swedish masters he admires during his regular visits to museums. His distinctive style, subtly inflected with Japanese influence, simplifies natural forms without diminishing them, revealing their richness and ever-changing character. His works capture landscapes imbued with calm, where nature immerses itself in the solemn rhythm of the seasons. A master of winter landscapes, he presents here a scene bathed in the gentle light of a setting sun. The waves of a lake or river shimmer under this low, slanting light, as if brushed with golden dust. The shoreline, entirely covered in pristine snow, allows here and there the delicate silhouettes of a few trees to emerge, their fine black branches standing out against a peaceful, hushed atmosphere.

Oskar Bergman (1879–1963) was born in Stockholm into a modest household, where his early talent for drawing went largely unnoticed. Largely self-taught, he received only occasional guidance from a friend of his mother. Following the death of his father in 1888, the family faced financial hardship, and by the age of 13, Bergman was working as a tailor's courier, delivering garments through the streets of Stockholm during the week. Despite these challenges, he nurtured a deep interest in art. Every Sunday, he visited the Nationalmuseum, where he discovered the works of Swedish Romantic painters such as Marcus Larson (1825–1864) and Nils Blommér (1816–1853) – artists who became his first true mentors in absentia. At 16, he enrolled at the Technical School, where he studied under Anders Forsberg (1871–1914). With no aspirations to join the Academy, he instead chose to travel across Europe on his own savings, visiting museums and studying collections in Germany and Italy. During a trip to Germany in 1901, Bergman encountered the art of Caspar David Friedrich, whose contemplative landscapes made a profound impression on him. This encounter marked a turning point, steering him away from the dramatic excesses of Romanticism toward a more restrained, introspective vision of nature. His return to Sweden was pivotal: Ernest Thiel (1859–1947), a major patron of Swedish artists, purchased one of his drawings and invited him to his artists' colony in Saltsjöbaden. Through Thiel, Bergman met the Symbolist painter Armand Point, who, impressed by his skill, invited him to Florence to study privately.

With Thiel's support, Bergman travelled through Berlin, Munich, Verona, and Rome before arriving in Florence. There, Point gave him free instruction and introduced him to the works of Arnold Böcklin, whose dreamlike symbolism strongly influenced Bergman's early style. Back in Sweden in 1906, Bergman held his first significant exhibition alongside sculptor Peter David Edström (1873–1938) and painter Ivar Arosenius (1878–1909). His reputation grew steadily, although his art stood apart from the more radical movements emerging in Sweden at the time. When the avant-garde group *De Unga* ("The Young Ones") caused a stir in 1909 with their embrace of Expressionism and Fauvism, Bergman's serene and meticulously detailed landscapes were seen as rooted in national

tradition rather than modernist rupture. His popularity flourished throughout the 1910s and 1920s. In 1917, the Nationalmuseum acquired his watercolor *By the Sea*, confirming his status within the Swedish art world. But as tastes shifted in the 1930s and modernist innovations became more accepted, Bergman's art came to be viewed as conservative. He nevertheless remained loyal to his own vision. Bergman's daily routine reflected this quiet dedication: after long walks in nature, he would retire to his studio and work simultaneously on two watercolors, seeking balance, precision, and harmony. His commitment to the Swedish landscape, both as subject and symbol, earned him lasting recognition. In 1957, King Gustav VI Adolf awarded him the Egron Lundgren Medal, one of the country's highest distinctions in the arts. When Oskar Bergman died in 1963 at the age of 84, he was celebrated as a deeply Swedish artist — one who had remained faithful to a poetic and intimate vision of nature across decades of change.



Oskar Bergman, *Snowy lakeside*



Oskar Bergman, *Farm in the Snow*

Clément Massier

Vallauris 1844 - 1917 Golfe-Juan

Dante and Beatrice

1900

Faïence with iridescent glaze and metallic lustre

H. 53 cm; W. 40 cm (20 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in)

Signed and dated « M. Clément Massier/ Golf Juan / MCM Golf Juan »

Provenance: French Art Market

This faïence plaque, with the iridescent reflections characteristic of Clément Massier's work, depicts Dante and Beatrice in a composition imbued with Symbolist mysticism. In late 19th-century France, the figure of Dante Alighieri experienced a revival of interest in both literary and visual arts circles. He came to embody the ideal of the visionary poet, and his work became a major source of inspiration for artists seeking spiritual elevation and ideal beauty. The scene may depict an episode from the *Purgatorio*, the second cantica of the *Divine Comedy*, specifically « Canto XXX », when Dante encounters his angel-woman, Beatrice, after nearly completing his purification on the mountain of Purgatory. This pivotal moment marks the transition from human reason, embodied by Virgil, to divine wisdom and love, represented by Beatrice, who will henceforth guide the poet toward the celestial realms.

Clément Massier is a central figure in the development of art ceramics in Golfe-Juan, he was one of the pioneers of the revival of artistic faïence in France. The heir to a long-standing dynasty of potters, he developed the famous metallic lustres that brought lasting fame to his creations. His workshop participated in several international exhibitions, most notably the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900, where his pieces met with great acclaim. It is also important to highlight the essential role played by the Massier family in the development of ceramics on the French Riviera. His brother Delphin and his cousin Jérôme fils helped to establish Vallauris and Golfe-Juan as key centres of ceramic innovation. Their workshops attracted artists, collectors, and patrons at a time when the region was opening up to tourism and becoming a favourite destination of the European elite.



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Ilona Rado, our photographer, for her work and support. Her eye and professionalism have helped us highlight the artworks we discovered during this first year of research and present them in the best possible way. We also warmly thank all the people in the art market, as well as our friends, who have supported us from the very beginning and accompanied us throughout this first stage of our journey.

Back cover:
Albert Lynch (1861-1950),
The Possessed Woman

1891

Graphite, India ink, watercolor and gouache on paper

Signed lower « A. Lynch »

H. 23.6 cm; W. 31.5 cm (9 ¼ x 12 ⅜ in)

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