

PRESS RELEASE

French 18th-century Drawings from a Private Collection

W. M. Brady & Co. is pleased to present *French 18th-century Drawings from a Private Collection*. The exhibition will be on view at Nicholas Hall, 17 East 76th Street, as part of *Master Drawings New York* from January 20 to 28, and will continue there through February 10.

Formed over the course of the past forty years, the collection presented is that of an individual with a discerning eye and refined taste, and is comprised of drawings at the highest level by the biggest names in the canon of French, 18th-century art. These include a beautiful *trois crayons* sheet by Charles de La Fosse showing two studies of Saint Anne, preparatory for one of his largest and most important commissions: *La Consécration de la Vierge*, painted for the high altar of the church of the Convent of the Immaculate Conception on the rue du Bac, Paris, in 1703 (today, Musée André Malraux Havre, Le Havre), as well as one of Claude Gillot's choice and charming pen and ink and wash drawings of theatrical subjects, *Four Actors in Theatrical Costume with Swords* ("Capitains").

Also on view is Antoine Watteau's magnificent and large drawing in red, black, and white chalk, *Study of Two Persian Diplomats*, one of nine drawings of male figures in Persian costume which Watteau made in 1715 on the occasion of the visit of the Persian ambassador to Paris. It is the largest of the group and the only one executed in *trois crayons*, perhaps the artist's earliest use of the media for which he became renowned.

There is, as well, Carle Vanloo's large and dramatic *Double-Academy* in red chalk, one of only two double-academies by the artist who is remembered today for the beauty and quality of his academic studies of the human form. Charles-Joseph Natoire's red and white chalk *Study of a Triton and a Naiad* is preparatory for his painting, *Le Triomphe d'Amphitrite*, 1735 (Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan), and François Boucher's "*La Passionnée*": *Head of a Young Woman Looking to the Left and Holding a Rose*, circa 1745-50, is the perfect embodiment of his *trois crayons*, Rococo approach to female portraiture.

Large in scale and with a look of surprise and astonishment, Jean-Baptiste Greuze's red chalk *Tête de femme en buste de coiffée d'un mouchoir*, dating to the mid-1760s, is a classic example of one of his *têtes d'expressions*. There are also drawings by Jean-Honoré Fragonard and Hubert Robert, dating to their time in Rome in the 1750s and '60s: Fragonard's beautiful watercolor drawing, *Capriccio: Excavation of Roman Ruins*, circa 1760-62, and Robert's large, tour-de-force view in red chalk of *The Piazza della Rotonda and the Pantheon, Rome*, circa 1759.

Most of the drawings in the collection are executed in chalk – red, red and white, black and white, or *trois crayons*. As a result, the collection is characterized by a richness in color and handling. Whether preparatory for paintings or prints, or made as finished works in their own right, the drawings presented here are of the highest quality and are in beautiful state. They represent French, 18th-century draughtsmanship at its very best.

A fully illustrated digital catalogue will accompany *French 18th-century Drawings from a Private Collection*. For further information or with any inquiries, please contact Mark Brady (mark@wbrady.com) or Laura Bennett (laura@wbrady.com).