

# French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Editor



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## William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, 1869

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<b>Artist</b>	William Adolphe Bouguereau, French, 1825–1905
<b>Title</b>	<i>Italian Woman at the Fountain</i>
<b>Object Date</b>	1869
<b>Medium</b>	Oil on canvas
<b>Dimensions (Unframed)</b>	39 3/4 x 31 7/8 in. (101 x 81 cm)
<b>Signature</b>	Signed and dated lower left: W. BOVGVEREAV / 1869
<b>Credit Line</b>	The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Nelson, F88-17

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### Catalogue Entry

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#### Citation

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With her flawless skin, sensual gaze, and pristine clothing, the title figure of *Italian Woman at the Fountain* exemplifies the escapist fantasies about contented

European peasants that resonated with wealthy collectors throughout the United States, especially when painted by William Adolphe Bouguereau. For the many American collectors of the late 1800s who were flush with recently made fortunes, the artist's beautiful imagery effectively conveyed the idea of quality and tradition; his works were freshly painted Old Masters for their newly minted American money. Indeed, in the Gilded Age—from the late 1870s to about 1900—Bouguereau's works were so popular that "no respectable amateur would mention his new fad of picture-collecting until he had secured a 'Bouguereau' for his parlor,"<sup>1</sup> as a critic for a New York art journal put it. Many of these paintings that hung in the homes of American robber barons and merchant princes were markedly similar to *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, with one contemporaneous American critic noting that the artist "is known in this country solely by his paintings, the greater number of which have Italian scenes and Italian figures for their subject."<sup>2</sup>

The appeal of *Italian Woman at the Fountain* is in some ways quite obvious, embodying much of what made Bouguereau so enduringly popular. One cannot fault the model's extraordinarily luminous skin or the beautifully molded forms of her face, neck, and hands, all effectively

contrasted with cloth, metal, foliage, stone, and earth. Her pose is finely balanced: she leans gracefully against the ashlar wall of the fountain enclosure; her intertwined hands are masterfully drawn and painted. Behind her a wall of green gives way to a stony outcropping, which in turn leads the eye upward to the beguiling image of a hill town bathed in evening light. Such paintings seduced both American collectors and critics, with one of many positive reviews praising these “peasant girls Bouguereau paints so charmingly; the arms and hands are marvels of shading and finish.”<sup>3</sup>

*Italian Woman at the Fountain* belongs to a type of painting that Bouguereau began to produce in the early 1860s and continued to paint into the following decade. They focus on images of beautiful Italian working-class women, with or without children, in tightly focused rustic outdoor settings or domestic or church interiors. Many of these figures, like this one, wear the traditional dress of the Ciociaria region of central Italy: a loosely fitted white blouse; shoulder-tied bodice; strings of heavy beads; a dark, full skirt; and an apron, usually dark green or blue, embroidered with wide bands of red, gold, and green floral motifs.<sup>4</sup> Such ensembles usually include a voluminous headdress of white cloth; this also may have served as padding to lessen the discomfort of heavy, head-borne loads. It is worth noting that the woman leans on a traditional Italian copper water vessel, or *conca*, which is usually carried on the head.

Although painted in 1869, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* directly derives from Bouguereau’s sojourn in Rome nearly twenty years earlier. After applying three times for the prestigious Prix de Rome—granted to the most gifted students of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in Paris—the artist finally succeeded to this honor in 1850. Receiving this scholarship gave Bouguereau the chance to travel to Rome, study with French masters at the Villa Medici, and explore the city and surrounding areas. Bouguereau spent three years in Italy and traveled widely, often on foot. He filled his days with studying and copying the masterpieces of art and architecture that abound in Rome and surrounding regions, paying particular attention to the Renaissance masters, among whom Raphael (Italian, 1483–1520) was a favorite. Bouguereau also completed copious sketches and watercolors of local landscapes, hill towns, beggars, and rural workers.



Fig. 1. William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Portrait of Teresa*, 1854, oil on canvas, 16 1/2 x 12 11/16 in. (41.9 x 32.2 cm), Musée de Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes, P.46.1.475

While in Rome, the artist completed several finished paintings. One of these, his *Portrait of Teresa* (Fig. 1), is an antecedent to *Italian Woman at the Fountain*. The former shows Bouguereau developing an eye for color, a subtle use of distant vistas, and a gift for capturing the textures of skin and cloth. It also shows Bouguereau’s interest in picturesque and rustic peasant imagery. His time at the Villa Medici also clearly influenced the distant townscape in *Italian Woman at the Fountain*. It is certainly based on a yet-unidentified medieval settlement that Bouguereau sketched during his years in Italy. During his sojourn there, Bouguereau displayed an intense devotion to his art and a relentless, dogged approach to learning that earned him the nickname “Sisyphus”—a reference to the character in ancient Greek mythology who pushed a stone up a hill every day, only to have it roll back again when he neared the top. Bouguereau’s persistence in refining his forms, use of color, and technique during his time at the Villa Medici laid the foundation for what would become his characteristic balanced compositions, remarkable chromatic harmonies, and extraordinary technical facility. Much

later in his career, a critic paid tribute to this exacting training, noting that Bouguereau “is admirable in what he strives to set forth. He was educated as a classicist and believes in the absoluteness of form, and in this you will note that he is quite perfect. There never was a better draughtsman, and for that accomplishment he deserves much credit.”<sup>5</sup> These skills in turn helped to ensure his later success, particularly with collectors in the United States during the latter half of the 1800s.



Fig. 2. Raphael, *La Donna Velata* or *La Velata*, ca. 1512–1515, oil on canvas, 32 15/16 x 23 13/16 in. (82 x 60.5 cm), Collection of Istituti museale della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Pitti Palace, 1912 no. 245

While *Italian Woman at the Fountain* certainly derives from Bouguereau’s own observations of Italian dress and landscape during his time there, its balanced composition and harmonious feeling also betray the artist’s debt to and admiration of Raphael, among other artists.<sup>6</sup> While in Italy, Bouguereau studied and copied numerous works by the master, including *Galatea* (1512; Villa Farnesina)—a masterpiece devoted to the tragic mythical love story of a nymph whose jealous consort killed her lover. *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, however, comes even closer to Raphael’s lyrical and coolly sensual portraits of women, such as the famous painting of his

mistress, *La Donna Velata* (Fig. 2). As his career developed, Bouguereau became remarkably adept at transforming familiar Italian Renaissance visual forms into images that met the aspirations and tastes of collectors in the United States. During the nineteenth century, this stylistic relationship was widely acknowledged, though critics noted that Bouguereau was hardly a slavish copyist. For instance, one critic observed that “in taking Raphael as his point of departure, M. Bouguereau has shown that modern feeling can be accommodated in an old form.”<sup>7</sup> Likewise, another discussion of the works of Michelangelo (Italian, 1475–1564) and Raphael in comparison to contemporaneous images extolls a painting by Bouguereau, celebrating “how noble in design and how exquisite in handling is this specimen of New pitted against the Old! It is worth much more than a single glance—a brief inspection; and in its light, something more than a mere moment of reflection may well be indulged in.”<sup>8</sup>

While paintings like *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, to some extent, resonated with Americans because of their sheer beauty, technical mastery, and visual references to Raphael and other Renaissance masters, the appeal of Bouguereau’s work in the United States is far more complicated and nuanced. Perhaps the most astute look at Bouguereau comes from the famed and sometimes refreshingly acid-tongued American art critic Clarence Chatham Cook. In his popular publication *Art and Artists of Our Time*, the writer offers some perceptive observations about paintings like *Italian Woman at the Fountain*:

*Bouguereau never forgets that he is painting pictures that are to be bought by rich people for the adornment of their drawing-rooms, and he takes care that nothing in them shall be out of keeping with the tasteful and elegant things that surround them. . . . Bouguereau has provided for his admirers an ample supply of pretty beggar-children, young peasants, mothers of the picturesque poor, and so forth and so on, who are in truth people of the upper class, or seem to be such, with beautiful faces, fine heads of hair, rich eyes, chiseled lips, ivory skins, hands that never wore gloves, feet that never wore shoes, and in a state of immaculate cleanliness.*<sup>9</sup>

Once again, Bouguereau’s works are revealed as fantasies—images of impossibly beautiful and nymph-like peasants who live an Arcadian existence, far from the constraints of a modern industrialized society. Their informal dress and relatively low décolleté would have

contrasted with standards of clothing for the Victorian period in the United States. This would have not only connoted freedom from societal constraints but might also have suggested the possibility of licentious behavior. In addition, there is a slightly fairy-tale quality to *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, both in the model—whose flawless beauty contrasts with her rustic dress and occupation—and in the castle atop a hill in the distance. Bouguereau also appears to have replaced the simple red or blue beads that were normally part of the Italian peasant costume with a string of massive and lustrous pearls.

In addition to the more fantastical elements of the painting, the costume of *Italian Woman at the Fountain* lends the picture a slightly exotic air. This is something that viewers of the time would have noticed, and something that may well have contributed to the popularity of such works in the United States. Exoticism, though more commonly associated with the European and American fascination with Asia or the Near East, is the attraction felt by artists or viewers for any culture different from their own. Bouguereau's work often includes appealing "foreign" elements, as here. One of the connotations of exoticism is that because it is different and "other," it represents a way of departing from the everyday. This framework reinforces the idea of *Italian Woman at the Fountain* as an elegant but clearly escapist fantasy.

Although the painting's history of ownership extends back to its purchase, from Bouguereau, by the Paris firm Goupil and Company in 1869, there is a frustrating gap in ownership from 1870 to 1932. The painting was probably one of the many "smooth, attitudinizing canvases, which found greedy takers, especially in France and the United States," in the words of an American critic—pictures that often appealed to the more conservative tastes of America's nouveau riche merchants and captains of industry.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, by 1932 it was in the possession of Mack Barnabus Nelson (1872–1950) and his wife, May (née Milhon, 1874–1951), of Kansas City. Like many of Bouguereau's collectors, Mack was a self-made man. At the age of fifteen he left his native Arkansas for Mexico, and he eventually rose to become the president of the Long-Bell Lumber Company. In 1914, he and May constructed a mansion on Ward Parkway that befitted their wealth and social standing. Bouguereau's *Italian Woman at the Fountain* hung in the home's two-story interior courtyard (Fig. 3). The Italian subject matter coordinated perfectly with the open space surrounded by columns, an adaptation of an ancient Roman peristyle. The painting also beautifully complemented

the courtyard's furniture, which was inspired by classical models.



Fig. 3. Frank Lauder (American, b. 1878), autochrome photograph of Mack Barnabus and May Nelson's interior patio, August 23, 1932, Frank Lauder Autochrome collection (P22), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri

Although Bouguereau enjoyed enormous popularity in the United States, this began to fade even during his lifetime. After his death, his paintings quickly fell from favor—especially with critics, who saw his work as old-fashioned and highly artificial. Today, however, paintings such as *Italian Woman at the Fountain* have begun to enjoy renewed critical attention, helping to re-establish Bouguereau's place within the artistic canon.<sup>11</sup> It should be noted, however, that among museumgoers, Bouguereau's unabashedly lovely and exquisitely painted works have never really lost their appeal.

Stanton Thomas  
January 2020

## Notes

1. "W. A. Bouguereau," *The Collector and Art Critic* 3, no. 11 (September 1905): 147.
2. "Bouguereau's 'Italian Women at the Fountain,'" *Art Journal* 1 (1875): 88.
3. Lucy H. Hooper, "Among the Studios of Paris," *Art Journal* 1 (1875): 62.

4. See, for instance, M. A. Racinet, *Le Costume Historique*, vol. 6 (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1888), unpaginated.
5. John C. Van Dyke, "Style and Individuality," *Decorator and Furnisher* 12, no. 4 (July 1888): 131.
6. Bouguereau also shared an ongoing visual dialogue with Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796–1875), who produced a series of Italian female figures in the 1860s and early 1870s. Many of them wear similar clothing, are posed in similar settings, and have similar props as the woman in the Nelson-Atkins painting. Some examples include: *Agostina* (1866; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.46583.html>), *Gypsy Girl at a Fountain* (1865–1870; Philadelphia Museum of Art, <https://philamuseum.org/collection/object/102994>), and *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1865–1870; Kunstmuseum Basel, Inv. G 1963.28 (<http://sammlungonline.kunstmuseumbasel.ch/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=1465&viewType=detailView>)). I am grateful for Brigid M. Boyle, Bloch Family Foundation Doctoral Fellow, for sharing this insight.
7. "En prenant Raphaël pour point de départ, M. Bouguereau a montré que le sentiment moderne pouvait s'accommoder d'une forme ancienne." Clément de Ris, quoted in *Catalogue illustré des œuvres de W. Bouguereau* (Paris: Librairie d'art, 1885), 15; translation by the author.
8. "A Modern Holy Family," *The Aldine: The Art Journal of America* 8, no. 4 (April 1876): 124.
9. Clarence Cook, *Art and Artists of Our Time* (New York: S. Hess, 1888), 1:87–88.
10. "W. A. Bouguereau," 147.
11. "See, for example, Louise d'Argencourt and Mark Steven Walker, *William Bouguereau, 1825–1905*, exh. cat. (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1984); and Tanya Paul and Stanton Thomas, *Bouguereau and America*, exh. cat. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019)."

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#### Technical Entry

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#### Citation

##### Chicago:

Mary Schafer, "William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, 1869," technical entry in *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.502.2088>.

##### MLA:

Schafer, Mary. "William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, 1869," technical entry. *French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945: The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2023. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.502.2088.

*Italian Woman at the Fountain* appears to have been executed on a plain-weave canvas with an initial, bright white ground layer followed by an upper ground of pale pink (Fig. 4). The tacking margins have been removed, making it difficult to determine whether the ground was commercially prepared, artist-applied, or a combination of the two.<sup>1</sup> Equidistant stretcher cracks and areas where paint stops short of the outer edges suggest that the dimensions of the painting (101 x 81 cm), which are close in size to standard-format no. 40 *figure* stretcher (100 x 81 cm),<sup>2</sup> have not been substantially altered.

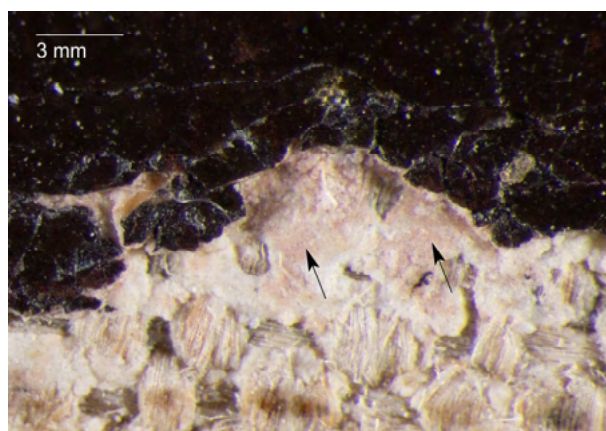


Fig. 4. Photomicrograph of the ground layers exposed by a paint loss, top edge of *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869). The layers of material visible in this image, starting at the bottom, include the following: canvas, white ground, pink ground (black arrows), and dark brown of the upper paint layer.

Bouguereau's working method included a rigorous phase of sketching—small sketches in pen or graphite; monochromatic wash drawings; color experiments (oil on canvas); drawings with a live model; more detailed studies of heads, hands, drapery, or foliage; and a cartoon for transfer to a prepared canvas—that enabled him to solidify the overall composition.<sup>3</sup> His students and contemporaries remarked on how quickly he executed the final painting after this deliberate process: "On the floor surrounding each painting all kinds of sketches and drawings lie here and there, in the disorder of work. Only this preparatory period holds the artist up for a few moments, since for him the actual execution is nothing."<sup>4</sup> Although graphite and charcoal underdrawings have been identified on other works by the artist,<sup>5</sup> no clear underdrawing was detected beneath *Italian Woman at the Fountain* using infrared reflectography or the stereomicroscope. It has been suggested that Bouguereau may have employed a pressure technique to transfer compositional designs to canvas.<sup>6</sup> However, if this method of transfer were used for the Nelson-Atkins painting, any subtle incised marks are now obscured by the weave interference of the lining



Fig. 5. Detail of the hands, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869), showing the preliminary red-brown wash in areas of shadow

The composition was first laid-in with colored washes, many of which remain visible at the edges of forms and between paint strokes, like the red-brown wash evident beneath the hands (Fig. 5). The figure was carefully modelled with half-tones and shadows consisting of scumbles in cool gray, warm beige, and darker brown tones, followed by thicker, opaque paint for the brightest highlights. Thin paint layers were lightly blended into

each other, creating subtle transitions from light to dark that effectively portray three-dimensional forms (Figs. 5 and 6). The painter François Flameng (1856–1923) described this aspect of Bouguereau's paint handling: "[He] attacked his work resolutely, painting directly over a brown scumble, blending in the part left from the day before, making it impossible to tell where the juncture was and thus imparting great solidity to his work."<sup>7</sup> Closer study of the paint surface reveals a light, back and forth movement of the artist's brush at various junctures of the eye lid, forming fringe-like wisps of intermingled paint colors (Fig. 7).

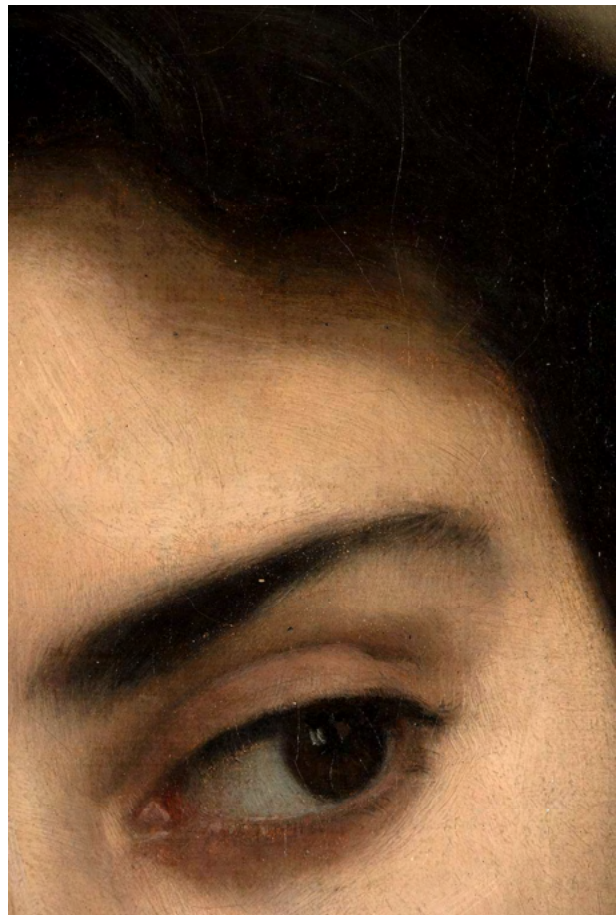


Fig. 6. Detail of the forehead, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869), showing the gradual transitions from light to shadow





Fig. 7. Photomicrograph of the proper right eyelid, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869)

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More prominent brushwork, much of which is applied quickly and wet-over-wet, is visible in the highlights of the face (nose, forehead, and proper left cheek), the short diagonal strokes of the forearm, the thickly painted folds of the blouse and headdress, and the highlights of the copper vessel. Transparent orange and reddish-brown paint enlivens the shadows of the hands, eyes, nostrils, and individual pearls (Fig. 8). Bright pink and orange UV-induced visible fluorescence suggest the presence of red lake in the hair, hands, lips, reflections of the eyes, pearls, skirt, and apron (Fig. 9).<sup>8,9</sup>



Fig. 8. Detail of the pearl necklace, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869)

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Fig. 9. Ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence photograph, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869)

In contrast to the controlled brushwork and careful modeling of the figure, the foreground elements and surrounding landscape were executed with loose, painterly brushwork and pronounced paint texture. Smooth, flat applications of paint in the foreground indicate the use of a palette knife, and numerous scraped textures represent the rough stone surface of the wall. In addition, curving sgraffito marks drawn through the wet paint, with either a palette knife or the tip of a brush handle, produce decorative marks at the base of the copper vessel (Fig. 10).



Fig. 10. Photomicrograph with raking illumination, *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869), revealing the sgraffito marks on the pitcher

Only three modifications appear to have been made in the final stages of painting, and these pentimenti are readily visible under normal lighting conditions. The distant mountain at the upper left was lowered, and Bouguereau adjusted the woman's proper left sleeve in two locations, widening it at the shoulder by 1 centimeter and extending it downward by 1.5 centimeters to the hands (Fig. 11).



Fig. 11. Detail photograph of *Italian Woman at the Fountain* (1869), revealing two pentimenti associated with the woman's proper left sleeve

The painting is in good overall condition. The design of the modern stretcher indicates that the painting was treated following its 1988 acquisition, although no records exist in the conservation file. The canvas is wax-lined, and some weave interference from the lining process has imparted a strong vertical texture across the paint surface. Localized traction cracks, the result of differential drying among the paint layers, disrupt and visually flatten the folds of the embroidered apron, and mildly cupped craquelure, stretcher cracks, and impact cracks have also formed. For the most part, the synthetic varnish saturates the paint layer, but it has discolored. Minor retouching, which appears dark and non-fluorescing under ultraviolet radiation, is scattered throughout and is also present at the outermost edges.

Mary Schafer  
October 2022

## Notes

1. The ground layers beneath *Seated Nude* (1884; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA) consist of a lower commercially applied gray layer that continues onto the preserved tacking margins, over which an upper pale pink ground was applied by the artist. See technical report by Sandra Webber in *Nineteenth-Century European Paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute*, ed. Sarah Lees (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 84.
2. David Bomford, Jo Kirby, John Leighton, and Ashok Roy, *Art in the Making: Impressionism* (London: Yale University Press, 1991), 46.
3. For an overview of Bouguereau's preparatory process, see Mark Steven Walker, "Bouguereau at Work," in *William Bouguereau 1825-1905*, ed. Mortimer Schiff, exh. cat. (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1984), 71-74. See also Damien Bartoli and Frederick Ross, *William Bouguereau: His Life and Works* (Antique Collectors Club: Art Renewal Center and the William Bouguereau Committee, 2010), 468-74.
4. Émile Bayard, "William Bouguereau," *Le Monde Moderne* (Paris: A. Quantin, 1897), 854, cited and translated in Bartolio and Ross, *William Bouguereau*, 469.
5. See technical entries for *Nymphs and Satyr* (1873) and *Seated Nude* (1884) by Sandra Webber in *Nineteenth-Century European Paintings*, 81, 84.
6. "The exact method that Bouguereau used for transferring the cartoons to canvas is also not known. There are no pounce marks or grids to be found on them, but in view of the fact that their main contours [of the cartoon] are usually heavily reinforced with graphite, it is likely that a pressure technique was involved. In other instances there is no graphite along the contours but rather a groove indicating the passage of a stylus." Walker, "Bouguereau at Work," 74.
7. François Flameng, "Notice sur la vie et les travaux de M. Bouguereau, lue dans la séance du 24 février 1906, Institut de France, Académie des Beaux-Arts" (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1906), cited and translated in Walker, "Bouguereau at Work," 75.
8. Helmut Schweppe and John Winter, "Madder and Alizarin," in *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of Their History and Characteristics*, ed. Elisabeth West

FitzHugh (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1997) 3:124.

9. "Laque de garance foncée" is listed in the description of Bouguereau's palette in Charles Moreau-Vauthier, *Comment on peint aujourd'hui* (Paris: Henri Floury, 1923), 24. Additionally, a number of lake pigments are listed in Bouguereau's 1869 sketchbook. William Bouguereau, sketchbook no. 5, 1869, Bouguereau Family Estate, cited in Walker, "Bouguereau at Work," 77.

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## Documentation

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### Citation

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Danielle Hampton Cullen, "William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Italian Woman at the Fountain*, 1869," documentation in *French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945: The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.502.4033>.

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## Provenance

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Purchased from the artist by Goupil et Cie, Paris, stock book no. 4, stock no. 4695, as *Italienne à la fontaine*, December 31, 1869–June 12, 1870;

Purchased from Goupil et Cie by Henry Wallis (1805–1890), London, June 12, 1870 [1];

Mr. Mack Barnabus "M. B." (1872–1950) and Mrs. Cora "May" (née Milhon, 1874–1951) Nelson, Kansas City, MO, by 1932–June 10, 1950 [2];

Inherited by his wife, May Nelson, Kansas City, MO, June 29, 1950–May 23, 1951 [3];

Estate of M. B. and May Nelson, 1951–1956 [4];

Bequeathed by M. B. and May Nelson to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, June 14, 1956 [5];

## Notes

[1] Henry Wallis was the owner of the French Gallery in London. Per Pamela Fletcher, at that time, it was normal for dealers to own the works they exhibited. See correspondence from Fletcher to Meghan Gray, The Nelson-Atkins, July 27, 2010, The Nelson-Atkins curatorial files. The gallery continued after Wallis's death under the direction of his descendants until 1929.

[2] See autochrome photograph of the painting hanging in the Nelsons' interior patio, dated August 23, 1932, Frank Lauder Autochrome collection (P22), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. Mr. Nelson visited England, Ireland, and Scotland in 1889, and, in 1911 he and his wife visited Southampton, England. These were opportunities where they may have purchased the painting.

[3] M. B. Nelson died on June 10, 1950. Nelson's will was filed in the Jackson County Probate court on June 29, 1950. The will indicates that the home on 5500 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, MO, was held jointly by his widow, May Nelson. The entire estate was left to Mrs. Nelson, who was named jointly with the Commerce Trust company as executor of the estate. The will was dated March 9, 1950. See "M. B. Nelson Will Filled," *Kansas City Star* 70, no. 285 (June 29, 1950): 3.

[4] The painting remained in the Nelsons' house at 5500 Ward Parkway, which was inherited by Mrs. Nelson's sisters, Katherine "June" Carlberg (née Milhon, 1876–1964) and Vida Clara Frick (née Milhon, 1890–1978). In 1956, Carlberg and Frick sold the mansion and brought the painting to the Nelson-Atkins. It was accepted into the museum's reserve collection as a gift by bequest on June 14, 1956, but on January 4, 1957, the museum loaned Frick the painting, which she hung in her apartment at 5050 Oak Street, Kansas City, MO. See The Nelson-Atkins registration files; and Erma Young, "Family Treasures as Key to Décor," *Kansas City Star* 80, no. 192 (March 27, 1960): 6H.

[5] On October 17, 1974, the Nelson's nephew, William M. Frick (1914–2000), Kansas City, MO, returned the painting to the museum. The museum offered the painting for sale in 1985 at *Nineteenth Century European Paintings, Drawings, and Watercolors*, Christie's, New York, October 30, 1985, lot 88, but it failed to sell. The painting was accessioned into the permanent collection on June 20, 1988. See The Nelson-Atkins curatorial files.

## Related Works

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William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Portrait of Teresa*, 1854, oil on canvas, 15 3/4 x 12 5/8 in. (40 x 32 cm), Musée des Beaux-Arts de Valenciennes, France.

William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Harvester*, 1868, oil on canvas, 41 7/8 x 33 1/2 in. (106.5 x 85 cm), private collection, illustrated in Damien Bartoli and Frederick Ross, *William Bouguereau: Catalogue Raisonné of his Painted Works* (Port Reading, NJ: Antique Collector's Club and Art Renewal Center, 2010), no. 1868/07, p. 2:170.

William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Italian Girl Drawing Water*, 1871, oil on canvas, 47 x 31 1/8 in. (119.4 x 78.7 cm), private collection, illustrated in Damien Bartoli and Frederick Ross, *William Bouguereau: Catalogue Raisonné of his Painted Works* (Port Reading, NJ: Antique Collector's Club and Art Renewal Center, 2010), no. 1871/13, p. 2:137.

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## Exhibitions

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Possibly *Seventeenth Annual Exhibition in London of Pictures: The Contributions of French and Flemish Schools at the Gallery*, French Gallery, London, 1870, no. 96, as *A Day-dream at the Well*.

*Winslow Homer and the Critics: Forging a National Art in the 1870s*, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, February 18–May 6, 2001; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, June 10–September 9, 2001; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, October 6, 2001–January 6, 2002 (Kansas City only), hors cat.

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