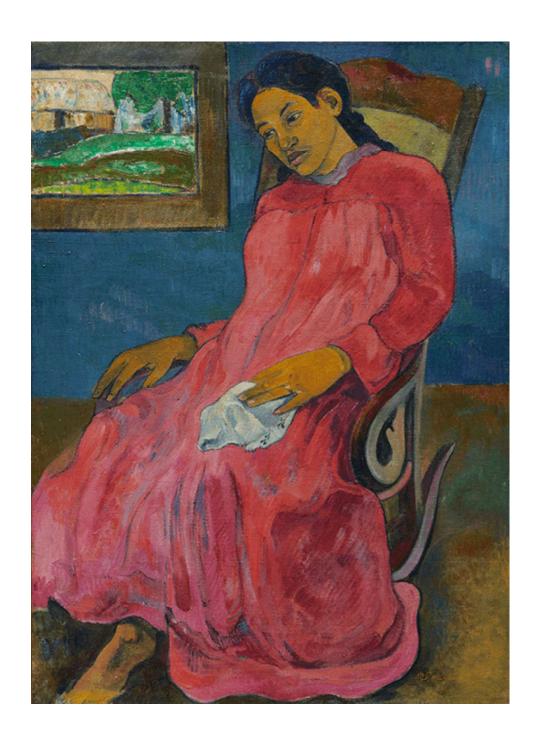
# French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Editor





# Paul Gauguin, Faaturuma (Melancholic), 1891

Artist Paul Gauguin, French, 1848–1903

Title Faaturuma (Melancholic)

Object Date 1891

**Alternate and Variant** 

Titles

Mélancolique; Rêverie

Medium Oil on canvas

**Dimensions (Unframed)** 37 x 26 7/8 in. (94 x 68.3 cm)

**Signature** Signed and dated lower right: P. Gauguin. 91

**Inscription** Inscribed upper left: Faaturuma

**Credit Line** The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Purchase: William Rockhill

Nelson Trust, 38-5

doi: 10.37764/78973.5.716

## **Catalogue Entry**

### Citation

# Chicago:

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#### MLA:

Childs, Elizabeth C. "Paul Gauguin, *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*), 1891," catalogue entry. *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.716.5407.

This canvas is one of the best-known compositions from Paul Gauguin's (1848–1903) highly productive first

sojourn to Tahiti, where he resided from June 9, 1891 to June 4, 1893. The painting is one of forty-one Tahitian canvases he included in a landmark exhibition at the Galeries Durand-Ruel in Paris in November 1893;<sup>1</sup> its inclusion there demonstrates both his confidence that this painting was a significant work within his new Tahitian oeuvre, and that he conceived his art about Polynesian subjects with a Parisian audience in mind.

The canvas belongs to the group of approximately twenty works he painted late in 1891 after he left the capital of Papeete for Mataiea, a smaller town on the southern coast of Tahiti. This move represented his effort to leave behind the disappointingly pervasive European influence in the colonial capital and to seek a simpler lifestyle more in harmony with what he had imagined traditional Tahitian life would be. There he established a home, although his relationships with local Tahitians were hampered by his imperfect command of the language and his practice of an art that most of them did not appreciate. In the later months of 1891, he probably initiated a domestic partnership with a young Tahitian woman named Tehe'amana; if one were to

believe his partly fictionalized autobiography *Noa Noa* (which he began writing in 1893), she was a youth of thirteen or fourteen years who lived with her family on the remote east coast of the island, and who agreed, with her parents' permission, to live with Gauguin in Mataiea.<sup>2</sup> It is often assumed, based on the artist's own, often exaggerated or invented narrative, that the model in the Nelson-Atkins painting is Tehe'amana. However, there is no clear support for this identification.

In this intensely colored figure study, a young woman sits in a French colonial rocking chair in a shallow interior space defined by an earthen-colored floor and a rich marine blue wall. The copious dress draws attention to the arresting hot salmon color that pulsates on the surface of the canvas. In the course of painting the dress, Gauguin lengthened the skirt's hemline by several inches, thus accentuating a single bare foot that is elongated beyond natural proportion. A distracting note is introduced by the bright yellow brushwork broadly painted across her brown toes, which announces a purely painterly touch. Other bold touches include two parallel pink strokes that hover improbably on the blue wall at the upper right. By such means, Gauguin asserts that his picture is a poetic and decorative arrangement of form on canvas, an embodiment of visual ideas as much as it is a composed portrait or a memory of his observations.

Close looking reveals how thoroughly he attends to this artistic mission: he uses a dark black or blue outline in the manner of Cloisonnism (a style he adopted in Brittany in 1888 when working with Émile Bernard [1868–1941]) to establish the strong contours of the woman's figure. In some areas, such as along the right edge of the sitter's arm and along the edges of her black hair at her temple, those defining lines are brightly elaborated by little hot pink dots to make the lines scintillate. The painting is therefore, based on a subtle contradiction that engages both mind and eye: as much as the mood of the scene is one of silence and enervation, the lines, forms, and colors sing together energetically and in brazen harmony.

Gauguin's sitter wears a gown known as a Mother Hubbard dress, an extremely common fashion that was first introduced by missionaries in the nineteenth century to "civilize" local women, and was adopted throughout colonial Polynesia from Hawaii to Tahiti.<sup>3</sup> Such gowns were well-favored in the islands because they were relatively easy for novice seamstresses to design and sew; they were suitable as both a day dress to be worn in town, and as a loose garment appropriate

for work; and the unfitted lines facilitated ready ventilation in the hot tropical climate. The Mother Hubbard dress replaced the traditional garments made of tapa cloth and also the printed pareu (wraparound garment), covering women in a missionary-approved modest style that largely hid the female body from view. As such, the gown represented the "modern" dress of the proper colonial woman who had adapted to European-approved ways. Other significant details of French style include the ring on the sitter's left hand, which indicates her married status, and the embroidered handkerchief, a touch of European femininity. These details, along with the modest costume and the colonial rocker, establish the sitter as a modern Tahitienne. Yet other details, such as her bare foot pushed noticeably up against the front of the picture plane to command the viewer's attention, reiterate that her accommodation to European style is only partial. Her clothing thus reaffirms the mix of the local and imported cultural practices, a hybridity typical of this island in the 1890s.



Fig. 1. Paul Gauguin, *Te Faaturuma (The Brooding Woman)*, 1891, oil on canvas, 35 7/8 x 27 1/16 in. (91.1 x 68.7 cm), Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA. Museum Purchase, 1921.186

While the woman's long dark hair and warm brownorange skin may have hinted at her Pacific Islander identity, two details of the framed image in the upper-left corner of the composition confirm it: both the scene itself, and the inscription of a title in Tahitian on the painted frame. The wide brown rectangular frame sets off a scene of a traditional thatched hut on a verdant plot of land. The brown frame could indicate either a window pierced through the wall, giving a view onto the village, or the frame of a painting on the wall. Given the openly painted facture of the scene and a highly colorful assortment of hues that denote the thatched vegetation of the roof, the image most likely represents not "nature" through a window, but a painting (now lost) by the artist. It also emphasizes his role as both artist and observer in this Tahitian world.



Fig. 2. Camille Corot, *The Letter*, ca. 1865, oil on wood, 21  $1/2 \times 14 1/4$  in. (54.6 x 36.2 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 29.160.33. H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Gift of Horace Havemeyer, 1929

There is a tantalizing clue to the overall meaning of the picture: the title *Faaturuma* is inscribed on that picture frame (or window frame). Gauguin's command of the Tahitian language was only tentative at this time; as he admitted in November 1891, he was not yet strong in

Tahitian in spite of much effort.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, throughout the 1890s he inscribed titles in the Tahitian language prominently on many of his canvases, often in a highly contrasting hue such as the orange-red used here to attract the eye.<sup>6</sup> Showcasing such words signaled that the painting's subject belonged to what was for the Parisian viewer a novel and mysterious culture; Gauguin intended these titles to lure and confound the viewer through their very inscrutability. When he exhibited these canvases in Paris in 1893, the catalogue included many French translations of his Tahitian titles, thus appearing to present him both as an authority on and interpreter of the distant culture.

The title *Faaturuma* can be translated one of two ways into French: either as *mélancolie* or as *boudeuse*. In English, these words translate as melancholic, a sulky woman, or silence.<sup>7</sup> In a letter he wrote in 1892 to Mette, his French wife in Paris, Gauguin offered a translation of the title of a related painting *Te Faaturuma* (Fig. 1) as "le silence" ("silence") or "être morne" ("a gloomy being"), which demonstrates that he indeed grasped the meaning of the phrase.<sup>8</sup> And indeed, those ideas describe the apparent mood of the sitter in *Faaturuma*, and of the painting overall.

The self-absorbed young woman inclines her head forward and tilts it slightly to the side, as she looks away from the viewer. Her full lips register no emotion, and her eyebrow closest to the viewer arches slightly, suggesting her introspection. Her hands rest listlessly on her lap and on the armrest. She may be guietly rocking forward; the back of the chair does not touch the floor. Her affect is one of quietude, reflection, and even wistfulness. This is no novel subject. The topos of the contemplative young woman recalls in particular the figure studies by Barbizon painter Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796–1875), who was well known for his studies of female models, often dressed in Italian peasant costume and shown reading or dozing in a chair in the studio. One such picture is of particular import here, as Gauguin's godfather Gustave Arosa had owned just such a painting by Corot, The Letter (Fig. 2), in the 1870s. Gauguin had with him in Tahiti a copy of the illustrated sales catalogue of the Arosa estate sale in 1878, and thus had a collotype reproduction of the Corot painting available to hang on the wall of his studio/hut. He relished having reproductions of famous European paintings with him, as sources of inspiration and as reminders of the broader world of art where he wanted to make his contribution. Before leaving France, Gauguin had written to artist Odilon Redon (1840–1916) that his

collection of images would be like having "an entire little world of friends with me in the form of photographs [and] drawings who will talk to me every day." <sup>9</sup> Corot's subject of the docile model lost in thought was a prototype Gauguin could transform into a uniquely Tahitian idiom in *Fagturuma*.

However, the reference here is not only to Corot's studio muse, but also to the idea, as Gauguin understood it, of colonial Tahiti at that time. Gauguin often associated notions of silence and melancholy with the Tahitians he encountered. <sup>10</sup> In several pictures, these qualities assume feminine form. In the related painting Te Faaturuma (Fig. 1), a somewhat sulky young Tahitienne sits in a brightly colored but emphatically empty interior, isolating herself in her reverie as a male companion approaches or waits outside. In these paintings, Gauguin infuses his Tahitian women with passivity, listlessness, moodiness, and perhaps regret. The modern Tahitian woman was understood in some popular travel accounts as being nostalgic for the fading culture of traditional Tahiti. The young woman in the Nelson-Atkins canvas, who wears a modest dress and a wedding ring and holds a handkerchief ready to wipe away a tear, counters the stereotype of the sexually free and uninhibited vahiné (unmarried young Polynesian woman) that had been so widely celebrated in European travel descriptions since the time of French explorer, Louis Antoine de Bougainville (1729–1811). In travel journals Gauguin could have read in Paris that in the mid-nineteenth century, Tahiti's famed "alluring sirens" had still been "free as birds" and could give their bodies to serve their own pleasures and desires. 11 Modernity and civilization, such a narrative argued, had brought these indigenous women under the control of church and marriage, and now they could only dream of former liberties. 12 Gauguin's sitter, at once resplendent in and contained by her copious missionary gown, and conspicuously displaying the wedding ring as her only jewelry, belongs to this contemporary generation of women whom the artist imagined both regretted their present Europeanized society and dreamt of former times. In this way, Gauguin sometimes used the figure of the indigenous Polynesian woman as a metaphor for the inherent losses wrought by the colonial world. The distant and passive demeanor he imposes on his sitter also echoes the mood of numerous photographic portraits of Tahitian women made for sale by commercial studios in Papeete (Fig. 3). These images, sold both locally and exported to the United States and France, were collectibles of the time, and offered souvenir images of the contemporary Tahitian woman

enthroned in her colonial chair, looking as if she quietly accepted her modern colonial status.<sup>13</sup>

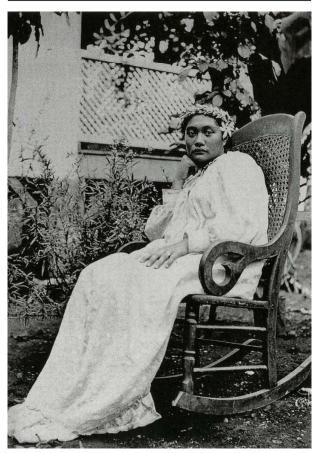


Fig. 3. Charles Spitz, *Tahitian Woman*, ca. 1890, albumen print, Musée de Tahiti et des îles /Te Fare Manaha, Puna'auia, Tahiti, D2004.32.152



Fig. 4. Paul Gauguin, Seated Tahitian Woman (related to the painting Te faaturuma [Reverie]), verso, 1891/1893, charcoal on cream wove paper, 18  $15/16 \times 21 \, 14/16$  in. (48.0 x 55.5 cm), Art Institute of Chicago, Margaret Day Blake Collection, 1944.578V

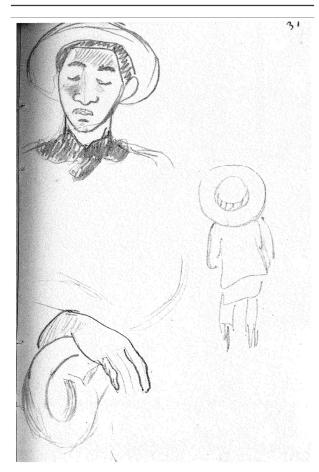


Fig. 5. Paul Gauguin, *Hand on the Armrest of a Chair*, 1891, pencil on paper, 6 11/16 x 4 5/16 in. (17.0 x 11.0 cm), originally from the *Carnet de Tahiti*, p. 31 recto (later dismantled), location unknown; illustrated in Elda Fezzi and Fiorella Minervino, "*Noa Noa" e il Primo Viaggio a Tahiti di Gauguin* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1974), 97

Gauguin only rarely made formal preparatory studies for his large painted compositions. In this case, there are two relatively modest drawings that may be related to his initial thinking about the subject. One is a pencil study of a Tahitian woman wearing a Mother Hubbard gown, whose eyes are lowered or closed, and who cradles a small dog or pig in her lap (Fig. 4). The mood of the scene is as quiet and introverted as Faaturuma, although the two figures may not be drawn from the same model, as the nose of the face in the pencil sketch is decidedly broader than that of the woman in the Nelson-Atkins canvas. Another sketch (Fig. 5) records the detail of a hand listlessly draped across the arm of a rocker, a study that confirms the artist's ability to observe compelling details of the body at rest. The figure of Faaturuma took shape on the canvas itself: Gauguin made a preliminary outline for the figure in paint directly on the canvas, and pentimenti attest to his initial attempts to render the dress that ultimately dominates

this composition.<sup>14</sup> This figure thus only came into full focus for the artist as she assumed her place in the painting.

Elizabeth C. Childs February 2018

#### **Notes**

- Exposition d'Œuvres récentes de Paul Gauguin, November 9–25, 1893, no. 28, as Mélancolique (or possibly no. 27, Faturuma [sic] (Boudeuse). This catalogue is not illustrated.
- 2. A useful summary of what is known about
  Tehe'amana is offered in Richard R. Brettell and
  Genevieve Westerby, "Gauguin, Cat. 50, Merahi
  metua no Tehamana (Tehamana Has Many Parents
  or The Ancestors of Tehamana) (1980.613):
  Commentary," in Gauguin Paintings, Sculpture and
  Graphic Works at the Art Institute of Chicago, eds.
  Gloria Groom and Genevieve Westerby (Chicago:
  Art Institute of Chicago, 2016), para. 3,
  https://publications.artic.edu/gauguin/reader/gaug
- 3. An exhaustive study on this fashion is Sally Helvenston Gray, "Searching for Mother Hubbard: Function and Fashion in Nineteenth-Century Dress," *Winterthur Portfolio* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 29–73.
- 4. A similar type of landscape is Gauguin's *Dog in front of the hut, Tahiti*, 1892, oil on canvas, 16 1/4 x 26 7/16 in. (41.2 x 67.1 cm), Pola Museum of Art, Hakone-machi, Japan.
- In a letter to Paul Serusier (1864–1927), Gauguin wrote, "Je ne suis pas encore bien fort sur la langue du pays, malgré tous les efforts." Quoted in Marianne Jakobi, Gauguin-Signac: La genèse du titre contemporain (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2015), 107.
- 6. Out of the 194 canvases he painted in Tahiti between 1891 and 1901, Gauguin painted titles in Tahitian on 82 of them. Jakobi, *Gauguin-Signac*, 133. In some cases, he instructed his friend George-Daniel de Monfreid (1856–1929), in Paris, to do the inscriptions.
- 7. See Sven Wahlroos, *English-Tahitian/Tahitian-English Dictionary* (Papeete: privately published,

- 2002), 574. See also correspondence between Meghan Gray, curatorial associate, Nelson-Atkins, and Ervelyne Bernard, translator of Tahitian and French, November 18, 2016, NAMA curatorial files.
- 8. Gauguin to Mette, December 8, 1892, in Maurice Malingue, ed., *Lettres de Gauguin à sa femme et à ses amis* (Paris: Bernard, Grasset, 1946), letter CXXXIV, p. 236.
- 9. "J'emporte en photographies, dessins, tout un petit monde de camarades qui me causeront tous les jours." Quoted in Roseline Bacou and Ari Redon, eds., *Lettres de Gauguin, Gide, Huysmans, Jammes, Mallarmé, Verhaeren.*.. à Odilon Redon (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1960), letter no. III, p. 193.
- 10. See his letter to Mette, July 1891, "Je comprends pourquoi ces individus peuvent rester des heures, des journées assis sans dire un mot et regarder le ciel avec mélancolie" (I understand why these people can remain hours and days seated saying nothing, and regarding the sky with melancholy), in Malingue, ed., Lettres de Gauguin, letter CXXVI, p. 218.
- 11. "sirènes provocantes"; "libre comme l'oiseau" in Louis d'Hura, "Notre nouvelle colonie, Tahiti," *Journal des Voyages* 7, no. 171 (October 17, 1880): 232.
- 12. For a discussion of this idea in the travel literature, such as in the Journal des Voyages in 1880, see Elizabeth C. Childs, Vanishing Paradise: Art and Exoticism in Colonial Tahiti (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 119–25.
- 13. For several examples of these photographs, see Elizabeth C. Childs, "Paradise Redux: Gauguin, Photography, and Fin-de-Siècle Tahiti," in Dorothy Kosinski, ed., *The Artist and the Camera: Degas to Picasso*, exh. cat. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 136.
- 14. See the accompanying technical essay by Mary Schafer, Nelson-Atkins paintings conservator.

# **Technical Entry**

# Citation

# Chicago:

Mary Schafer, "Paul Gauguin, *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*), 1891," technical entry in ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021), https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.716.2088

#### MLA:

Schafer, Mary. "Paul Gauguin, Faaturuma (Melancholic), 1891," technical entry. French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.716.2088.

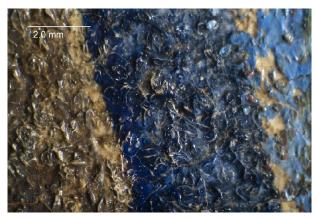


Fig. 6. Photomicrograph of raised canvas fibers visible in thinly painted areas, Faaturuma (Melancholic) (1891)



Fig. 7. Photomicrograph of a dilute blue outline, seen in the lower portion of this image, Faaturuma (Melancholic) (1891)

Faaturuma was executed on a tightly woven, cotton canvas with a half basket weave. During the 1890s, Paul Gauquin (1848-1903) painted on a variety of canvases,

and cotton has been identified on several other works by the artist.<sup>2</sup> Although the tacking margins of the gluelined canvas are preserved, wooden strips added to the top and bottom edges of the stretcher expand the overall height of the painting by approximately 1.6 centimeters.<sup>3</sup> Paper was adhered to the painting edges and covers the wooden strips, indicating that these components may have been added or reattached when the painting was lined. The current six-member stretcher with mortise and tenon joinery is close in size to the no. 30 *paysage* (basse) standard-format stretcher, rotated ninety degrees.<sup>4</sup> It is unclear if this support dates to the stretching of the canvas following the painting's arrival in France.

Fig. 8. Raking light detail of the painted landscape in *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*) (1891)

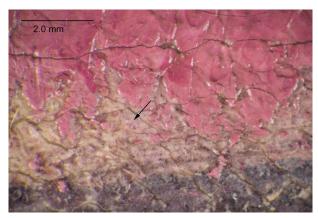


Fig. 9. Photomicrograph of the pale pink underpainting beneath the dress, Faaturuma (Melancholic) (1891)

The canvas is primed with a thin, off-white ground that was most likely applied by the artist himself, as it does not continue evenly to the outermost edges of the painting.<sup>5</sup> The ground layer is visible throughout the

framed painting depicted on the upper left. Under magnification, a fibrous texture is apparent in thinly painted areas, as if Gauguin sanded or roughed up the canvas in some way prior to applying the ground (Fig. 6).<sup>6</sup>

No graphite or charcoal sketch was detected during microscopic examination or infrared reflectography. Gauguin outlined compositional elements using a brush and dilute blue paint, and many of these lines remain visible between forms. The fluid application of these preparatory lines is most noticeable within the painted landscape hanging on the wall (Fig. 7).



Fig. 10. Ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence photograph, *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*) (1891)

With the compositional outlines in place, Gauguin began to apply paint within the confines of these borders. The background wall is made up of vertical strokes of blue, green, and pink that were applied with a flat brush approximately 3/8 inches wide. In his rendering of the framed painting, Gauguin opted to use a palette knife to

carefully apply paint between the blue outlines, forming distinctive marks that differ from his brushwork elsewhere on the painting. Partially mixed colors and smooth marks that are characteristic of this tool are evident in Figure 8.

Gauguin appears to have underpainted the dress with a layer of pale pink (Fig. 9). He then added a range of pink, red, and violet tones, many of which were applied in groupings of parallel hatching strokes. Bright pink at the lower left edge of the dress may have been applied with a palette knife, as it has a smooth, scraped appearance with some exposed ground. A vivid red, applied throughout the sitter's dress, hair, and lips, produces an intense pink, ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence that suggests the presence of carmine (Fig. 10).<sup>7</sup>

5.0 mm

Fig. 11. Photomicrograph of the proper right eye and cheek, *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*) (1891)

A fine stroke of bright red paint outlines the proper right cheek and lower eye, and a diagonal line of orange paint, carefully applied across the pupil of each eye, creates reflections of light (Fig. 11). A similar technique was observed on *Self-Portrait, 'les misérables'* (1888; Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam): "...after the eye was outlined in blue, brown, black, and flesh colors and the paint had dried, a very dry brush lightly loaded with red was delicately dragged across the lid, depositing color only on the most elevated ridges of the fabric and paint. Gauguin thus created reflected light in the shadow and a subtle color vibration around the eye." He produced a similar vibration on the Nelson-Atkins painting when he disrupted the blue outline along the proper left shoulder and arm with dabs of bright red paint.



Fig. 12. Reflected infrared digital photograph of *Faaturuma (Melancholic)* (1891)

In the final stages of painting he strengthened many of the blue outlines, such as the curving edge of the lower right side of the dress. The blue outlines are prominent with infrared reflectography and reveal some repositioning of the proper right foot, folds of the dress, and dress hem (Fig. 12). Many of the blue lines as well as more substantial compositional changes are evident in the radiograph of *Faaturuma*. A radio-dense shape with a rippled edge beside the sitter's foot was eventually covered by brown paint (Fig. 13).<sup>9</sup> In addition, over the course of painting, Gauguin reduced a larger section of hair at the proper right shoulder, repositioned the sitter's profile and head at the upper left, and modified the shape of her collar (Fig. 14). The radiograph and reflected infrared digital photograph show a dark form beneath the proper right fingertips confirming that the arm of the chair was in place before the sitter's hand was painted.<sup>10</sup> Two pentimenti indicate some additional reworking of the composition: the brown paint of the floor partially covers the dress on the center left, cropping it by approximately 2 centimeters, and the top of the proper right hand was raised slightly.



Fig. 13. Detail of radiograph, Faaturuma (Melancholic) (1891)

The painting is in good condition overall with only a small amount of retouching present, mainly on the edges of the painting. While there is no indication of substantial color fading at the outermost edges, for example beneath the paper tape where the paint has been protected from light exposure, Gauguin's palette during this period included red lakes that would be susceptible to fading. A small amount of traction cracking is evident on the lower left floor. Residues of yellowed varnish are visible in the paint interstices with magnification. A discolored natural resin varnish was removed during the 1988 treatment, and a synthetic varnish was applied in such a way as to impart a soft, matte, "waxed" look to the painting, in keeping with the artist's varnish preferences.<sup>11</sup>

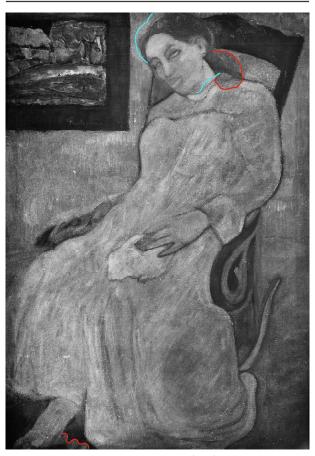


Fig. 14. Radiograph of *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*) (1891) with red annotations indicating shapes no longer visible on the paint surface and blue annotations indicating the position of elements in the final composition

Mary Schafer March 2020

#### **Notes**

- Fiber identification was completed using a Zeiss Aus Jena microscope. See examination report by Scott Heffley, February 22, 1988, Nelson-Atkins conservation file, no. 38-5.
- For other examples of cotton supports used by Gauguin, see Carol Christensen, "The Painting Materials and Technique of Paul Gauguin," Studies in the History of Art, 41 (National Gallery of Art, Washington DC: University Press of New England, 1993), 68–69. Vojtêch Jirat-Wasiutyński and H. Travers Newton Jr., Technique and Meaning in the Paintings of Paul Gauguin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 156. Van Gogh's Studio Practice, ed. Marije Vellekoop, Muriel Geldolf, Ella Hendriks, Leo Jansen, and Alberto de Tagle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 368. Kristin

Hoermann Lister, "Gauguin, Cat. 28, *Te burao (The Hibiscus Tree)* (1923.308): Technical Study," in *Gauguin Paintings, Sculpture, and Graphic Works at the Art Institute of Chicago*, ed. Gloria Groom and Genevieve Westerby (Art Institute of Chicago, 2016), para. 15, https://publications.artic.edu/gauguin/reader/gauguinart/section/140265/p-140265-15.

- 3. A wooden strip extends the top edge of *Polynesian Woman with Children* (1880; Art Institute of Chicago). See Kristin Hoermann Lister, "Gauguin, Cat. 122, *Polynesian Woman with Children* (1927.460): Technical Study," in *Gauguin Paintings, Sculpture, and Graphic Works at the Art Institute of Chicago*, para. 28, https://publications.artic.edu/gauguin/reader/gauguinart/section/140482/p-140482-28.
- 4. The no. 30 paysage (basse) standard-format stretcher measures 91.8 x 67.5 centimeters. See Anthea Callen, *The Art of Impressionism: Painting Technique and the Making of Modernity* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), 15.
- During his first trip to Tahiti, Gauguin began to prepare his own canvases. See Colta Feller Ives, Susan Alyson Stein, Charlotte Hale, and Marjorie Shelley, The Lure of the Exotic: Gauguin in New York Collections (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 191.
- 6. VJirat-Wasiutyński and Newton, Technique and *Meaning in the Paintings of Paul Gauguin*, 112. The authors observed a "...fuzzy texture of the painting [1888; Self-Portrait, 'les misérables,' Van Gogh Museum]...in which the fibers of the canvas, possibly roughed up before application of the paint, were encouraged to stand out and hold tiny peaks of color." It is possible that a similar sanding or scraping of the canvas caused the fibers to lift, and this effect remains visible in thinly painted areas of Faaturuma. Another example is described in Kristin Hoermann Lister, "Gauquin, Cat. 50, Merahi metua no Tehamana (Tehamana Has Many Parents or The Ancestors of Tehamana) (1980.613): Technical Study," in Gauguin Paintings, Sculpture, and Graphic Works at the Art Institute of Chicago, para. 25, https://publications.artic.edu/ gauguin/reader/gauguinart/section/140288/p-140288-25.

- 7. Helmut Schweppe and Heinz Roosen-Runge, "Carmine—Cochineal Carmine and Kermes Carmine," in *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of their History and Characteristics*, ed. Robert L. Feller (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1986), 1:273.
- 8. VJirat-Wasiutyński and Newton, *Technique and Meaning in the Paintings of Paul Gauguin*, 112.
- 9. See radiograph no. 455, Nelson-Atkins conservation file, no. 38-5.
- 10. This shape is more easily viewed with the Hamamatsu vidicon camera, which has a longer wavelength range.
- 11. Scott Heffley, March 22, 1988, treatment report, Nelson-Atkins conservation file, no. 38-5. The varnish technique followed recommendations presented by Carol Christensen, "Surface Coatings for Paintings by Gauguin," AIC Preprints. American Institute for Conservation 14th Annual Meeting, Chicago (Washington DC: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1986), 150.

#### **Documentation**

# Citation

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# Provenance

Paul Gauguin (1848–1903), Tahiti and Paris, 1891–no later than September 29, 1901 [1];

Purchased from Gauguin by George-Daniel de Monfreid (1856–1929), Paris, by September 29, 1901–December 21, 1901 [2];

Purchased from de Monfreid by Ambroise Vollard (1866–1939), Paris, Stockbook B, no. 3330, as *Femme en rouge dans un fauteuil*, and no. 4506, *Femme assise sur un fauteuil*, December 21, 1901–at least March 15, 1912 [3];

Probably purchased from Vollard by Johann Erwin Wolfensberger (1873–1944), Zurich, ca. spring 1912–at least September 15, 1928 [4];

Probably purchased from Wolfensberger through Justin Kurt Thannhauser (1892–1976), Berlin, by Josef Stransky (1872–1936), New York, ca. October 1928-March 6, 1936 [5];

Stransky estate, New York, 1936-January 4, 1938 [6];

Purchased from the Stransky estate through Wildenstein, New York, by The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, 1938.

#### **Notes**

[1] Some scholars believe that *Faaturuma* was bought in by Gauguin at the following sale: Vente de tableaux et dessins par Paul Gauguin, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, February 18, 1895, no. 30, as Faturuma [sic]; see Richard Brettell et al., The Art of Paul Gauguin, exh. cat. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1988), 228. Others believe *Te* Faaturuma (Worcester Art Museum) is more likely to have been included in this sale as no. 30; see Jonathan Pascoe Pratt, "Ambroise Vollard: Dealer and Publisher 1893-1900" (PhD diss., The Courtauld Institute of Art, 2006), 77. The Wildenstein Institute and Worcester Art Museum both agree with Pratt; see letter from Sylvie Crussard, Wildenstein Institute, to Meghan Gray and Simon Kelly, NAMA, November 6, 2009; e-mail from Sylvie Crussard, Wildenstein Institute, to Brigid Boyle, NAMA, August 24, 2015; and e-mail from Karysa Norris, Curatorial Assistant, Worcester Art Museum, to Brigid Boyle, NAMA, November 16, 2015, NAMA curatorial files.

On June 28, 1895, Gauguin departed Marseille for Tahiti, leaving behind the paintings from his first Tahitian trip, including *Faaturuma*. He likely entrusted them to George-Daniel de Monfreid with instructions to sell them. De Monfreid purchased *Faaturuma* from Gauguin sometime between June 1895 and September 1901.

[2] Because de Monfreid was born in New York, he wanted his first name to be spelled the American way without the "S": "George."

In a letter dated September 29, 1901, de Monfreid informs Vollard that an amateur collector has expressed interest in purchasing Faaturuma from him. Since Vollard "avez la priorité sur d'autres" [has priority over others] as Gauguin's agent, de Monfreid gives him the option of purchasing Faaturuma himself; see letter from George-Daniel de Monfreid to Ambroise Vollard, September 29, 1901, Harry Ransom Center, Carlton Lake Collection, Container 189.10. Vollard agreed to purchase the painting; see letter from Ambroise Vollard to George-Daniel de Monfreid, October 2, 1901, Getty Research Institute, Miscellaneous Papers Regarding Ambroise Vollard (1890–1939), Series I, Box 1, Folder 18. He completed his purchase on December 21, 1901; see letter from Ambroise Vollard to George-Daniel de Monfreid, December 23, 1901, Getty Research Institute, Miscellaneous Papers Regarding Ambroise Vollard (1890–1939), Series I, Box 1, Folder 19.

Bengt Danielsson claims erroneously that Vollard purchased *Faaturuma* as early as 1893, after it was exhibited at the Galeries Durand-Ruel; see *Gauguin in the South Seas*, trans. Reginald Spink (1964; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 155.

[3] Faaturuma remained in Vollard's possession until at least March 15, 1912, when Vollard shipped the painting to Zurich for the Ausstellung von Werken Paul Gauguin's im Kunstsalon Wolfsberg (March 17–April 15, 1912); see Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Documentation Center, Fonds Vollard, Ms 421 (4,13), Registre consignant des expéditions, avec adresses des destinataires, du 33 mai 1907 au 15 février 1923, f° 46-47.

Stockbook B is preserved at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Documentation Center, Fonds Vollard, Ms 421 (4,5), Registre des entrées et sorties de juin 1904 à décembre 1907 avec des achats aux artistes Gauguin, Redon, Cézanne, Valtat, Denis, Cassatt, K. X. Roussel. There is also a glass plate of *Faaturuma* preserved at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Documentation Center, Archives photographiques du fonds Vollard, ODO 1996-56-3722, which bears the stock number 4506.

[4] After the close of the Ausstellung von Werken Paul Gauguin's im Kunstsalon Wolfsberg, an exhibition of works loaned by Ambroise Vollard, Johann Erwin Wolfensberger (owner of the Kunstsalon Wolfsberg) purchased a Gauguin painting from Vollard for 9000 francs, which he paid in two installments. The first installment of 2000 francs was received on June 18, 1912 and the second installment of 7000 francs was received on July 12, 1912; see Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Documentation Center, Fonds Vollard, Ms 421 (5,8),

Agenda de bureau pour 1912, p. 112 and 131. Vollard's agenda book does not identify the painting by title or stock number, but Lukas Gloor believes the painting Wolfensberger purchased was *Faaturuma*; see Raphaël Bouvier and Martin Schwander, eds., *Paul Gauguin*, exh. cat. (Basel: Beyeler Museum, 2015), 189. As Gloor points out, *Faaturuma* disappears from Vollard's books after the spring of 1912; see e-mail from Lukas Gloor, Director, Sammlung E. G. Bührle, to Brigid Boyle, NAMA, July 23, 2015, NAMA curatorial files.

Faaturuma remained in Wolfensberger's collection until at least September 15, 1928, when the Kunsthalle Basel returned it to him after the close of their exhibition, Paul Gauguin, 1848–1903 (July 1–September 9, 1928); see letter from the Kunsthalle Basel to J. E. Wolfensberger, September 15, 1928, Staatsarchiv des Kanton Basel-Stadt, Basel, Pa 888a N6 (1) 239.

The Wildenstein catalogue raisonné of 1964 tentatively suggests that a certain "Dr. Hahnloser, Zurich" owned *Faaturuma* between Vollard and Wolfensberger. The best-known collectors fitting this description are Arthur Hahnloser (1870–1936) and his brother Emil Hahnloser (1874–1940). However, neither began collecting works by Gauguin until after World War I. As Lukas Gloor notes, "an acquisition by Arthur Hahnloser of *Faaturuma* in 1912 would...have been totally out of sync with Arthur's collecting behaviour at that time" and "an acquisition by Emil Hahnloser of *Faaturuma* in 1912 would have been a totally isolated affair"; see e-mail from Lukas Gloor, Director, Sammlung E. G. Bührle, to Brigid Boyle, NAMA, July 23, 2015, NAMA curatorial files.

[5] The Wildenstein catalogue raisonné of 1964 claims that Justin K. Thannhauser owned *Faaturuma* between Wolfensberger and Stransky, but there is no documentary evidence to support this. Shortly after receiving *Faaturuma* back from the Kunsthalle Basel in September 1928, Wolfensberger presumably shipped it to Berlin for the exhibition Paul Gauguin, 1848– 1903 (October 1928) at the Galerien Thannhauser. Sylvie Crussard believes that Justin K. Thannhauser acted as an intermediary for Wolfensberger when he sold Faaturuma; see e-mail from Sylvie Crussard, Wildenstein Institute, to Brigid Boyle, NAMA, August 24, 2015, NAMA curatorial files. This was not without precedent: in 1920, Stransky purchased Gauguin's A Farm in Brittany (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 54.143.2) from Thannhauser, who had it on consignment from a private collector. However, Dr. Günter Herzog found no reference to *Faaturuma* in the archives of the Galerien Thannhauser, Zentralarchiv des

internationalen Kunsthandels, Cologne; see e-mail from Günter Herzog to Brigid Boyle, NAMA, August 12, 2015, NAMA curatorial files.

Stransky definitely owned *Faaturuma* by May 16, 1931, when his collection was featured in *Art News*. Mark Aitken, Stransky's great-nephew, does not know how *Faaturuma* came into Stransky's possession, nor does he believe any documentation of Stransky's collection has survived; see phone conversation between Mark Aitken and Brigid Boyle, NAMA, June 16, 2015, NAMA curatorial files.

[6] When Stransky died in 1936, married but childless, *Faaturuma* passed to his estate. Wildenstein negotiated with the estate on behalf of the Nelson-Atkins; see Trustees' Meeting, December 10, 1937, NAMA curatorial files.

#### **Preparatory Work**

Paul Gauguin, *Hand on the Armrest of a Chair*, 1891, pencil on paper, 6 11/16 x 4 5/16 in. (17.0 x 11.0 cm), originally from the *Carnet de Tahiti*, p. 31 recto (later dismantled), location unknown, illustrated in Elda Fezzi and Fiorella Minervino, "*Noa Noa*" e il Primo Viaggio a Tahiti di Gauguin (Milan: Rizzoli, 1974), 97.

Paul Gauguin, *Self-Portrait; Sketch for "Faaturuma,"* ca. 1891, watercolor, crayon and ink on paper,  $6 \times 77/8$  in.  $(15.2 \times 20.0 \text{ cm})$ , The Triton Foundation, The Netherlands.

Paul Gauguin, *Seated Tahitian Woman: Study for "Faaturuma (Reverie),"* 1891, charcoal on tan wove paper, 18 7/8 in. x 21 7/8 (48.0 x 55.5 cm), The Art Institute of Chicago.

#### **Exhibitions**

Exposition d'Œuvres récentes de Paul Gauguin, Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, November 9–25, 1893, no. 28, as Mélancolique.

Peintures, Pastels, Aquarelles, Dessins, Sculptures, Céramiques, Objets d'Art, Lithographies, etc., Société des Beaux-Arts de Béziers, Salle Berlioz, rue Solférino, April–May 1901, no. 52, as Tahitienne au rocking-chair.

Exposition Paul Gauguin, Galerie Ambroise Vollard, Paris, November 4–28, 1903, no. 31, as Rêverie.

Salon d'Automne: 4ème exposition; Œuvres de Gauguin, Grand Palais, Paris, October 5–November 15, 1906, no. 72, as *Rêveuse*. *Galerie Miethke, März–April 1907*, Galerie Miethke, Vienna, Austria, March 15–April 28, 1907, no. 65, as *Melancholie*.

*Tavaszi Kiállítás: Gauguin, Cézanne stb. Müvei*, Nemzeti Szalon, Budapest, May 1907, no. 8, as *Melancholia*.

Possibly Exposition d'Œuvres de Paul Gauguin, Galerie Ambroise Vollard, Paris, April 25–May 14, 1910, unnumbered, as Femme dans un fauteuil.

Manet and the Post-Impressionists, Grafton Galleries, London, November 8, 1910–January 15, 1911, no. 45, as *Réverie* [sic].

Ausstellung von Werken Paul Gauguin's im Kunstsalon Wolfsberg, Kunstsalon Wolfsberg, Zurich, March 17–April 15, 1912, no. 5127, as La Rêverie. Jeune fille dans un fauteuil. Paysage de Tahiti.

Ausstellung von Werken aus dem Besitz von Mitgliedern der Vereinigung Zürcher Kunstfreunde, Kunsthaus Zürich, September 3–October 2, 1927, no. 92, as *Träumerei*.

Paul Gauguin, 1848–1903, Kunsthalle Basel, July 1–September 9, 1928, no. 77, as Tahitierin [sic] im Schaukelstuhl (Rêverie).

*Paul Gauguin: 1848–1903*, Galerien Thannhauser, Berlin, October 1928, no. 52, as *Tahitanerin* [sic].

First Loan Exhibition: Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Van Gogh, Museum of Modern Art, New York, November 7–December 7, 1929, no. 38, as *Reverie*.

The Stransky Collection of Modern Art, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA, opened January 6, 1933, no cat.

Paul Gauguin, 1848–1903: A Retrospective Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of les Amis de Paul Gauguin and the Penn Normal Industrial and Architectural School, Wildenstein, New York, March 20–April 18, 1936, no. 21, as Reverie.

*Paul Gauguin, 1848–1903*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA, May 1–21, 1936, no. 19, as *Reverie*.

Paul Gauguin, 1848–1903: A Retrospective Exhibition of his Paintings, Baltimore Museum of Art, May 24–June 5, 1936, no. 13. as Reverie.

"Collection of a Collector": Modern French Paintings from Ingres to Matisse (The Private Collection of the Late Josef Stransky), Wildenstein, London, July 1936, no. 25, as Rêverie.

*La vie ardente de Gauguin*, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, Paris, November 1936, no. 113, as *La Rêverie*.

Trends in European Painting from the XIIIth to the XXth Century, Art Gallery of Toronto, Canada, October 15–November 15, 1937, no. 40, as *Reverie*.

*Five Years of Collecting*, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, December 4–11, 1938, no cat.

French Painting from David to Toulouse-Lautrec, THe Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, February 6–March 26, 1941, no. 51, as *Reverie*.

A Loan Exhibition of Paul Gauguin for the Benefit of the New York Infirmary, Wildenstein, New York, April 3–May 4, 1946, no. 14, as Reverie.

*Gauguin: Exposition du centenaire*, Musée de l'Orangerie des Tuileries, Paris, July 1949, no. 26, as *Rêverie*.

Masterpieces from Museums and Private Collections: Jubilee Loan Exhibition, 1901–1951, Wildenstein, New York, November 8–December 15, 1951, no. 53, as Rêverie.

Twenty Years of Collecting, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, December 11–31, 1953, no cat.

Paul Gauguin: His Place in the Meeting of East and West, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, March 27–April 25, 1954, no. 19, as *Reverie*.

The Two Sides of the Medal: French Painting from Gérôme to Gauguin, Detroit Institute of Arts, September 28–October 31, 1954, no. 109, as Rêverie.

Gauguin: Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the Citizens'
Committee for Children of New York City, Inc., Wildenstein,
New York, April 5–May 5, 1956, no. 25, as Reverie.

Gauguin: Paintings, Drawings, Prints, Sculpture, Art Institute of Chicago, February 12–March 29, 1959; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, April 23–May 31, 1959, no. 29, as Reverie (Melancolique) [sic].

Man: Glory, Jest, and Riddle; A Survey of the Human Form through the Ages, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, November 10, 1964–January 3, 1965, no. 183, as *Reverie*.

La revue blanche: Paris in the Days of Post-Impressionism and Symbolism, Wildenstein, New York, November 17–December 31, 1983, unnumbered, as La Rêverie.

The Art of Paul Gauguin, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, May 1–July 31, 1988; The Art Institute of Chicago, September 17–December 11, 1988; Grand Palais, Paris, January 10–April 24, 1989, no. 126, as Faaturuma (Boudeuse).

Impressionism: Selections From Five American Museums, The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, November 4–December 31, 1989; The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, January 27–March 25, 1990; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, April 21–June 17, 1990; The Saint Louis Art Museum, July 14–September 9, 1990; The Toledo Museum of Art, September 30–November 25, 1990, no. 29, as Faaturuma (Melancholic).

The Artist and the Camera: Degas to Picasso, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, October 2, 1999–January 4, 2000; Dallas Museum of Art, February 1–May 7, 2000; Fundación del Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao, June 12–September 10, 2000, no. 123 (Dallas only), as *Melancholic* (Faaturuma).

Vincent van Gogh and the Painters of the Petit Boulevard, Saint Louis Art Museum, February 17–May 13, 2001; Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt, June 8–September 2, 2001, unnumbered, as *Faaturuma*.

*Expressive!*, Fondation Beyeler, Basel, March 30–August 10, 2003, unnumbered, as *Melancholic* and *Faaturuma* (*Boudeuse*).

*Gauguin, Polynesia*, Ny Carlsberg Glypotek, Copenhagen, September 24–December 31, 2011; Seattle Art Museum, February 9–April 29, 2012, no. 166 (Seattle only), as *Faaturuma* (*Melancholic*).

Expressionism in Germany and France: From Van Gogh to Kandinsky, Kunsthaus Zürich, February 7–May 11, 2014; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, June 8–September 14, 2014; Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, October 6, 2014–January 25, 2015, unnumbered (Montreal only), as *Melancholic*.

*Paul Gauguin*, Fondation Beyeler, Basel, February 8–June 28, 2015, unnumbered, as *Faaturuma / Boudeuse (The Brooding Woman)*.

Gauguin: Portraits, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, May 24–September 8, 2019; The Credit Suisse Exhibition: Gauguin Portraits, National Gallery, London, October 7, 2019–January 26, 2020, no. 78, as Melancholic (Faaturuma).

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