

Biography

Emile Lévy was a French painter of portraits and a pastellist. He also made some genre and historical scenes. After been the pupil of François-Edouard Picot and Abel de Pujol at the Fine Art School of Paris, he gained in 1854 the First Prize of Rome, with his classmates Giacomotti and Maillot.

Inspired by the magic of Rome, he stayed at the Villa Médicis from 1855 to 1857, painting "The Poetry", copy from Raphael, "Ruth and Noémie" or "Noé cursing Cham".

After his stay in Italy, he came back to France in 1859 and devoted himself to painting in the respect of the academic tradition, while he was friend with Delaunay, Edgar Degas and Gustave Moreau. Working between genre and historical painting, Levy belonged, like Félix Clément and William Bouguereau to the neo-classic movement that was developing in the 1850s and the 1860s.

In 1867, he was awarded with the Legion of Honor and named Chevalier of the Leopold Order in Belgium. He also took part in the 1882's Salon of French Artists and in the 1889's Universal Exhibition in Paris.

Emile Lévy was one of the first artists to give back to the pastel its success in the artistic world. From the 1880s, he sent artworks to the Society of Pastellists, of which he was one of the founders. For the annual Salon, he sent portraits where he revealed a meticulous technique and a remarkable talent for drawing.

This feminine nude composition reveals an intimist, luxuriant and voluptuous interior. Emile Lévy showed his talent by the precision of his line and by a remarkable work on the volumes and the color of the flesh.

Museums

Musée du Louvre, Paris

Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Musée du Château de Versailles

Musée du Luxembourg

Museums of Sydney

Princeton Museum, New Jersey

Bibliography

Catalogue de tableaux pastel aquarelles et dessins par Emile Lévy, Hôtel Drouot, Salle I, lundi 15 et mardi 16 décembre 1890

Bénézit Dictionnaire des peintres, Editions Grund, 1999

Exposition Universelle de 1867 à Paris, Catalogue général (groupe I à V)