



Paul Guillaume

1893-1934

Hilda

Oil on cardboard / signed lower right

Dimensions : 15 x 20 cm

Dimensions : 5.91 x 7.87 inch



Biography

Visionary art dealer and French collector of modern art, Paul Guillaume was born in Paris in 1893.

Growing in a modest family in Montmartre, his education was basic and Paul Guillaume had to work from his childhood in a garage. One day, he discovered African sculptures in a rubber shipment and decided to exhibit them in the garage window. As a consequence, he caught the attention of the poet and art critic Guillaume Apollinaire who introduced him to the artistic bohème and avant-garde where he met Picasso, Picabia, Chirico, Derain, Van Dongen, Soutine, Laurencin and Modigliani.

This inspiring environment combined with his visionary ideas led him to become a committed art dealer. In 1914, he opened a gallery near the Elysée Palace and founded in 1918 a magazine titled " Les Arts à Paris " where he promoted the avant-garde artists exhibited in his gallery.

In 1921, he moved his gallery to rue La Boétie where he jointly presented avant-garde painting and African art.

Becoming the adviser and art dealer of the rich American doctor Albert Barnes made his fortune. His reputation reached its peak when he was decorated with the Order of the Légion of Honor in 1930. He was with his spouse Juliette Lacaze (called Domenica) one of the emblematic figures of Paris. In this environment, he entertained himself drawing and painting his Parisian friends, in the manner of the artists he collected. The painting " Hilda ", in a cubist style, perfectly illustrates this facet of Paul Guillaume's personality.

Owning one of the most remarkable collections of the European paintings of the 1930's, Paul Guillaume planned to offer his collection to the French Government and to make it the first modern art museum in France. His brutal death at the age of 42 and the venal ambitions of his wife gave rise to the " Lacaze Case " which resulted in the purchase of the collection by the State. This collection is currently exhibited at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris.

Bibliography

Colette GIRAUDON, "Paul Guillaume et l'art du XXe siècle : De l'art nègre à l'avant-garde", La Bibliothèque des Arts, Paris, 2016

Paul GUILLAUME, "Les Ecrits de Paul Guillaume", La Bibliothèque des Arts, Paris