



Ferdinand Du Puigadeau

1864-1930

Pink tamarix and the church's bell, Batz-sur-Mer

Oil on canvas signed lower left and titled on the back "Landscape of Batz".

Dimensions : 46 x 55 cm

Dimensions : 18.11 x 21.65 inch

Literature : Mr. Antoine Laurentin has confirmed the authenticity of this work which will be included in volume II of the catalog raisonné Ferdinand Loyer du Puigadeau that he is currently preparing.

Origin : Private collection, France





Dimensions with frame : 69 x 78 cm  
Dimensions with frame : 27.17 x 30.71 inch

## Biography

Particularly marked by the work of the Nabis and the neo-impressionist movement, Ferdinand du Puigauveau followed in the wake of impressionist painters. However, despite these multiple influences, the artist manages to develop a very singular and personal aesthetic. Moreover, a large part of his work is in the tradition of the Flemish and French masters of the 17th century, from whom he inherited the beauty of his nocturnal lighting. The work of this artist is composed by a combination of the naturalist style of popular subjects and that of the synthetic theories of Pont-Aven. A master of light, his work with its bright colours is similar to the classical impressionist movement.

Born in Brittany, in 1864, Ferdinand Loyen du Puigauveau comes from a family involved in commercial transactions with the islands in the field of armament. Coming from divorced parents, a large part of du Puigauveau's childhood took place in a castle in the Vendée, with his maternal uncle, Henri de Chateaubriant, who introduced him to the practice of drawing. Indeed, receiving the education of a gentleman of lower nobility, he is sensitized to art from a very young age. Within this framework and encouraged by his uncle, he revealed early artistic predispositions. However, following his father's demands, he then follows a more conventional education, and is forced to leave his uncle's home, in order to return to Paris. Nostalgic about country life and not being able to bear the hustle and bustle of the capital, he quickly decided to put an end to his studies and left to join his mother in Nice.

From then on, du Puigauveau devoted himself exclusively to the practice of painting. Rebuffed by the idea of joining a renowned workshop at the École des Beaux-Arts and bending to the educational principles of his time, the artist chose to study on his own, exploring the countryside with his easel and his colours: his apprenticeship took place in contact with nature and through the study of the works of the old masters, which served as a reference for the creations of the time. It was at this time that, in the spirit of Caravaggio, a multitude of women of all ages, candle in hand, whose faces were illuminated by this unique source of light, radiating from the canvas, plunged into semi-darkness, were pictured in his work. These subjects are related to the classical and naturalist current of the end of the 19th century.

Little concerned with material contingencies, he was able to devote himself entirely to his practice of painting and drawing, since his parents gave him a monthly allowance.

It is in this context that he then undertook a journey to Naples, Venice and Rome. He chose to survey Tunisian soil, a French protectorate since 1881. Against all expectations, the artist was unable to translate this light from the South, which was far too bright for his palette. After a month, ill and affected by the North African climate, the painter chose to return to France.

Later, in 1886, the artist, attracted by the light and beauty of western France, settled in Pont-Aven, a village famous and renowned all over Europe. He frequented a large number of artists from the Pont-Aven school. In this context, he became a pupil of Hubert Voos, a Dutch painter, and then received instruction from Gauguin, at his request. This artistic exchange had a considerable influence on du Puigauveau's work, which was deeply marked by the aestheticism of his mentor's work. He also became friends with Charles Laval, a painter linked to the synthesizing movement.

However, this proximity with the painters of this renowned school did not prevent him from developing a pictorial approach that remained very personal to him. Unlike the painters of his time, Puigauveau went against the aesthetic conventions of his time: he abandoned daylight in favour of representations of nocturnal scenes. Overly concerned about preserving his originality, the artist made a point of never being influenced by other

painters. Of course, the relationships he maintains with the artists of Pont-Aven contribute to the formation of his vision, however, we can attest that they remain only a tiny part of the artistic influences that nourish the aesthetics of his work.

In 1890, the artist exhibited at the Salon de la Société nationale des Beaux-Arts. Determined to make his mark on the Parisian scene, he was noticed by Paul Durand-Ruel, a great promoter of artists from the Barbizon School and the Impressionist movement. Indeed, the latter took a keen interest in the work of the painter, who actively participated in the life of the gallery between 1897 and 1904. He was particularly present at the gallery between 1897 and 1898. Because of his growing fame, Durand-Ruel took many paintings on deposit.

In 1898, an exhibition is devoted to him: about twenty of his paintings will be presented there. He was also asked by Durand-Tahier, General Secretary of the Fine Arts Society, to exhibit at the Champ-de-Mars, who defined his plastic work as "original and penetrating". During this period, Puigauveau became friends with Edgar Degas. Indeed, the renowned artist, wishing to acquire one of Puigauveau's subjects at the Durand-Ruel gallery, approached the painter to ask for a reduction in the price of his work. Ferdinand, who was flattered, gladly accepted. From this exchange was born a loyal friendship that was cultivated by the two men, after Puigauveau's installation in Paris. In 1907, for financial reasons, he was forced to leave the capital for Brittany. As a result, sunsets over the sea, mills and the depiction of Breton landscapes were at the heart of his work between 1910 and 1914.

#### Museums

Musée Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Quimper

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Vannes

#### Bibliography

LAURENTIN, Antoine, Ferdinand du Puigauveau (1863-1930), Editions Thierry Salvador, Paris, 1989.