The Starr Collection of Portrait Miniatures, 1500–1850

The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, with Blythe Sobol and Maggie Keenan

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

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Workshop of André Léon Larue, called Mansion, *Portrait of General Jean Victor Marie Moreau*, ca. 1813, watercolor and gouache on ivory, sight: 2 1/4 x 1 5/8 in. (5.7 x 4.1 cm), framed: 2 9/16 x 1 15/16 in. (6.5 x 4.9 cm), Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Starr and the Starr Foundation, Inc., F58-60/88

Workshop of André Léon Larue, called Mansion, *Portrait of General Jean Victor Marie Moreau*, ca. 1813

Artist	Workshop of André Léon Larue, called Mansion (French, 1785–1870)
Title	*Portrait of General Jean Victor Marie Moreau*
Object Date	ca. 1813
Former Title	*Portrait of an Officer*
Medium	Watercolor and gouache on ivory
Setting	Gilt metal alloy case
Dimensions	Sight: 2 1/4 x 1 5/8 in. (5.7 x 4.1 cm) Framed: 2 9/16 x 1 15/16 in. (6.5 x 4.9 cm)
Inscription	Inscribed at a later date on recto, right margin: "Mansion 1808"
Credit Line	Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Starr and the Starr Foundation, Inc., F58-60/88
Collection Link	https://art.nelson-atkins.org/objects/1499

doi: 10.37764/8322.5.2314

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Chicago:

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ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

See the artist's biography in volume 4.

CATALOGUE ENTRY

This miniature is a copy of an oft-reproduced portrait by André Léon Larue, called Mansion, of Jean Victor Marie Moreau (1763–1813), one of Napoleon's generals, who was later banished from France.[1] Copying was a vital part of Larue's studio practice, anticipating his later work on photographic reproductions. Larue's original miniature (whereabouts unknown) was itself probably a copy of a large-scale oil portrait by the academic painter Baron François Gérard (1770–1837).[2] While it is impossible to compare the unlocated original to the present workshop copy, this miniature's flat and generalized rendition is probably a copy several times over, though its quality suggests that it was painted under Larue's supervision.[3] This hypothesis is further supported by the date and signature, although they were applied later, according to Bernd Pappe.[4] The Nelson-Atkins miniature may have been made after Moreau's death as a memento of the departed military hero. Stylistically, it resembles works by Larue's teacher,

Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767–1855), affirming his continued influence on Larue and his pupils.[5]

Moreau studied law at the University of Rennes at the behest of his father, but he joined the revolutionary army in 1791, leading to his promotion to general in 1794. After taking on the command of the Army of the Rhine and Moselle, Moreau became a household name in France for his skill even in retreat.[6] Napoleon soon grew envious of Moreau's military success and popularity after the Battle of Hohenlinden (1800), seeing him as a threat to his authority, and banished him to the United States in 1804.[7]



Fig. 1. Anthony Cardon, after Baron François Gérard, *Victor Moreau, General en Chef*, 1802, stipple with etching on paper, 13 1/8 x 10 1/8 in. (33.3 x 25.7 cm), British Museum, London. © The Trustees of the British Museum

Moreau spent several leisurely years on an estate in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.[8] While he considered President James Madison's offer to lead American troops at the outbreak of the War of 1812, Moreau instead chose to take up arms against Napoleon. During the Battle of Dresden, Moreau was shot by a French cannon while in conversation with Tsar Alexander, for whom he was serving as a military advisor. He died several days later, on September 2, 1813, mourned as a brilliant general who dared to stand up to a dictator.[9] Images of renowned contemporary personalities like Moreau circulated widely in England and France as both miniatures and prints (Fig. 1). Moreau's portrait was popular with military enthusiasts and other admirers, especially after his posthumous appointment as a Marshal of France by King Louis XVIII.[10]

Blythe Sobol
April 2024

NOTES

1. We are grateful to Bernd Pappe for his advice on the attribution of this portrait, which was previously thought to be by Larue, during a visit to the Nelson-Atkins July 24–26, 2023. Notes in NAMA curatorial files.

2. The oil sketch for the lost original portrait, which was one of the highlights of the Salon of 1800, is at Versailles: Baron François Gérard, *General Jean-Victor Moreau*, ca. 1800, oil on canvas, 12 1/4 x 8 1/4 in. (31 x 21 cm), Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/joconde/000PE008196. It is also possible that Mansion's original work was a copy after a miniature that his former teacher, Jean-Baptiste Isabey, may have painted of Moreau, also after Gérard's painting, though the unsigned miniature in question was more likely by Mansion rather than Isabey. See Jean-Baptiste Isabey, *General Jean Victor Moreau*, n.d., watercolor on ivory, 1 5/8 in. (4.1 cm), sold at Christie's, London, November 27, 2007, lot 254, https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5003482.

3. For example, André Léon Larue, *Jean-Victor Marie Moreau*, n.d., watercolor on ivory, 2 1/2 x 2 in. (6.4 x 5.1 cm), Cincinnati Art Museum, https://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org/art/explore-the-collection?id=16378760&title=Jean-Victor-Marie-Moreau, illustrated in Nathalie Lemoine-Bouchard, *Les Peintres en Miniature 1650–1850* (Paris: Les Éditions de l'Amateur, 2008), 367; and André Léon Larue, *General Moreau*, n.d., watercolor on ivory, 2 1/4 in. (5.8 cm) high, sold at Christie's, London, May 24, 2000, lot 14, https://www.christies.com/zh-cn/lot/lot-1788228, among others.

4. Pappe, 2023, notes in NAMA curatorial files.

5. Isabey's influence is noted by Lemoine-Bouchard, *Les Peintres en Miniature*, 367.

6. Moreau was particularly praised for retreating with five thousand prisoners in tow. See James R. Arnold, *Marengo and Hohenlinden: Napoleon's Rise to Power* (Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword, 2005).

7. It did not help that Moreau's ambitious young wife surrounded herself with those who were critical of the Bonapartist regime. On Napoleon's jealousy and other tensions with Moreau, see Philip Dwyer, *Citizen Emperor: Napoleon in Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 65.

8. J. Christopher Herold, *The Age of Napoleon* (New York: Mariner Books, 2002), 159–60.

9. Adulation of Moreau was such that a print of him on his deathbed circulated widely. John Cardini, *Portrait of General Moreau*, 1813, etching and stipple with hand coloring, 9 3/8 x 11 7/8 in. (23.8 x 30.2 cm), British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1850-1014-827.

10. Artists continued to depict scenes from the life of Moreau decades after his death; for example, Henri Frederic Schopin, *Battle of Hohenlinden, 3rd December 1800*, 1836, oil on canvas, 183 11/16 x 213 3/4 in. (465 x 543 cm), Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/joconde/000PE005906. The memoirs of Baron François de Meneval, private secretary to Napoleon, record his scandalized response to this appointment among the Bonapartists. Baron de Meneval, *Memoires Pour Servir à l'Histoire de Napoleon Ier, Tome Troisième* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1894), 158.

PROVENANCE

Mrs. Helen Carew (d. 1951), by October 15, 1951 [1];

Purchased from her posthumous sale, *Objects of Art and Vertu: Fine Gold Watches and Boxes and Miniatures*, Christie, Manson, and Woods, London, October 15, 1951, lot 16, as *An Officer*, by Leggatt Brothers, London, probably on behalf of Mr. John W. (1905–2000) and Mrs. Martha Jane (1906–2011) Starr, Kansas City, MO, 1951–August 7, 1958 [2];

Their gift to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, 1958.

NOTES

[1] "Mrs. Carew gave from the Farquhar Matheson Collection twenty-five snuff-boxes in gold, enamel, and other materials, and a group of objects of silversmiths' work," according to Victoria and Albert Museum, *Review of the Principal Acquisitions During the Year* (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1920), 57. Basil Long mentions a Carew in an article on Richard Crosse: "The largest existing collections of miniatures by Richard Crosse are probably those belonging to the Rev. W. E. Crosse Cross and Mr. Charles Robert Sydenham Carew. The latter inherited his collection from the late Rev. Robert Baker Carew, of Collipriest, near Tiverton. . . . The remainder of Mr. Charles Carew's collection, including numerous miniatures by Crosse and a full-length portrait of a Miss Crosse, is at Collipriest." Basil Long, "Richard Crosse, Miniaturist and Portrait-Painter," *The Volume of the Walpole Society* 17 (1928): 65. Charles Robert Sydenham Carew (1853–1939) married Muriel Mary, who died in 1939. None of his siblings were named Helen or married a Helen, and none died in 1950 or 1951. Another Helen Carew (née Wyllie) was close friends with author Oscar Wilde, but died in 1928 at the age of 72. With thanks to Maggie Keenan for her research on Helen Carew.

[2] The lot is described in the sales catalogue as "Portrait of an officer, by J. Mansion, signed and dated 1808, in black uniform with gold facings, 2 1/4 in. high." Another miniature in the same lot is also in the Nelson-Atkins collection (C. Charlie, *Portrait of Madame Valière*, F58-60/9). An annotated catalogue for this sale is located at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, Miller Nichols Library. The annotations are most likely by Mr. or Mrs. Starr. Lot 16 is circled twice, in blue pen and pencil. Archival research has shown that Leggatt Brothers served as purchasing agents for the Starrs. See correspondence between Betty Hogg and Martha Jane Starr, May 15 and June 3, 1950, Nelson-Atkins curatorial files.

RELATED WORKS

Baron François Gérard, *General Jean-Victor Moreau*, ca. 1800, oil on canvas, 12 1/4 x 8 1/4 in. (31 x 21 cm), Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, 000PE008196.

André Léon Larue, called Mansion, *General Jean Victor Moreau*, n.d., watercolor on ivory, 2 1/4 in. (5.8 cm), sold at Christie's, London, May 24, 2000, lot 14.

Jean-Baptiste Isabey, *General Jean Victor Moreau*, n.d., watercolor on ivory, 1 5/8 in. (4.1 cm), sold at Christie's, London, November 27, 2007, lot 254.

André Léon Larue, *Jean-Victor Marie Moreau*, n.d., watercolor on ivory, 2 1/2 x 2 in. (6.4 x 5.1 cm), Cincinnati Art Museum, 1990.1785.

REFERENCES

Ross E. Taggart, ed., *Handbook of the Collections in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art and Mary Atkins Museum of Fine Arts*, 4th ed. (Kansas City, MO: William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art and Mary Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, 1959), 265, as *An Officer*.

Ross E. Taggart, *The Starr Collection of Miniatures in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery* (Kansas City, MO: Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, 1971), no. 244, p. 80, (repro.), as *Unknown Officer*.

Nathalie Lemoine-Bouchard, *Les Peintres en Miniature 1650–1850* (Paris: Les éditions de l'Amateur, 2008), 367, as *Officier en buste, en uniforme noir et boutons dorés, sur fond de ciel*.

No known exhibitions at this time. If you have additional information on this object, please tell us more.