

PAUL ALPHONSE VIRY, GENRE PAINTER.

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Summary: The work of the painter Paul Viry (1832-1913), born in Pocé sur Cisse, is unrecognized today. Picot's pupil, Viry attended classes at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris at the end of the 1850s. A regular exhibitor at the Paris Salon, he was first noticed in 1864, but it was in the United States that his work was most appreciated thanks to the merchant G. Lucas. The paintings currently on sale come mainly from American collections.

Résumé : L'œuvre du peintre Paul Viry (1832-1913), né à Pocé sur Cisse est aujourd'hui méconnue. Elève de Picot, Viry a suivi les cours à l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris à la fin des années 1850. Fidèle exposant du Salon parisien, il est remarqué en 1864, mais c'est surtout aux Etats-Unis que son travail est apprécié grâce au marchand G. Lucas. Les tableaux mis en vente actuellement sont principalement issus des collections américaines.

Introduction

Little is known about the background and training of Paul Alphonse Viry, painter from Indre-et-Loire who made his Salon debut in 1861. Son of Paulin Viry, master blacksmith, and Pauline Perrin, Viry was born on December 28th, 1832 at the Château de Pocé. He spent his childhood in the 15th century buildings in the middle of a park near the forge structures. The forges produced cast iron beginning in the early 19th century. Paul, fatherless at 11 years old, then moved with his mother and sister Adèle to Amboise until 1846. We do not know if he studied in Tours at the School of Fine Arts, but his name does appear in the registration records of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris on October 9th, 1856; he was registered in the painting class of François-Edouard Picot (1786-1868), member of the Institut des Beaux-Arts from 1836, and an official painter of the July Monarchy.¹

Information about Paul Viry and his work comes primarily from three sources: family archives,² American catalogs and newspapers,³ and finally the French national archives.⁴ The archives of the School of Fine Arts indicate its presence during the summer semester, between April 12th and September 11th, 1858, but it was not until the year 1861 that his name appears in "L'annuaire des artistes et des amateurs". From that date until the beginning of the 20th century, he was a faithful exhibitor at the Salon.⁵ Outside the salons, there are few details about his artistic activity. When he died on April 11th, 1913, at 185 avenue du Maine in Paris, he was isolated; his family lived in Creuse, and it was his neighbors who declared his death at the town hall of the 14th arrondissement. The burial register of the Parisian cemetery of Bagneux indicates that Paul Viry was buried there on April 12, 1913.

¹ ARCHIVES NATIONALES aj/52/234-aj/52/236 Registres matricules des élèves des sections de peinture et de sculpture. 1807-1894 et aj/52/478

² We find in the family fund a little more than 500 photographs representing landscapes, monuments, natural landscape elements ... from specialized houses of the 19th century, photos probably due to the artist, as well as large glass plates photographic negative format of several paintings by Paul Viry, more than 200 sketches on paper and on tracing paper. Several paintings in progress on canvas and panel..

³ Le site américain : <https://archive.org/> recense un ensemble de journaux et de catalogues de ventes américains du XIX^e siècle.

⁴ LACROIX Paul (1861) Annuaire des artistes et des amateurs, Veuve Renouard Editeur, Paris.

⁵ The "Salon" database of the National Institute of Art History, <http://salons.musee-orsay.fr> mentions his participation in 14 art fairs between 1861 and 1885, but the painter exhibited in 1886, 1889, 1891, then in 1905 and 1908, as evidenced by the booklets of the Salons.

I. The Art of Paul Viry

Paul Viry's art shows a perfect mastery of drawing and painting, particularly in his attention to the details, for example his documentary studies and still-lives at the heart of his genre scenes. Indeed, although he painted occasional landscapes,⁶ it was his genre scenes that made his reputation. These paintings were created in the troubadour style which appeared during the Restoration as an idealized depiction of the Middle Ages. The pictorial technique borrows much from 17th-century Dutch painting. The young painter followed his master, Picot, who uncompromisingly followed his own principles.

Picot was sufficiently influential until the middle of the 1860s that his students were routinely accepted as exhibitors at the annual salons. "La correspondance littéraire" for the Salon of 1863 notes that 90 of Picot's pupils were accepted for the exhibition in a field of 1,915 total painters who exhibited.⁷ The troubadour style was fading when Viry began to participate in the Salon exhibition, and his genre scenes were not idealized images of the Middle Ages, but of the Renaissance or later eras, such as the reign of Louis XIII.

Some of his contemporaries saw this style of painting, and the themes being portrayed, as evidence of the influence of the English Pre-Raphaelite painters. It was as part of this "hated school" that Hector de Callias bluntly classified Paul Viry.

"I did not see this time, neither Mr. Leys, nor Tissot, but Mr. Patrois is there who has nothing to envy in terms of Pre-Raphaelitism. (...) Mr. Viry transports this genre on large canvases; he brings in, like the English Millais, two life-size characters in a setting that embarrasses them, and stamps them with the desired dryness. My God! it is high time to put an end to the gullibility of these artists who are nothing less than primitive; art is not outmoded to the point of falling into childhood."⁸

It is not known if Viry saw the paintings of the English Pre-Raphaelites, Millais, Rossetti or Hunt, then at the height of their glory, at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1855. W. Bürger insists on this English influence in his discussion of the the painting, *Dans les bois*: "Mr. Viry, must have seen some English Pre-Raphaelite painter."⁹

If these scenes appear a little bland these days, the mastery and precision of the line and color still deserve attention. The painter obviously relies on his sound knowledge of the castles of the Loire Valley where he spent his childhood. The facades of the castles of Blois or Chenonceau¹⁰ serve as decorative settings for the painter's romantic and idealized characters. The photographs of the Château de Blois in the painter's archives served as a model as

⁶VIRY Bernard (2000) Paul, Alphonse Viry, peintre de genre et de paysage. Only few landscape paintings have been identified.

⁷ "La Correspondance littéraire" 25 juillet 1863.

⁸ CALLIAS (de) Hector (1864) "Salon de 1864, XIV Les préraphaélites", L'Artiste Beaux-Arts et Belles Lettres, p 198, janvier 1864, Paris

⁹ BÜRGER William (pseudonyme de Théophile Thoré) (1868) "Les salons de W. Bürger 1861-1868" Paris.

¹⁰ In the painting known as "The Duo" or "The Music Lesson", it is the Château de Chenonceau which serves as the setting for this musical moment. Paul Viry represented on the right the Marques tower, the last vestige of the medieval castle and on the left the entrance to the Renaissance house. See illustration 4.

evidenced by the pencil grids.¹¹ From the family foundry, he preserved the memory of decorative elements in the gardens on antique models. But like all of the students at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the painter undoubtedly visited the galleries of the Louvre, an unparalleled place of learning for studying and copying the great masters and antiquities.

The most remarkable of Paul Viry's work is based on animal painting and the depictions of dogs, especially hunting dogs, birds, flamingos, herons, swans, parrots, doves and hawks.¹²



Figure 1
The falconer, 1877, detail,
Image courtesy of Mark Murray Fine Paintings – New-York City – www.markmurray.com

The falcons are particularly well documented in the paintings. Precise detail is particularly evident in the large number of still-lives, even in the scholarly depictions of musical instruments, game birds, glasses and myriad bibelots. Each musical instrument, weapon, object or piece of furniture is based on photographs of museum pieces or decorative arts.

This precision was noted in an exhibition review in the *New York Herald*: “It is said that Paul Viry, whose paintings resemble tapestries full of minute details, are admired for the care and talent which they display; he is said to paint only three canvases per year.”¹³ It’s true that one can imagine that the meticulous treatment of each detail in small formats did not allow the painter to execute a large number of paintings.

II. Success and Critical Response

The very first comment about a Viry painting appeared in the newspaper, *Le Charivari*. In his account of the Salon of 1861, Louis Leroy evokes “La châtelaine”: “*The Châtelaine* by Mr. Viry looks like a stained-glass window that the sun would light from behind.”¹⁴ In 1863, a stranger at the Salon expressed himself with enthusiasm: “Few people, I think, have noticed Mr

¹¹ We were able to identify the facade of Blois in six paintings: *Picking lilacs*, 1874; *A galant*, 1874; *The engagement ring*, 1874; *A falconer*, 1877; *Young woman on the terrace of the castle of Blois*, 1894; *The proposition*, undated.

¹² HARDOUIN FUGIER Elisabeth (2001). *Le peintre et l'animal*. Editions de l'Amateur, Paris.

¹³ *New York Herald*, November 11, 1878.

¹⁴ *Le Charivari*, samedi 18 mai 1861.

Viry's *News*. For me, I often stopped in front this canvas where I find a great distinction in color and the tendencies of a real painter. Either I'm wrong or there is a future for Mr. Viry."¹⁵

On several occasions the name of Viry is associated with that of James Tissot (1836-1902), as their manner of painting is so similar, while their masters are different. "Not far from Mr. Tissot, we noticed a charmingly colored painting by Mr. Viry, entitled *La Nouvelle*. It is in the same vein that Mr. Viry found this simple scene composed of two figures dressed in the costumes of the sixteenth century; but the touch as well as the color are more flexible and seek more refined models."¹⁶

With *Dans les bois*, Paul Viry was noted at the Salon of 1864. This canvas was purchased by the Princesse Mathilde Bonaparte. Here is what Louis Auvray had to say about it:



Figure 2
Dans les Bois, 1864, photography of 1864
J. Bingham (artist archives)

His Highness bought from Mr. Viry a painting of a completely different character, but of great distinction; it is entitled *In the Woods*, and represents a young man and young woman from the time of Francis I, both dressed in white satin. The young woman, without leaving the arm of her knight, leans over to pick flowers by the side of the road, flowers that will be added to the bouquet the young man is already carrying; the bouquet will become very large as the walk continues. As we can see, the scene is calm and simple. The poses are natural, the movement of young woman is full of grace; her head, seen in profile, shows elegant features. The color of this canvas may not be very accurate, but it is of a range so harmonious, so pleasant, that one does not have the courage to blame Mr. Viry for it.¹⁷

In *Le Moniteur Universel* of June 17, 1864, Théophile Gautier, fils, reported on the same painting in equally complimentary terms.¹⁸ And for W. Bürger, Viry and Guérard, both students of Picot, deserved a medal at the Salon of 1864.¹⁹ Critics of the 1864 *Encyclopedic Yearbook* were also enthusiastic about the painting: "*In the*

¹⁵ *Le Figaro*, n° 879, 19 juillet 1863, Paris. The articles published in the Figaro under the title "A stranger in the Salon" under the pseudonym J. Graham were collected in a book by Arthur Stevens "Le Salon de 1863" Paris, 1866.

¹⁶ VIOLLET-LE-DUC Adolphe. (1863) « Le Salon de 1863 » in *Journal des Débats politiques et littéraires*, mercredi 20 mai 1863, Paris.

¹⁷ AUVRAY Louis (1864). Exposition des Beaux-Arts, Salon de 1864, Paris.

¹⁸ GAUTIER Théophile, fils (1864). *Le Moniteur Universel* du 17 juin 1864.

¹⁹ BÜRGER William (1908). W. Bürger's *Kunstkritik deutsche bearbeitung* von A. Schmarsow und B. Klemm. Vol 1. Verlag von Klinkhardt & Biermann, Leipzig.

Woods, this is the title of a very pleasant, curious and elegant composition by Mr. Paul Viry.”²⁰ Meanwhile, Jean Rousseu wondered in *Le Figaro*: “I do not know in which school, under which banner, to put MM. Tissot and Viry. I just note that their means of effect and success is the same: to cut figures dressed in white on a background of dark greenery.”²¹

However, harsh criticisms were especially expressed at the Salon of 1865. Léon Lagrange did not hesitate to castigate the “new school”.

Mr. Ribot makes blacks, like Mr. Viry makes white, like Mr. Manet makes yellow or pink. The watchword is given, and a small school believing it has found the philosopher’s stone of art, eliminate with one blow—in hatred of the subject—the thought, the feeling, the composition, the line, the drawing, the color, charm and beauty, beauty above all. To make a black, to make a white is the secret of the masters. “Make a roux” said the bourgeois cook. But a self-respecting Vatel despises these vulgar recipes and only serves expertly prepared dishes on the table. An artist worthy of the name cooks at home, keeps studies for the workshop, and brings only serious paintings to the public. We keep him away from the rest.²²

In 1865, Ernest Chesneau, for his part, considered that Viry was a member of a group of eccentrics with MM. Manet, Fantin-Latour, Whistler, Lambron, Tissot and Courbet.

Painting spots has become fashionable elsewhere in our school, particularly white and green spots that allow a kind of fine tranquil harmony (...) I must say that this year’s submission by this painter [Viry] is far from being worth that of his last Salon. Does he have so little imagination that he cannot find two different movements for the same character systematically introduced into his two paintings.²³

The two paintings by Viry are the target of several cartoonists, Cham, J. Denneulin and Bertall, who insist on the ease with which Viry produced these painting from the sole perspective of the hunters.

In the 1870s, genre painting produced by former students of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts reunited a number of artists who worked in a style defined by Duranty as paintings “smelling of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts”²⁴ For Joseph Péladan, this style of painting was designed for a bourgeois audience, especially the provincial bourgeoisie.

Genre? Which one? The bourgeois genre? (...) If genre painters appear to descend from Metz, Mieris, Terburg, Pieter de Hoogh, Slingelandt, Nestcher, Dow, they have an illusion that I will not allow them. (...) to speak clearly, genre is not archaeology, it’s bric-a-brac, and Mr. Meissonnier, whatever his merit, is a bourgeois painter because he is a painter without breadth that the mob understands immediately. [About Paul Viry,

²⁰ Annuaire encyclopédique publié par les directeurs de l’Encyclopédie du XIXème siècle, troisième tirage 1864, Paris, 1865.

²¹ ROUSSEAU Jean (1864). *Le Figaro* n° 968, du jeudi 26 mai 1864, Paris.

²² LAGRANGE Léon (1864). *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Salon 1864, Paris.

²³ CHESNEAU Ernest (1865). « Les excentriques » MM. Manet - Fantin-la-Tour - Whistler - Lambron - Viry - J. Tissot – Courbet. ». *Le Constitutionnel* du 16 mai 1865 Beaux-Arts Salon de 1865.

²⁴ DURANTY (1874). *Musée Universel*, Revue illustrée hebdomadaire, 1874 – 2ème année – 2ème semestre.

he wrote] To engrave *Les Aveux discret* by Mr. Viry for the living rooms of Nîmes or Tarascon.²⁵

However, if the genre scene seems to be reserved for the French “petite bourgeoisie” it nevertheless finds favor in England as shown by this appreciation in *The South London Press*, which signals positive approval of Paul Viry’s work presented at an exhibition in 1878. “A striking contrast to this are two carefully painted pictures of the French school of Paul Viry. These are exquisite in coloring and painted with a strength and accuracy of detail of Meissonnier.”²⁶

III. The Works of Paul Viry in the United States

We must certainly see in this success with the English and American public, Paul Viry’s link with the American merchant George A. Lucas. Indeed, this art dealer, installed in Paris in 1857, was the European agent of great American collectors until the early years of the 20th century. G. Lucas’s diary is very instructive about the work of an art dealer under the Second Empire and the Third Republic.²⁷ Paul Viry was in close contact with Lucas; his name appears about forty times in the merchant’s datebook between March 1872 and February 1885. In short notations, Lucas indicates that he went to see Viry at home, that he received a visit, that he took the measurement of a painting, that he ordered a frame, that he went to pick up a painting from the artist, that he packaged and sent pictures... Sometimes Lucas gives a description of Viry’s paintings in a few words. It seems that Lucas as the main buyer of Viry’s paintings for the American market where an affluent public was developing collections of European, as well as American, artwork. Some Parisian observers have noted: “It was America that made the most acquisitions at the Salon of 1875. It had sent here [to Paris] the delegates of a society with the mission of picking up a certain number of paintings.”²⁸

The first trace of a painting by Viry in the United States is found in reports of one of Samuel P. Avery’s exhibitions at his Broadway gallery in New York in 1873. This was *Cacatoes*.²⁹ The American newspapers accessible on digital archive sites date Paul Viry’s celebrity in the United States between 1875 and 1883 when his paintings were presented in exhibitions.³⁰ This was the case with the eighth annual exhibition organized by the Chicago Academy of Design, which presented works by foreign and American painters.³¹ As with Lucas, Avery represented American collector such as the businessman W. T. Walters, or Colonel J. S.

²⁵ PELADAN Joséphin, (1888). *La décadence esthétique, L’art ochlocratique, Salons de 1882 et de 1883*. Paris.

²⁶ *The South London Press*, Saturday, August 10, 1878.

²⁷ LUCAS George, Aloysius (1979). *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. Transcribed and with introduction by Lilian M.C. Randall. Hardcover.

²⁸ VERON Pierre (1875). *Le Monde illustré*, 26 juin 1875.

²⁹ *S.P. Avery's Catalogue of Oil Paintings, on exhibition (1873). n° 625 Broadway*. At Private Sale. Avery probably had this painting from George A. Lucas who knew Viry's work at that time.

³⁰ For the period 1875-1919 we were able to list in American daily newspapers or art journals around fifty quotes from Paul Viry, among the European artists presented during exhibitions or sales of collections. Newspapers and journals consulted include: *The New York Times, New York Daily Tribune, The Chronical in America, The New York Herald, Brooklyn Newsstand, The Art Amateur, The Collector and Art critic, American Art News, The Art Journal*.

³¹ *Chicago tribune*, July 9, 1876, Chicago Academy of Design, cor. State and Monroe-sts., July 8, 1876. “*The Eighth Annual Exhibition of choice.*”

Jenkins, both from Baltimore. Very clearly, Viry is one of the painters with whom Avery is directly linked as his diary reveals.³² As early as August 1873, Avery indicated in his notebook that he bought two paintings from Viry for 1,500fr. Paul Viry had some success in the United States, receiving a very positive reception. *The Art Amateur* indicated that the art dealer S. P. Avery made purchases in Europe and, in particular, in Paris, and explicitly cited “Viry the elegant” among the painters whose works he bought at the Salon of 1879.

The Aldine notes indicated that Viry’s painting *The Doves* at the Brooklyn Art Association Exhibition in 1876.

[It]...is full of fantasy and beautifully expressed. A tall pale girl, dressed in rich satin dove color, caresses her dove in a large door, construction from a soft gray stone , carefully carved. A greyhound stands by her side. There are no other colors to mitigate the predominance of the delicate ash color, but the rich green of two small vines installed in magnificent green boxes, a beautifully colored pheasant on the threshold and the bleak red and brown of a line of bricks that appear just above the portal. The effect is similar to that of rubbed silver and the drawing is in “un jeu d’esprit”. The finish is simply wonderful.³³

³² AVERY Samuel P. (1979). *The diaries, 1871-1882*, of Samuel P. Avery, art dealer, edited from the manuscript with an introd. by Madeleine Fidell Beaufort, Herbert L. Kleinfield, and Jeanne K. Welcher ; foreword by A. Hyatt Mayor, New York, Arno Press, 1979.

³³ Brooklyn Art Association, *The Aldine*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1876), pp. 27-28.

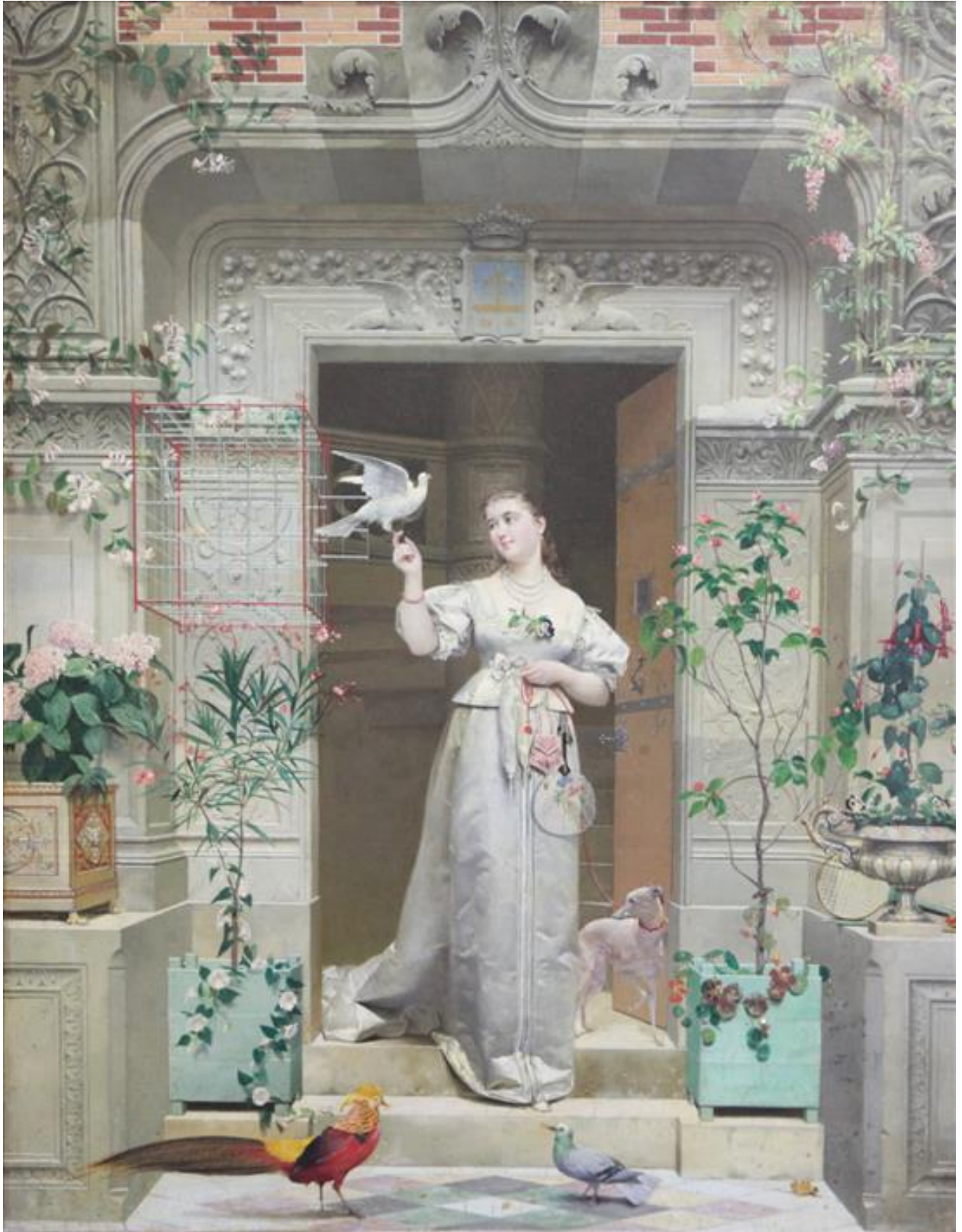


Figure 3
Paul Viry, The doves, oil on panel, 53,3 x 41,9 cm, 1875
Sold 5500 £ at Gorrings UK, november 2016,

On the occasion of an exhibition, *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 1, 1877, describes *The Duo* with the same praise. “From the collection of Judge Hilton of New York, there are two superb painting by Paris artists. One, by Paul Viry, represents a lady and gentleman in costume of the last century, seated in a park. The cavalier is running his fingers over the strings of his guitar for the entertainment of his fair companion. The picture is painted in a somewhat gray tone and its finish is superb.”³⁴



Figure 4
Paul Viry, *The duet* 76,20 x 61,60 cm oil on panel, dated 1876, signed left on right.
Image courtesy of Rehs Galleries, Inc., New York City – www.rehs.com

The Philadelphia businessman and art collector, W. E. Burgess (1833-1917), who was very interested in the works of Barbizon school painters and naturalists, acquired several paintings from Paul Viry. In an exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1899, Burgess included a painting entitled *Arranging Flowers*. This work represents a couple against the light

³⁴ *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 1, 1877.

in a Renaissance setting, making a bouquet of flowers under the watchful eye of a hunting dog. Three paintings on the theme of the falconer were particularly appreciated by critics.



Figure 5

**Paul Viry, *The falconer*, dated, signed, 1877, oil on panel, 53,3 x 43,2 cm,
Image courtesy of Mark Murray Fine Paintings – New-York City – www.markmurray.com**

Eric Zafran reported the words used by the author of an 1899 sales catalogue containing the *Falconer (with three hawks)*, dated 1877.³⁵ “It is impossible to describe the microscopic development of each part of this painting. It reminds us a bit of Barge’s work. With this, the whole is good and the color is very pleasant in its quiet hues. This work is remarkable for the

³⁵ *The falconer*, oil on panel, signed and dated Paul Viry, 1877, 53.3 x 43.2 cm, exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1877 under the number 2135; *The falconer [with three hawks]*, oil on panel, 27.9 x 33 cm, signed and dated 1877; and *The falconer*, oil on panel, 55.9 x 42.6cm 1878, signed and dated Paris 1878.

richness of its combination of delicate textures, the softness of the feathers of the game birds and the velvet of the garment being most remarkable.”³⁶

The quality of precision and thoroughness of the representation continued to be put forward in connection with *The Engagement Ring*, of 1874. “This very delicate design brings to mind the small lens of a kodak, where nature is put in miniature, with line accuracy. Extreme refinement and grace mark this charming group image. Nothing is missing to augur the greatest happiness for the couple who in this essential appointment commits their oath. The painting is painted with great delicacy, with a touch of light and silver color.”³⁷

Rare are the negative American critics concerning the style and themes of Paul Viry; only two were found in the press. In fact, in the second part of the 19th century, the American bourgeoisie sought “subject painting, well painted, well drawn, the painting which clearly tells a story” wrote René Brimo.³⁸ The taste for anecdote and realism prevails in the society of the East Coast with a growing number of collectors attracted by genre painting. “Everything that the realistic Parisian school and the Dusseldorf school will produce as paintings for sale will take the road to New York.”³⁹ It is therefore artists with various talents, but duly validated by the Academy of Fine Arts, who are sought after by American collectors: Gérôme, Rosa Bonheur, Fortuny, Bouguereau, Madfrazo, Meissonier Cabanel, Breton, Dupré....Viry, at his measure is part of this movement and appear in the collections of some great collectors. L. Zalewski confirms the instructions of R. Brimo in his study of four large private American collections at the end of the 19th century. French painters are always significantly in the lead in the selections of collectors.⁴⁰ Thus, Paul Viry’s major paintings are found in the collections of the American bourgeoisie from industry, medicine, law, art lovers and often philanthropists: Henry HILTON, William BARNES, Ebenezer BEMENT, Warren BURGESS, Walter RICHMOND, Malcolm GRAHAM, Samuel Putnam AVERY, John WOLFE, Mary Jane MORGAN, Jonathan Ackerman COLES, George Ingraham SENEY, Charles PRATT, George WHITNEY, William LIBBEY, Thomas REID...⁴¹ At the beginning of the 21st century, it was the paintings from these collections that went into American sales at Sotheby’s or Christie’s.

³⁶ ZAFRAN Eric (1994). *Cavaliers and cardinals in XIX^e french anecdotal paintings*, Taft Museum, Cincinnati.

³⁷ *Catalogue of valuable modern paintings...collected by the late de William B. Bement*, New-York, 27-28 February 1899.

³⁸ BRIMO René (1938). *L'évolution du goût aux Etats-Unis d'après l'histoire des collections*. Thèse pour le doctorat d'Université présenté à la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris, James Fortune Ed. Paris.

³⁹ BRIMO René. op. cit.

⁴⁰ ZALEWSKI Leanne (2019). «Creating Cultural and Commercial Value in Late Nineteenth-Century New York Art Catalogues, Art Crossing Borders The Internationalisation of the Art Market in the Age of Nation States, 1750-1914» *Studies in the History of Collecting & Art Markets*, Volume 6, Brill, 2019.

⁴¹ Based on the American auction catalogs and the database of The Frick collection at: <http://www.frick.org/research>

Conclusion

By taking F.-E. Picot's courses at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, like many other students, Paul Viry received an academic education.⁴² But it was not long before the aged neoclassical master was challenged. Although Viry, who was noticed at the Salon of 1864 and treated as "eccentric" alongside painters who later became famous—Manet, Fantin-Latour, Whistler, Tissot, and Courbet at the Salon of 1865—he would always remain a "good pupil" in the academic tradition. He was a master of drawing and precise painting. By the 1880s, while other pictorial currents were developing, this perfect mastery was felt as a handicap. However, although he reproduced the same scenes of music, hunting, gallantry in the same settings for almost 40 years, Paul Viry found his audience. Thanks to the purchases of S. P. Avery and G. Lucas, his clientele was primarily English and especially American. It is for this reason that the United States today has the main sources of documentation in digital archives. Sales catalogues and journalistic descriptions of exhibitions make it possible to identify the route of the painter's works and their reception by the American public and critics. Although we have been able to carry out a precise inventory of more than 80 paintings, the work of Paul Viry is still unknown. The purpose of this modest work is to recall this child from Pocé-sur-Cisse, whose memory has been somewhat erased, but also to call on anyone who has information about the works of Paul Viry.⁴³

⁴² To note, among famous pupils of Picot: A. Leloir (1809-1892), A. Cabanel (1823-1889), W. Bouguereau (1825-1905), A. Tournachon (1825-1903), brother of Félix, says Nadar, G. Moreau (1826-1898), J-J. Henner (1829-1905).

⁴³ The detailed and illustrated study of P. Viry's work is online : <http://paulbusuttill5.wixsite.com/paulalphonseviry>