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NEWS FROM THE GETTY

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GETTY ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF RARE, EARLY PORTRAIT BY ÉDOUARD MANET

Portrait of Madame Brunet will complement the Getty Museum's major Impressionist paintings and will go on view December 13, 2011

LOS ANGELES—The J. Paul Getty Museum announced today the acquisition of *Portrait of Madame Brunet* (also known as *Young Woman in 1860*), painted in 1860-1863, and reworked by 1867—a rare, early portrait by the modern French master Édouard Manet (1832-1883).

"We are thrilled to add to our collection this significant and compelling portrait from Manet's decisive early period," said David Bomford, acting director of the Getty Museum in announcing the acquisition.

"Opportunities to acquire museum-quality paintings by Manet are few and this brilliant portrait of a mysterious young woman will command instant attention."

The painting will be presented near Manet's renowned work, *The Rue Mosnier with Flags*, 1878, which has long been on view at the Museum. The two paintings together—one much later than the other—will vividly illustrate Manet's range and the development of his technique over time. This new acquisition exemplifies Manet's signature early style, with its strong contrasts of light and dark, sharp silhouetting of forms, and broad, simplified brushwork, all of which contributed to disjunctive effects of flatness that challenged longstanding conventions of pictorial illusionism in the West.



Portrait of Madame Brunet, about 1860-63, reworked by 1867.
Édouard Manet (French, 1832-1883).

"While *The Rue Mosnier with Flags* represents Manet's impressionistic, and politically charged, consideration of the modern city, the earlier ***Portrait of Madame Brunet*** highlights the artist's intensive engagement with the old masters and his passionate dialogue with Spanish art," said Scott Schaefer, senior curator of Paintings at the Getty Museum. "So different in aspect and handling, the two pictures together dramatically illustrate the poles of Manet's practice."

Portrait of Madame Brunet depicts a young woman who faces the viewer with a placid, affectless gaze. Standing before a generic landscape backdrop, she wears an outdoor costume consisting of fawn leather gloves, a black velvet hat, and a short black coat over a white crinoline dress trimmed with bands of black lace—a detail that reflects the influence of the fashionable Spanish-born Empress of France, Eugénie (1826-1920). While the sitter's dress is typical of a bourgeois woman of her time, her pose has been loosely connected to Velazquez's 1632 portrait of the Cardinal Infante Don Fernando of Austria, which Manet knew of through an 18th-century etched copy by Goya. Manet was known to have revered Velazquez and the landscape background may have derived from a portrait of Philip IV of Spain attributed to the Spanish master, which was acquired in 1862 by the Louvre Museum in Paris and subsequently seen there by Manet.

Manet exhibited the painting in 1863 and 1867 with the title "Portrait de Mme. B...", using only an initial for the lady, which was a common practice at the time. An inventory of Manet's studio after his death identifies the "B" as "Brunet," very possibly the wife of Eugène Brunet, a sculptor Manet had known for many years. However there were several people named Brunet in Manet's circle and it cannot be said definitively which Madame Brunet sat for this portrait.

Whoever the sitter was, she refused to accept the painting. Théodore Duret, a French journalist and art critic who championed Impressionism and especially Manet, recounted that Manet told him that Madame Brunet burst into tears when she saw how she was depicted and "left the studio with her husband, never wanting to see the portrait again." Manet retained the portrait for two decades, until his death in 1883. He showed it at least twice, and altered the piece between exhibitions by cutting off the bottom portion of the once full-length portrait to make it a three-quarter length view.

The painting, which is in excellent condition, made its way to the United States from Paris via the noted art collector and philanthropist Joan Whitney Payson, who also owned Vincent van Gogh's *Irises*, 1889, also now in the Getty's permanent collection. After her

death, much of the collection was sold and *Portrait of Madame Brunet* has remained in private collections until now. The well-published work has been loaned for exhibition to many major museums internationally.

Portrait of Madame Brunet is expected to go on view at the Getty on December 13.

About Édouard Manet (French, 1832–1883)

Described by his contemporaries as a debonair, charismatic, and sociable man, Manet's artistic portrayal of the kaleidoscopic experience of modern Paris can be seen as a reflection of his personality and interests. For much of his career, Manet's urban subjects and seemingly detached approach to painting produced one scandal after another. He was a profoundly important figure to the development of Impressionism and to the course of art into the twentieth century.

Schooled in the traditional studio of history painter Thomas Couture, and a scrupulous student of Italian and Spanish Old Masters, Manet quickly broke away from convention. He painted Paris's fashionable high society and marginalized poor, the spectacle of the boulevard, café, and racetrack. Answering poet and friend Charles Baudelaire's call for art capturing the epic, heroic qualities of modern life, Manet produced large canvases of contemporary subjects; for example, he depicted the city's down-and-out on a scale once reserved for royal portraiture. Manet was equally provocative in his approach to painting, laying down intense contrasts of light and dark, creating brazenly unmodulated paint surfaces, and asserting the primacy of flattened pattern and color. For these innovations, Manet attracted unrelenting hostility and scorn.

Particularly shocking to the Parisian public was Manet's treatment of the female nude. In the 1860s, the brazen, frank nudity of *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* and, most notoriously, *Olympia*, caused major scandals at the Salon. Manet also sought to revise other traditional genres and created still-life paintings, portraiture, and religious scenes. The artist addressed current political events in his paintings and graphic work. Only toward the end of his career—having been warmly embraced by the younger Impressionist painters and their circle—did Manet begin to gain widespread recognition for his achievements.

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The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Malibu.

The J. Paul Getty Museum collects in seven distinct areas, including Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts, and photographs gathered internationally. The Museum's mission is to make the collection meaningful and attractive to a broad audience by presenting and interpreting the works of art through educational programs, special exhibitions, publications, conservation, and research.

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