

PRESS RELEASE | 20 NOVEMBER 2023 | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



# FRAGONARD

Friday, December 21, 2023

Hôtel Drouot



NEWLY DISCOVERED FRAGONARD PAINTING UNSEEN  
SINCE THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
TO BE OFFERED AT HÔTEL DROUOT

**JEUNE FILLE AU CHAPEAU, 1770-1775**  
**WILL BE OFFERED AT AUCTION BY BOISGIRARD - ANTONINI**  
**ON 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER AT HÔTEL DROUOT, PARIS**

On 21<sup>st</sup> December at Hôtel Drouot, Paris, Boisgirard - Antonini auction house will unveil an a newly discovered work by the renowned painter Jean-Honoré Fragonard. With an estimate of €400,000 - 600,000, *La Jeune fille au chapeau* is an incredible discovery from the same collection as the *Philosophe*, discovered in 2021: that of Dominique Magaud (1722-1806), deputy to the Estates-General, justice of the piece, prosecutor for the king, and deputy of Puy de Dôme.

This discovery illustrates a fabulous history that makes it possible to reconstitute a collection, bring together paintings that have been separated since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and better understand the work of the artist and his relations with his patrons.

The attractive portrait shows a young woman wearing a wide-brimmed hat trimmed in pink that casts shadow on her eyes and half of her face without hiding her gaze. The artist uses an incredibly flexible and spirited technique here, showcasing his virtuosity. It is the same approach that he applied in several of his masterpieces as he was breaking away from the usual conventions to paint his "fantasy figures" series. One of these, kept at the Musée du Louvre, 1769, bears the inscription "painted in one hour's time."

The style is comparable to that of the *Philosophe*, which belongs to the same collection, and is probably from the same period, circa 1770-1775. The composition shows energetic brushwork that sweeps across the canvas, depicting the clothing with very dynamic white smudges. Wide, loaded strokes reveal the pressure of the artist's hand fluidly spreading impasto.

The coquettish appearance of the young woman and her hat-shaded gaze are also similar to those of a background figure in a composition that probably came later – *The Visit to the Nursery* –, of which several versions exist, including one among the collections of Waddesdon Manor (United Kingdom) and another at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.





This portrait features the oval shape that was fashionable in the 18<sup>th</sup> C. for artists such as Watteau, Chardin, and Boucher, leading up to artists at the end of the century. Views of interiors from that period show a number of examples bringing interest to hanging arrangements. Fragonard particularly appreciated the format, which characterizes nearly one-sixth of all his paintings and brings energy and vitality to his compositions.

Around 1770, Diderot expressed that he considered Fragonard the rising hope of historical French painting: *Coresus Sacrificing Himself to Save Callirhoé* (Paris, Musée du Louvre), which the king purchased, met with great popular and critical success at the Salon of 1765. Even so, it brought a different orientation to the academic career for which he appeared destined. He went on to paint the famous fantasy figures, with a liberated technique showing clearly visible brushstrokes, for a very sophisticated Parisian clientèle.

This style – characterized by great spontaneity, elegance and voluptuousness – embraces pastel colors, refined textures, freely flowing brushstrokes, asymmetrical compositions, and an interplay of curved lines and shapes that create a swirling appearance.

Contrary to his contemporaries, Fragonard places the utmost importance on brushwork; his strokes are often broad and vigorous, capturing moments quickly and spontaneously. “Painted with relish,” according to the term often used at the time, it bears the hallmark of fire and genius. Fragonard takes up his wide, lively brush to explore every technical possibility.

### **Provenance :**

- Probably in the collection of Dominique Magaud (1722-1806), son of Amable Magaud (1680 - après 1754) deputy to the Estates-General, justice of the piece, prosecutor for the king, and deputy of Puy de Dôme ;
- Antoine François Hippolyte Magaud d'Aubusson (1801-1873), collector, Pontcharraux, Clermont-Ferrand ;
- Louis Anet Nicolas Marie Magaud d'Aubusson (1847 - 1917), collector and ornithologist, Pontcharraux, Clermont-Ferrand ;
- Marie-Félicie du Saray de Vignolles (1864 - 1950), Pontcharraux, Clermont-Ferrand ;

In the same family until the actual owner.



**Jean-Honoré FRAGONARD (1732-1806)**

*Jeune fille au chapeau*, 1770-1775

Oval canvas

H. 52 cm — L. 42,5 cm

18th-century inscription on reverse of frame: «a R n°16 Fragonard»

Estimate: € 400,000 - 600,000



**FRAGONARD**

**Auction - Hôtel Drouot - 9 rue Drouot Paris 9<sup>e</sup>  
Room 4 - Thursday, December 21, 2023**

**Public Exhibition :  
Wednesday, December 20 from 11am to 6pm  
the morning of the sale from 11am to 12am**

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**About Drouot**

Comprising several subsidiaries, Groupe Drouot is a key player in the art market. Hôtel Drouot, located in the heart of Paris, has been the world's largest public auction house since 1852. 15 sales rooms are available to more than 70 auction houses, which organized nearly 500 sales in the first half of 2023 for total proceeds of €206.8m. The Group's digital platform, Drouot.com, is continental Europe's leading marketplace for Fine Art and Collectibles auctions. Drouot.com broadcast 3,915 Live sales (live broadcast and public attendance) and Online-only sales (dematerialized auctions) for total sales revenue of €182 million. The 690 auction houses that published sales on the platform offered more than 1.6 million items. Auction news is relayed every week by La Gazette Drouot, the weekly reference for the art and heritage market, published by Auctionspress.