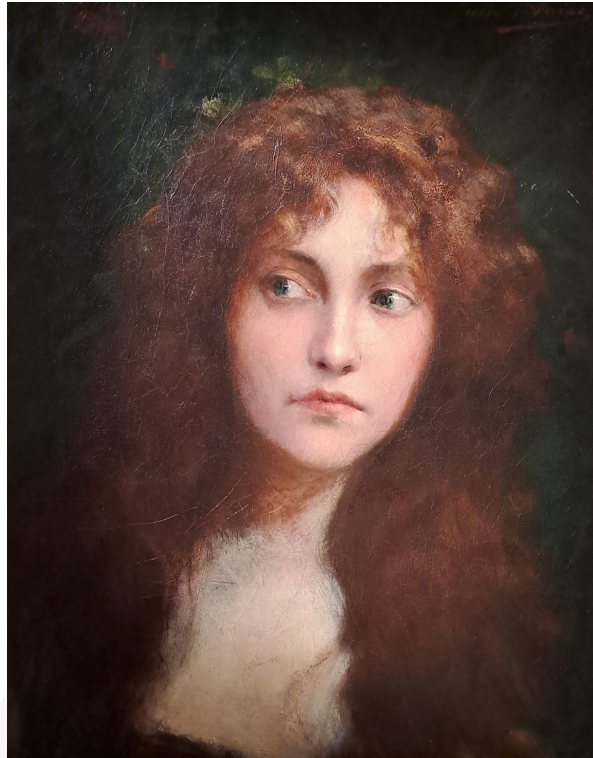


Jules Aviat (1844-1931) - Portrait of a curious young woman



Oil on canvas signed upper right

Dimensions : H. 46 x W. 39 cm (With frame H. 61 x W. 54cm)

Real name Jules-Charles Mauperrin, Jules Aviat was born in 1844. He was one of the finest portrait painters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In Rome, he received academic training from 1867 to 1870, with Ernest Hébert, Director of the French Academy in Rome, as his teacher. Back in France, Jules Aviat worked with some of the leading figures of the day, including Carolus-Duran and Léon Bonnat. Along with his friends Hébert, Puvis de Chavannes and Bonnat, Aviat helped decorate the Pantheon in Paris.

In May 1905, Samuel Thruston Ballard and his wife, originally from Louisville, visited the Salon des artistes français: they were looking for a painter who could paint portraits of their family. They felt that the most talented painter, apart from John Singer Sargent, was Jules Aviat: they asked him to come to Louisville. Jules Aviat accepted and boarded the SS La Bretagne at Le Havre on December 9, 1905. He painted portraits of the Thruston Ballard couple and several others, including Miss Mary Ballard's sister, Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston and his son. He also painted portraits of Mrs. Herman D. Newcomb, Maryon E. Taylor, Theodore Harris and Zudie Harris. Aviat left Louisville in April 1906 and toured several U.S. cities, including New York in 1907.

Works by Aviat are rare on the market today. This fine portrait reflects Jules Aviat's incredible talent for capturing instant, subtle expression. The oblique gaze and slightly off-set head place this portrait far from the conventional depictions of the period. The young girl is inquisitive and intelligent; with her neck stretched out, she observes out of the corner of her eye a scene that the artist has chosen to leave to the viewer's imagination. The painting is on its original canvas, in perfect condition. It is set in a handsome antique Regency-style frame of patinated wood and stucco.

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