

Charles Gleyre
Chevilly 1806 - 1874 Paris

Vénus Pandémos

Oil on square canvas with a feigned tondo 46 cm
Signed with a monogram lower right



Provenance:

Camille Duplan, (possibly bought directly from Gleyre around 1854) until 28th January 1876;
Louis de Clercq, 5 rue Masseran, Paris, until at least 1885;
Collection Lingenauber, Monaco

Exhibitions:

Geneva 1854, Exposition des Beaux-Arts, Musée Rath, Geneva, September 1854, no catalogue (Venus Pandemos and Ruth and Boaz);
Paris 1885(b), Exposition de tableaux, statues et objets d'art au profit de l'œuvre des orphelins d'Alsace-Lorraine. Salle des Etats, Louvre, no dates, 1885, n° 230 (Venus Pandemos);
Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Vénus dévoilée – La Vénus d'Urbino du Titien, Brussels 11 October 2003 – 11 January 2004, n° 320 (Venus Pandemos)

Literature:

Gaullieur, Eusébe-Henri, Exposition de peinture à Genève, in *Revue suisse*, XVII, 1854, pp. 579-80;
Bernard Le Salon de Genève, in *Journal de Genève*, September 1854, pp. 2-3;
Brevans, Alfred de, Genève, Exposition des Beaux-Arts, in *L'Illustration*, XXIV, n° 604, 1854, pp. 221/22, ill;
Dax, Pierre L'Artiste 1860, p. 239; Mantz, Paul, Charles Gleyre, in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, XI, 1875, pp. 406 and 409, ill;
Montégut, Emile, Charles Gleyre, in *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, XLVIII, September 1878, p. 416;
Clément, Charles, *Etude biographique et critique avec le catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre du maître*, Genève, Neuchâtel 1878, pp. 259-61;
Berthoud, Fritz, Charles Gleyre, in *Bibliothèque universelle et Revue de la Société suisse*, 1880, p. 8; Rambert, Eugène, Charles Gleyre, *Etudes et souvenirs*, in *Mélanges*, Lausanne 1890, pp. 335-38;
Hauptman, William, Charles Gleyre: Tradition and Innovation, in *Charles Gleyre 1806-1874*, William Hauptman and Nancy Scott Newhouse, eds., exh. Cat., Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York 1980, p. 43;
Hauptman, William, Charles Gleyre 1806-1874, *Life and Works*, Catalogue Raisonné, Zürich/Princeton 1996, vol. I, p. 199, ill. n° 151, vol. II, p. 338, ill., cat. n° 571;
Calabrese, Omar, Vénus dévoilée – La Vénus d'Urbino du Titien, Brussels 11 October 2003 – 11 January 2004, p. 307, illustrated

William Hauptmann

Charles Gleyre 1806 – 1874

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N° 571.

Venus Pandemos

1852-53

Vénus pandémos

Oil on canvas (with dimensions 46 cm diameter)
Present location unknown
Clément n° 70

Clément provided relatively little information on the origins of the painting but noted that it was sold in 1854, having been completed about two years earlier. Gleyre originally intended to represent the subject of sacred and profane love through the dual aspects of the image of Venus, and had even thought of using that title. But the existence of a celebrated work by Titian with the same title obliged him to look elsewhere: after he had considered *Venus impudique*, which his friends thought vulgar, Planche persuaded him to adopt a more generalized title, with the Greek adjective meaning "of all the people" - hence *Venus Pandemos*.

The painting is a curious one in light of Gleyre's other projects in the 1850s. It is true that he had already explored lesser-known aspects of Greek mythology before, but this painting, which has the appearance of a miniature, is almost antithetical to *The Dance of the Bacchantes*. An antique mirror in the Louvre was probably Gleyre's source for the work, but the flavor of the painting, as seen in reproductions and in the surviving oil study, is decidedly Venetian. The painting was highly praised by Clément for the purity of design and execution, as well as for the application of antique canons of beauty. Audiences in Paris never knew the image directly, but only from an engraving published in *L'Illustration* of 23 September 1854, or from a copy on porcelain by the Swiss painter Jean-Marc Baud that was exhibited in the Salon of 1859 (livret n° 160) and is now in Sèvres. The only known public exhibition of Gleyre's painting was in Geneva, Musée Rath, in September 1854; it was the first example of Gleyre's art seen there. The illustrator Gustave Roux, a friend and collaborator of both Gleyre and Olivier, composed a rhapsodic poem on the imagery in a letter of December 1874 to Olivier. Clément wrote that Camille Duplan bought the painting for 2,000 francs; it is not known whether the purchase was made directly from

Gleyre or through the exhibition in Geneva. Camille Duplan was the brother of Jules and Ernest Duplan, both of whom knew Gleyre well and were also intimate friends of Flaubert and the Goncourts. Gleyre had given Jules Duplan a study for the painting - see catalogue n° 574. When Camille died on 28 January 1876 the painting went to a Mr. de Clercq. After remaining a mystery for many years, Mr. de Clercq - who also, with his wife, owned the *Ruth and Boaz* and *Ulysses and Nausicaa* panels - has recently been identified as Louis de Clercq through the discovery of a letter from Ernest Duplan to Fritz Berthoud on 23 October 1877, noting de Clercq's full name, his occupation as a "Député," and his residence as 5 rue Masseran in Paris. De Clercq (1836-1901) was a politician - first a Conseiller général of the Pas-de-Calais and later a deputy from the region - and also an avid collector and archeologist; he learned about archeology from the Due de Luynes. Between 1859 and 1863 de Clercq made at least two expeditions to the Near East, where he amassed a collection of coins and artifacts. He may or may not have known Gleyre himself; but he must have known of the painter's works through the Duplans and Flaubert (there is no known contact through Clément De Clercq, although twice married, had no children. None of the available documents on the Duplans or Flaubert indicates what became of de Clercq's collection of paintings.