



IMPERIAL ART
Paris Beijing



George ROUGET. 1783-1869.

Bust of Paris. Before 1818.

Oil on panel

Signed « *G.Rouget* » above the shoulder of the character on the right

35,7 x 30,8 cm

Imperial Art

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Georges Rouget:

Georges Rouget was born on August 26, 1783, in Paris into a modest family. Very young, he demonstrated skills and a certain taste for drawing. In 1790 he joined the workshop of the painter Michel Garnier, a friend of the family. Thanks to the latter, he joined in 1796 the *École des Beaux-Arts*, where he worked until 1799, presumed date of his meeting with Jacques-Louis David. During a drawing class David, noticed his talent, and stopped by the young student to compliment him on his work. He then asks Rouget to show him other works. Impressed by the drawing that the young boy presented to him, he met his parents to convince them to push him into an artistic career and let him join his studio. Testimonies from the time reveal the affection David had for the little Rouget, who was quickly adopted by his master's circle. From 1803 to 1805, Rouget competed for the Prix de Rome, second grand prix in 1803, he will never manage to win first place. From 1805, David offers to help him in the realization of his works. More than a simple retouching job, he made his student his right arm, the latter being sometimes even brought to complete the works started by the master. Their close collaboration means that today it is very difficult to distinguish the two hands in some of David's creations. This partnership is recognized and valued by David himself who presents his apprentice, whom he now considers his equal, as his right arm. In the Coronation of Napoleon, in which Rouget's contribution is important, David will pay homage to him by making him appear on the painting in the gallery next to him. After David's exile in Belgium, Rouget, who enjoys a solidly established reputation, will be honored with numerous official orders under the Restoration and under the July Monarchy. As a result, several of his paintings are now kept in French public collections, we can list some like: *Oedipus and Antigone on Mount Cytheron* (1814) *The Assembly of Notables in Rouen* (1822), *Saint-Louis dispensing justice under an oak tree at Vincennes* (1826), *Portrait of Clovis III, King of Austrasia* (1836).



Georges ROUGET. 1783-1869.

Self-portrait,
1850,

Oil on canvas, 73,5 x 59,5 cm
Château de Versailles,

© RMN-Grand Palais (Château de
Versailles)



Jacques-Louis DAVID. 1748-1825.

Self-portrait,
1794,

Oil on canvas, 81 x 105 cm
Musée du Louvre

© RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du
Louvre) / Adrien Didierjean

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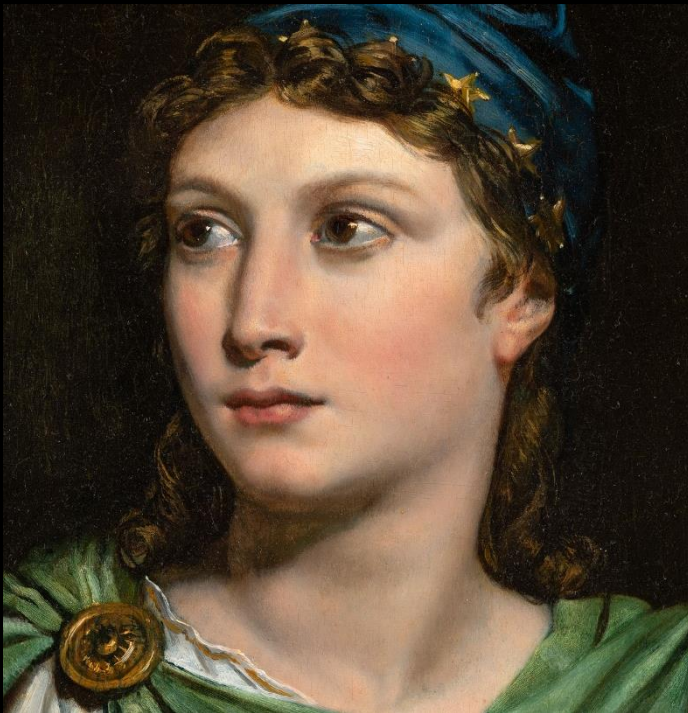
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This oil on panel represents the shepherd Paris, mythical character of the Trojan epic. When he was born an oracle warned his father King Priam that Paris will be the cause of the destruction of his beloved city of Troy. The child is then abandoned on Mount Ida where he is taken in and brought up by the shepherd Agelaos. When he became an adult, it was

while he was tending herds that the three goddesses Athena, Hera and Aphrodite chose him to decide between them in a beauty contest, whose outcome would lead to the Trojan War. In the legend, Paris grew up in Phrygia, so the Phrygian cap became its emblem and very early on its iconography became inseparable from this hat.



Anonym German painter.

Head of Paris

Beginning of the 19th century,

Oil on canvas, 73 x 62 cm

Hermitage Museum

© The State Hermitage Museum



Jacques-Louis DAVID. 1748-1825.

The love of Paris and Helen

1788,

Oil on canvas, 146 x 181 cm

Musée du Louvre

© RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre) / Adrien

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In this painting all the adroitness of Rouget is observed, the composition perfectly harmonizes thanks to a palette playing on rather dark shades of green which make it possible to highlight the youthful freshness of the flesh of the shepherd. The expression of the young boy is very skillfully studied, all in reserve, emerges from his face, which could seem neutral at first sight, a kind of concern mixed with a touching innocence. His gaze cast towards a distant horizon, invisible to the viewer, seems to rest on a destiny he knows to be fatal. In this striking painting, Rouget experiments both a work on beauty but also on the subtlety of emotions.

The painting comes from the collection of Athanase Lavallée (1768-1818), secretary of the Louvre Museum, at the time called the Napoleon museum. From 1797, he will be the assistant of Vivant Denon and will even replace him at the head of the institution when he resigned in 1815. It was during a sale organized after his death on March 9, 1818 that the painting was sold to Mr. Bouteville for an amount of 40 francs. The work is quoted by the specialist of the painter Mr Alain Pougetoux in the catalog of the exhibition dedicated to Georges Rouget which was held at the Museum of Romantic Life in 1995.¹.



Attributed to Pierre-Paul PRUD'HON. 1758-1823.

Portrait of Athanase Lavallée,
1809,

Oil on canvas

Musée des Beaux-arts d'Orléans

© RMN-Grand Palais / Agence

Bulloz

We would like to thank M. Alain Pougetoux, specialist of the painter and writer of the monography of Georges Rouget, for having authenticated our artwork as being from the artist's hand.

A few artworks in the public collections:

- **Georges ROUGET**, *Religious Wedding of Napoléon I and of the archduchess Marie-Louise*, 1810, Oil on canvas, 185 x 182 cm, Château de Versailles
- **Georges ROUGET**, *Mesdemoiselles Mollien*, 1811, Oil on canvas, 130 x 97,3 cm, musée du Louvre
- **Georges ROUGET**, *Oedipus, and Antigone on Mount Cytheron*, 1814, Oil on canvas, 276,5 x 212,5 cm, Musée des Beaux-arts de Rouen
- **Georges ROUGET**, *The Assembly of Notables in Rouen*, 1822, Oil on canvas, 385 x 304 cm, Château de Versailles
- **Georges ROUGET**, *Saint-Louis dispensing justice under an oak tree at Vincennes*, 1826, Oil on canvas, 320 x 261 cm, Château de Versailles
- **Georges ROUGET**, *Portrait of Clovis III, King of Austrasia* (1836), Oil on canvas, 92,5 x 75 cm, Château de Versailles

¹ Alain Pougetoux, *Georges Rouget élève de David*, musée de la Vie romantique 12 septembre-17 décembre 1995, Paris musées, 1995, p.138