

LE CLAIRE

SEIT 1982

KUNST



MAURICE DENIS

1870 Granville - Saint-Germain-en-Laye 1943

Le Goûter sur la cale — soir or *Le goûter au Pouldu*
[*A Quayside Snack, in the Evening* or *The Snack at Le Pouldu*]

Pen and brown ink, black and grey wash, executed 1899-1900.
Inscribed and signed at the lower right: *Dessin p. le catalogue, M. Denis.*
198 x 237 mm

PROVENANCE: MM. Bernheim Jeune et fils, Paris (1900) – Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, London (1987) – Colin Clarke, London – Thence by descent

LITERATURE: *Ceuvres de Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Ibels, Aristide Maillol, Hermann Paul, Ranson, Roussel, Sérusier, Vallotton, Vuillard*, exhib. cat., MM. Bernheim Jeune et fils, Paris 1900, reproduced on the cover of the catalogue – *Nineteenth Century French Drawings*, exhib. cat., Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, London 1987, no. 33

EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1900, MM. Bernheim Jeune et fils, *Ceuvres de Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Ibels, Aristide Maillol, Hermann Paul, Ranson, Roussel, Sérusier, Vallotton, Vuillard*, 2 - 22 April 1900 – London 1987, Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, London, *Nineteenth Century French Drawings*, June - July 1987, no. 33.

Maurice Denis and his family spent the summer of 1899 at Le Pouldu on the south coast of Brittany. Eva, the sister of the painter's wife Marthe, accompanied the couple and their two children. During this pleasant stay at the seaside Denis mainly drew his subject matter from his immediate surroundings, making frequent use of his family as models for his figure compositions.¹

The present drawing depicts a scene near the Hotel Poitier at Le Pouldu, where Denis and his family lodged. Marthe and Eva are shown offering a snack to the artist's eldest daughter, Noëlle, who sits in her fashionable sailor suit and hat on a bench beside a crab trap, while at the left a Breton woman holds the baby, Bernadette, who was born in April 1899. At the right two girls skip away into the background. Denis's handling of the scene conveys a sense of intimacy and familiarity.

This drawing is inspired by the painting of the same title which Denis regarded as one of his most important works. It was painted between the summer of 1899 and March 1900 [Fig.1]². It was a decisive moment for the Nabis Group and for Denis himself. The work combines classical tradition with characteristic elements of the Nabis aesthetic.

In the drawing Denis reduces the format of the motif and limits his palette to nuances of grey and brown tones. However he forfeits none of the charm and the lightness of the painting with its playful lines, fluid patterning and summer light as the evening sun glows among the silhouettes of trees in

¹ See: *Baigneuses, plage du Pouldu*, 1899, oil on canvas, 85.5 x 113 cm. Musée des Beaux-Arts de la ville de Paris [PPP2138]. – *Maternité à la fenêtre*, 1899, oil on canvas, 70 x 62.2 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris [RF1941 42] – *Maternité au Pouldu, effet de soir*, 1899, oil on canvas, 49 x 65 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Pont-Aven. – *Le Petit déjeuner*, 1901, oil on cardboard, 51.3 x 66.5 cm. Stadel Museum, Frankfurt am Main [SG 392]

² *Une Passion Française, La Collection Marlene et Spencer Hays*, exhib. cat., Musée d'Orsay, Paris 2013, repr. p. 79, listed p. 199. – *Maurice Denis, 1870-1943*, exhib. cat., Musée d'Orsay, Paris; Musée des beaux arts de Montréal; Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea, Rovereto 2006-7, no. 70, repr.

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the background. It is no surprise that this drawing was chosen to be reproduced on the cover of the catalogue of the prominent Nabis exhibition held at Galerie Bernheim Jeune in Paris in April 1900. The exhibition included works by Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Henri-Gabriel Ibels, Aristide Maillol, Hermann Paul, Paul Ranson, Ker-Xavier Roussel, Paul Sérusier, Félix Vallotton and Édouard Vuillard [Fig. 2]. Nine paintings by Denis were shown at this exhibition, among them *Le Goûter sur la cale – soir*.

A comparable drawing by Denis of the same subject and in similar size was formerly in the collection of Antoine Terrasse, Paris [Fig. 3].³

We would like to thank Claire Denis, granddaughter of the artist, for confirming the authenticity of the drawing and for her assistance in preparing the present catalogue entry. She is responsible for the publication of the forthcoming catalogue raisonné of Maurice Denis's oeuvre.⁴



Fig. 1: *Le Goûter sur la cale – soir* / *Le Goûter au Pouldu*, 1900
Oil on canvas, signed and dated: MAVD 1900. 74 x 97 cm.
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, (Donation of Marlene and Spencer Hays, 2016)

³ This drawing was published by Huguette Berès in her exhibition catalogue *Au temps des Nabis*, Paris, 29 May - 20 July 1990, no. 57, and again in her catalogue *Maurice Denis 1870-1943*, Paris 1992, no. 87.

⁴ In her email of 12 May 2021 Claire Denis writes: *C'est un dessin qui a été fait à partir d'un tableau, exprès pour illustrer le catalogue de l'exposition Bernheim: Le goûter sur la cale ou Le goûter au Pouldu, 1900 (indexation: 900.0030). Près de l'hôtel Portier au Pouldu, où les Denis logeaient l'été 1899, 2 femmes, Marthe, l'épouse du peintre, et Eva, la sœur de Marthe, donnent le goûter à Noëlle, la fille aînée du peintre, assise sur un casier à crabes, alors qu'une Bretonne porte la seconde, Bernadette, née en 1899.*

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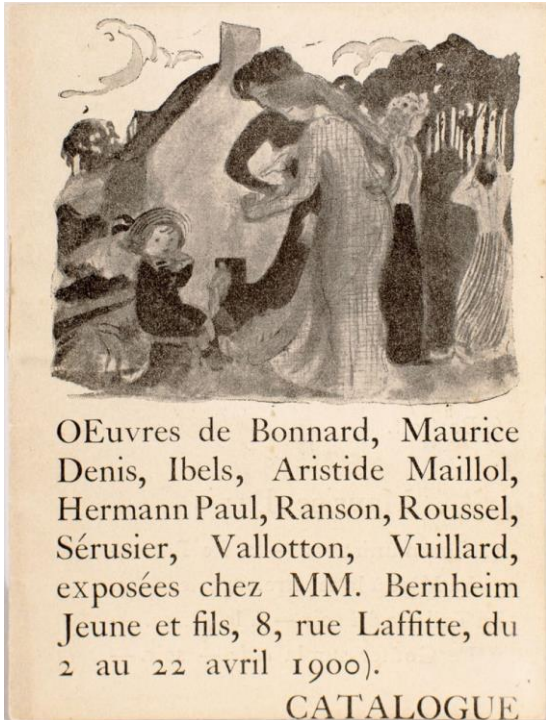


Fig. 2: The present drawing reproduced as cover illustration for the exhibition catalogue, *Oeuvres de Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Ibels, Aristide Maillol, Hermann Paul, Ranson, Roussel, Sérusier, Vallotton, Vuillard*, MM. Bernheim Jeune et fils, Paris, 2 - 22 April 1900



Fig. 3: *Le Gôter sur la cale or Au Pouldu*, 1899-1900
Pencil, and black ink with wash. Signed in black chalk: MAVD
166 x 226 mm
With Huguette Berès, Paris (1990-92)