



Georges Michel (?)

Ciel d'orage (Stormy sky)

Oil on board, 47.3 x 63 cm

on verso, frame, upper centre, inscribed in red: "1934/2"; upper right, in pencil: "Fot."; in blue: "R233";
at right, inscribed in blue: "214" [in circle]

Provenance:

By 1912: Ernest May, Paris (per CCP)

(...)

By 1927: with Galerie Charpentier, Paris (CCP)

(...)

Possible sale: Galerie Fievez, Brussels, 6 December 1937, lot 171 ?

(...)

By latest 1945: Hildebrand Gurlitt, Aschbach

1945–1950 Central Collecting Point Wiesbaden, no. WIE 1934/2

From 15 December 1950: Hildebrand Gurlitt, Dusseldorf

Thence by descent to Cornelius Gurlitt, Munich/Salzburg

From 6 May 2014: Estate of Cornelius Gurlitt

Exhibition:

L'exposition centennale de l'art français, Institut Français, St. Petersburg, 15–28 January 1912 [as collection Ernest May]

Rétrospective Georges Michel 1763–1843, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 29 March–15 April 1927. [cat. no. 80, as *Ciel d'Orage*]

Bibliographical reference:

Catalogue d'une collection de tableaux et de miniatures du XVIe au XXe siècle (...). Auct. cat., Galerie Fievez, Brussels, 6 December 1937. [possibly lot 171, as *Paysage*]

Primary sources:

Hildebrand Gurlitt and Cornelius Gurlitt Papers:

Catalogues: 15.2_1505 (Charpentier, 1927)

Photographs: BArch, N 1826 Bild-0940 [=9.1_F927], [November 1937]
BArch, N 1826 Bild-2088 [=21.1_F2111], [n.d.]

Seizure Inventory [Sicherstellungsverzeichnis], 2012, no. SV Part 2/105

Hildebrand Gurlitt and Cornelius Gurlitt Papers – possible references:

Current (checking) account: 25 February 1942 [fol. W. 34]
17 March 1942[?] [fol. J. 54]

Imports and exports ledger: 22 September 1941 [no. 1489]
25 February 1942 [no. 1489]

Sales ledger 1937–41: 17 November 1942 [no. 140]
15 February 1943 [no. 170]
3 February 1943 [no. 171]
5 April 1943 [no. 170]
22 September 1941 [no. 114]
25 February 1942 [no. 151]

Sales ledger 1937–?: 1941 [no. 1489]
25 February 1942 [no. 1489]
25 November 1942 [no. 1666–1672]
1942 [no. 1666–1672]
5 April 1943 [no. 1666–1672]
3 February 1943 [no. 1758–1761]
15 February 1943 [no. 1758–1761]
22 September 1941 [no. 1489]

National Archives, College Park, Maryland:

M1947, Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point, Property Card no. WIE 1934/2
www.fold3.com/image/231951596/ (6 September 2015)

Further sources consulted:

Cataloue de tableaux anciens et dessins (...) composant l'importante collection de M. E. May. Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 4 June 1890.

Larguier, Léo. *Georges Michel (1763–1843)*. Paris: André Delpeuch, 1927.

Exposition rétrospective d'œuvres de Georges Michel. Exh. cat., Galerie Guy Stein, Paris, 5 December 1938–7 January 1939.

Exposition Rétrospective de Georges Michel à l'occasion du centenaire de sa mort 1763–1843. Exh. Cat., Galerie Lefranc & Engrand, Paris, 8–25 May 1943.

Bouret, Jean. *L'École de Barbizon et le paysage français au XIXe siècle.* Paris: La Bibliothèque des Arts, 1972.

Müllerschön, Bernd, and Thomas Maier. *Die Maler der Schule von Barbizon: Wegbereiter des Impressionismus.* Stuttgart: Ed. Thombe, 2002.

Archives de Paris
Archives Nationales, Paris
Archives of Contemporary Art in Belgium
Bundesarchiv, Koblenz
Centre Pompidou, Bibliothèque Kandinsky, Paris
Cultural Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg: Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume
Database "Central Collecting Point München"
Database "Kunstsammlung Hermann Göring"
Getty Provenance Index, German Sales Catalogs
Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Paris
Lootedart.com
Lost Art
Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Archives diplomatiques, Paris
Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin
Répertoire des Biens Spoliés
Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague
Verzeichnis national wertvoller Kunstwerke ("Reichsliste von 1938")
Witt Library, London
Zentralarchiv für deutsche und internationale Kunstmarktforschung, Cologne

Note:

This work originated in the collection of Ernest May (1845 Strasbourg–1925 Paris), a banker and prominent art collector. An early sale of works from his collection was sold through Galerie Georges Petit on 4 June 1890. Following May's death, twelve works were bequeathed to the Musée du Louvre.

The Property Card of the Central Collecting Point Wiesbaden records the presence of two exhibition labels on verso: the 1927 retrospective in Paris and the 1912 exhibition of French art in St. Petersburg, with the latter inscribed as "Collection May." These labels have not been preserved, or are possibly concealed by the laying down of canvas on verso.

The extant sale ledgers of Hildebrand Gurlitt list many Georges Michel works. Owing to the lack of specific details given therein, it has not to date been possible to establish definitively when and where this work was acquired.

The possible provenance that was tentatively assigned to the artwork in the course of its seizure, and later published on Lostart.de, requires further research.

The personal papers found in Cornelius Gurlitt's Salzburg home include a collection of about 2,400 photographs of artworks. Photograph no. 9.1_F927 is a reproduction of this work; inscribed on verso, a statement of authenticity by art expert Jean Charpentier of Paris, dated November 1937. It has not, to date, been possible to establish definitively whether Hildebrand Gurlitt acquired the work directly through Jean Charpentier and/or the Gallery Fievez. A second photograph (no. 21.1_F2111) is an interior shot of the Gurlitt family residence in Düsseldorf, with this painting mounted on the wall.

The original report on the provenance of this work, as submitted to the Task Force Schwabing Art Trove, was made accessible online at www.taskforce-kunstfund.de as of 14 January 2016. That report was updated by the Gurlitt Provenance Research Project on 16 March 2017.

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