THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS FOR JANUARY

PAINTINGS BY
HENRI CARO-DELVAILLE

JANUARY 7 TO FEBRUARY 6, 1919
HENRI CARO-DELVAILLE

As a Frenchman of the younger generation I deem it a privilege to present Henri Caro-Delvaille to the American public by defining the exact position this distinguished artist occupies among his compatriots. Artistic circles in America have undoubtedly been quick to sense the rank this painter deserves, but the general public which has many interests, naturally enough, does not always adequately realize the true position that an artist occupies, especially when he is a foreigner. At all periods, save for certain rare exceptions, it is time alone that has served to internationalize the world’s famous men.

In France we have known Caro-Delvaille for twenty years. His debut was a striking one; attracting attention at once by the clarified vision, the brilliance of style, and the luminosity that he contributed to the color scheme of French art. The critics, who felt called upon to trace the genealogy of the artist saw fit to relate him to Ingres and Goya. Others saw in him a disciple of Manet. As a matter of fact Caro-Delvaille exemplifies a temperament Spanish by origin but disciplined by French culture. The simplification of form obtained through the solid fixing of values in the atmosphere which is so characteristic in his work exerted an undeniable influence upon the generation that followed him. Personally, I remember that arriving in Paris thirteen years ago, I was struck, in the course of my almost daily visits to the Luxembourg Museum, to see young painters disputing a favorable place for copying a canvas by Caro-Delvaille. This fact is significant of the artistic satisfaction this painter affords our generation. As we in France are rather fond of classifications, Caro-Delvaille has been dubbed "The Painter of Woman"; for at
the beginning of his career he painted a whole series of intimate portraits in which women held the dominant place. Very soon, however, he underwent a distinct evolution which drew him toward a profound study of the nude.

The most observant artists realized at this time that one would have perhaps to go back to Titian and Veronese to find the radiactivity of the flesh the secret of which this young painter seemed to have re-discovered. His extremely modern sensibilities were most decisively influenced by the study of the antique, not in academic formulas but by a dignity and logic which he extracted from the living form.

For ten years his evolution continued along the tendencies of his early work. That which followed became constantly more plastic and more stylistic, and the compositions that he gives us today are the admirable fruits of twenty years of work in the full possession of his matured powers. He gives us a transcription of reality, a style however which does not weaken the astonishing gift of his meridional temperament.

I believe that this exhibition is especially significant at the present moment, when the tawdry and meretricious tend to dominate. There is a great lesson in the work of Henri Caro-Delvalle for it aims to place modern society in its proper setting, that is, to express it in our terms which shall carry on the tradition of the ancients and which may replace the dreary and feeble imitations of the masters of the past. On the day when modern society comprehends this necessary development of decorative art as applied to the modern home, all art and artists will be greatly benefitted thereby. Under such conditions art will not only take the form of practical expression of modern life but will naturally tend toward the domain of divine fantasy which is its true goal.
How grateful we of today should be to Henri Caro-Delvaille for revealing to us with such courage and such nobly disinterested energy the possibilities of restoring its true significance to the art of the painter. Through his work he brings an important message to our whole artistic generation.

Caro-Delvaille exercises his incomparable stylistic art not only in these portraits themselves but in his understanding of the method of depicting a type. He is ever preoccupied with classifying his subject according to some artistic standard; in a word, striving to epitomize its organic and psychic essence. In so doing, he has accomplished what few painters have done before; he has carried on the great tradition of the old masters, who bequeathed portraits to posterity, which, entirely aside from the personalities they portrayed, ever remain eternal types in themselves.

Denys Amiel
CATALOGUE

"PHILOSOPHY"—Three Decorations
1 MEDITATION
2 CONTROVERSY
3 CONTEMPLATION

"YOUTH"—Three Decorations
4 FESTIVAL OF SPRING
5 FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH
6 ALTAR OF LOVE

Decorative Panels
7 THE GRAY SCARF
8 THE OFFERING
9 THE BLACK GRAPES
10 THE POOL
11 GARDENER'S BASKET
12 GARDENER'S BASKET
13 FLOWER DECORATION
14 FLOWER DECORATION
15 FLOWER DECORATION
16 DECORATIVE SKETCH
17 DECORATIVE SKETCH
18 DECORATIVE SKETCH

PORTRAITS
19 PORTRAIT OF MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER
20 MRS. SPICER-SIMSON
21 MME. FELIX WILDENSTEIN AND DAUGHTERS
22 MONSIEUR DENYS AMIEL
23 MR. BRYSON BURROUGHS
24 MR. CARLOS SALZEDO
25 MR. SPICER-SIMSON
26 SELF PORTRAIT