

ELLIOTT FINE ART

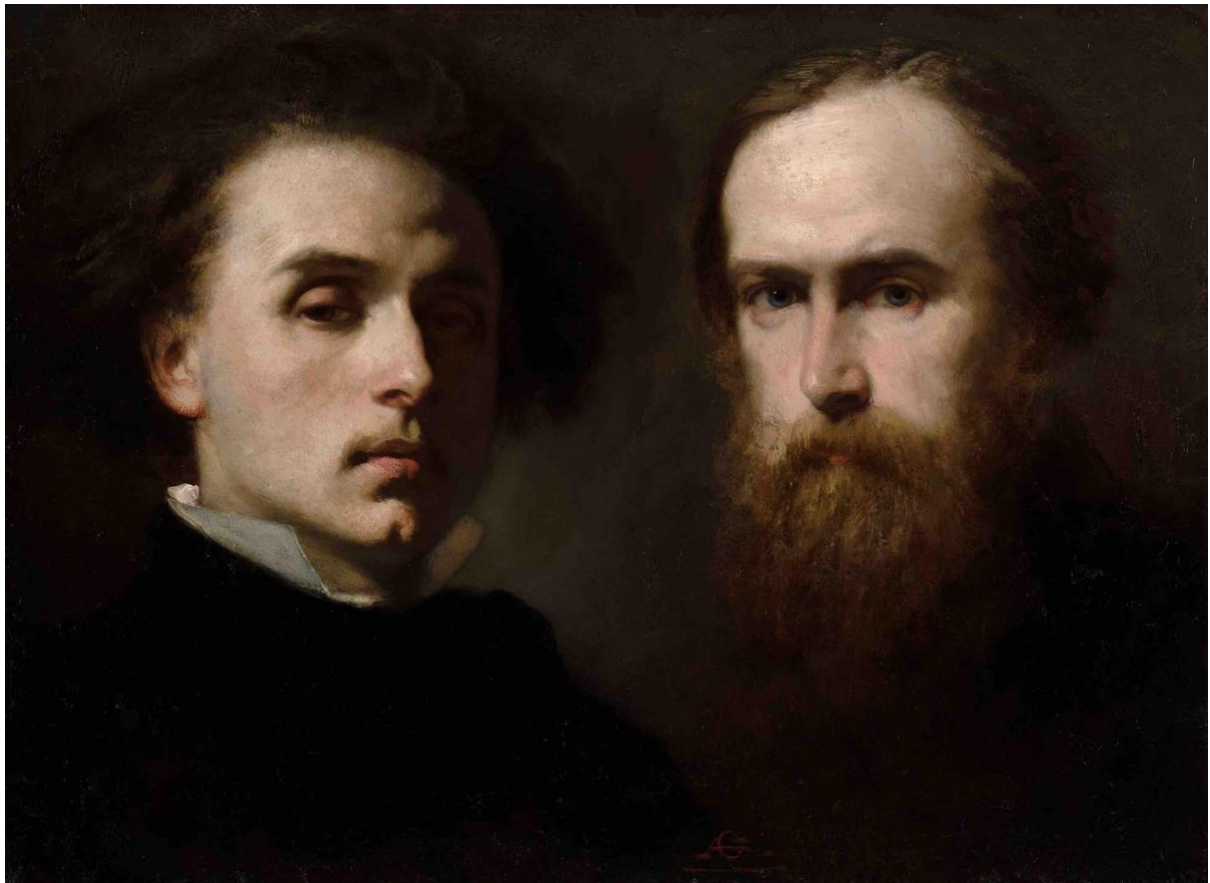
Nineteenth Century to Early Modern

Auguste-Barthélémy Glaize
(Montpellier 1807 – 1893 Paris)

Self-portrait of the artist with a bearded man

Monogrammed lower centre: AG
Oil on card affixed to board
44.5 x 59 cm. (17 ½ x 23 ¼ in.)

Provenance:
Léon Glaize (1842 – 1931), son of the artist;
Thence by descent until 2022.



A major artistic figure in time, the Montpellier-born Auguste-Barthélémy Glaize has been sadly neglected since his death in 1893. To this day, there has been no monographic studies dedicated to the eclectic and adaptable artist who debuted at the Salon of 1836, perhaps partly due to the inability to pigeon-hole Glaize into a single artistic movement. The present painting, a self-portrait of the artist alongside an unidentified older man, aptly demonstrates why the artist was so highly regarded by his contemporaries.

Glaize's haughty features and shock of over swept wavy hair are clearly recognisable from the slightly later self-portrait in the Art Institute of Chicago (fig. 1), where the artist, bearded, portrays himself alone. The double portrait dates to circa 1830, when Glaize was in his early twenties and still in the Parisian studio of the brothers Eugène and Achille Deveria. He appears here, at the outset of his career, full of confidence. One might even see a certain disdain in his expression, as if the young artist is sure of his destiny to surmount the French art world. The second figure may be the artist's father or at least a close family member, given that the painting remained until recently with Glaize's descendants, alongside other family portraits.

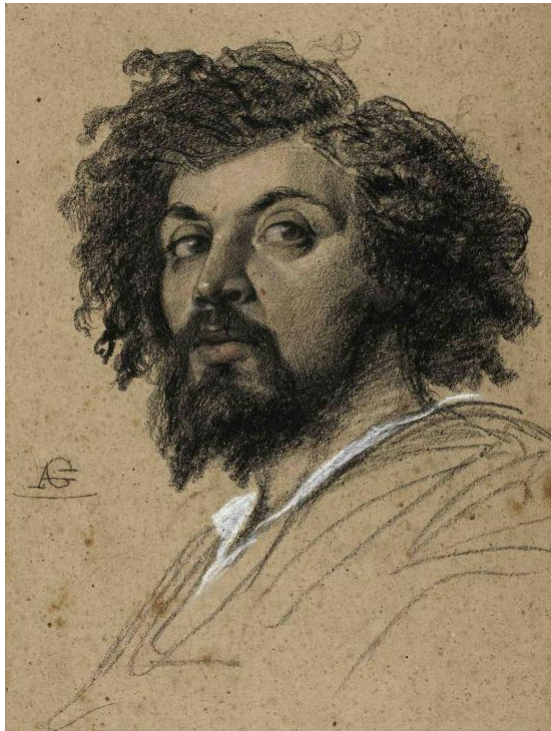


Fig. 1, Auguste-Barthélémy Glaize, *Self-portrait*, c. 1835, crayon on paper, 39.1 x 29.4 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago

Glaize's painting fits beautifully into the narrative arc of French 19th-century self-portraiture. In some ways it is a transitional painting, bridging the gap between Romanticism and Realism. The two illuminated heads, emerging from the gloom, are strongly reminiscent of Eugène Delacroix's youthful self-portrait (fig. 2), executed about fifteen years previously. There is also a more naturalistic streak, with the thick impasto and daubs of paint prefiguring much of Gustave Courbet's self-portraiture from the following decade (fig. 3). Here, Glaize's penetrating presence, combined with the broad brushstrokes and tonal contrasts, reconcile these two movements, and find echoes in the early work of Henri Fantin-Latour and Carlos Duran (fig. 4) at the century's midpoint. All of these paintings

demonstrate the continued hold of Spanish 17th-century art, then visible in the Louvre, over generation to generation of young French artists.

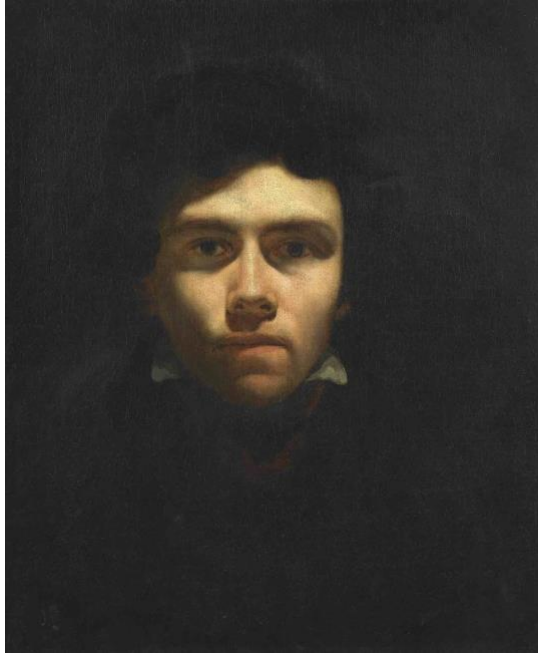


Fig. 2, Eugène Delacroix, *Self-portrait*, c. 1816, oil on canvas, 60.5 x 50.5 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen

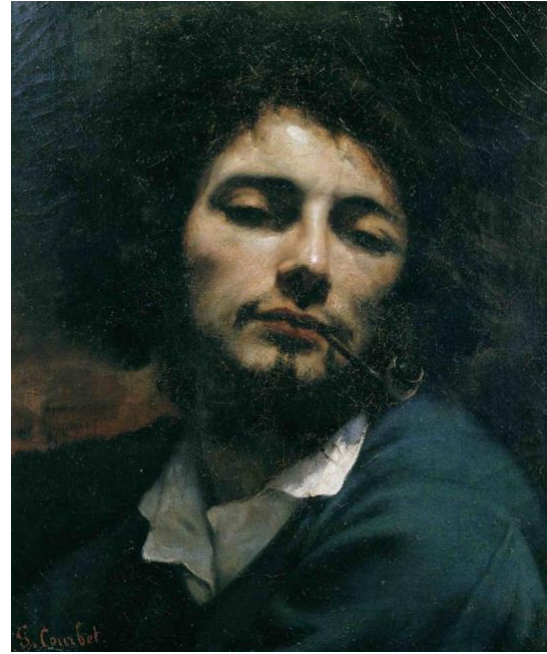


Fig. 3, Gustave Courbet, *Self-portrait with a pipe*, c. 1848, oil on canvas, 60.5 x 50.5 cm, Musée Fabre, Montpellier

The connection between Glaize and Courbet is potentially a fascinating one and yet has never been explored. As leading figures in the French art world and, more importantly, as favourites of Alfred Bruyas, the important collector and patron, the two would surely have known each other. Courbet would have seen Glaize's works in the home of Bruyas, when he visited the collector in Montpellier in the early 1850s. Of course, the aforementioned portraits pre-date this visit, though still raise the question of whether Courbet looked to Glaize, twelve years his senior, for artistic inspiration. The present work might suggest that he did.