

IN THE COURTYARD AT A COACHING INN - Jehan Georges Vibert (1840-1902)



Photograph by Goupil dated 1877

Two men are vying for the attention of a young beauty, who definitely seems to favour the flamboyant *hidalgo* over the ill-mannered *hombre* staring at her. The scene is frowned upon by the black-clad curate, who obviously reproves of such debauchery.

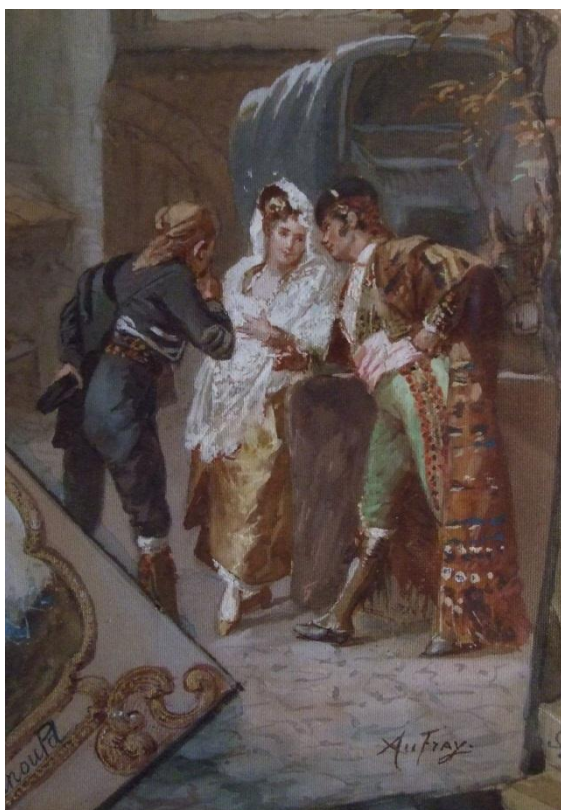
Vibert travelled frequently to Spain and brought back quantities of typical clothes and trinkets to be used as props in later paintings. He became friends with painter Eduardo Zamacois, to the point of sending a joint exhibit at the 1866 Salon 'The Torreros' Arrival'. In 1878 he founded the Society of French Watercolour Artists with Louis Leloir, Jules Worms, Prosper Berne-Bellecour and Zamacois. His paintings were widely reproduced by art dealer Adolphe Goupil, who had been his guardian following his father's death.

The fan by Lauronce only reproduces the central part of Vibert's painting, omitting the curate whose deeply-offended glare lent piquancy to the scene.



Fan by Lauronce

The same part of the painting also features on the fan-shaped painting that Ernest Kees' employees presented to their boss on his retirement in 1894.



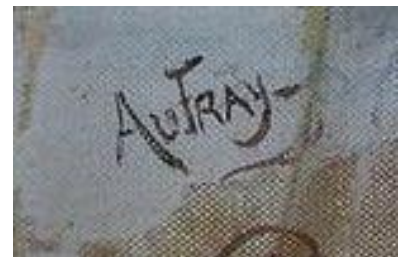
Musée de l'Eventail-Hervé Hoguet, Paris

The background is even more simplified than on the Lauronce fan: the travellers resting under the awning on the left have disappeared. The artist has added a personal touch: a pensive-looking donkey instead of the jug meant to collect water from the drainpipe.

This artist has signed his/her work, but that doesn't help much identifying him/her. Experts do not even agree on the name: Georgina Letourmy in '*Kees, éventailliste parisien*' reads 'Anfray' whereas the catalogue of the 1985 exhibition '*L'éventail, miroir de la belle Epoque*' mentions 'Aufray'. Both surnames appear in the Paris birth-and death certificates for the years 1880/1890, so which one should be favoured ?

The *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* mentions « Radon (Mme) née Anne Marie Elisa Anfray, rue de la Tour, 27, Passy ». The Bénézit dictionary identifies the lady as « a pupil of Charlet » who exhibited portraits at the Salon between 1841 and 1849. Could she still have been in activity 45 years later ? That would be a long career indeed.

The following fan should also be considered. It was sold on the Internet in 2004 and reportedly made by Kees. The painted cartouche is signed 'Aufray' and though the shape of the letter Y is different it could be the same hand as on the Kees Retirement painting.



Fan by Kees (?) signed 'Aufray'

References:

- Georgina Letourmy: '*Kees, éventailliste parisien*' Musée de l'Éventail-Hervé Hoguet, Paris, 2005.
- Catalogue of the exhibition '*L'éventail, miroir de la belle Epoque*' Musée Galliera, Paris, 1985.
- Annuaire publié par la *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Paris, 1870.
- E.Bénézit, '*Dictionnaire de tous les peintres de toutes les époques*'
