



Self-portrait
Pharaon De Winter
Oil painting on canvas
1909, Lille



Mrs Fagoo's portrait
Pharaon De Winter
Oil painting on canvas
1890, Lille



The indiscreet
Pharaon De Winter
Oil painting on canvas
1884, Bailleul

A jewel of the Benoît De Puydt Drawing Academy, Pharaon De Winter (Bailleul 1849 - Lille 1924)

Pharaon De Winter was born in Bailleul on 17th November 1849. He was the third child of Zéphirin De Winter, who was a clog maker and of Régina Seingier. Encouraged by his father he attended the class of Edouard Swynghedauw at the drawing academy of Bailleul at the age of 11, which was founded by Benoît De Puydt. After obtaining a scholarship from the De Puydt foundation, he went to attend Alphonse Colas' courses at the Beaux Arts School in Lille. In 1872, he was successfully admitted to the Competitive Entrance Exam of the Beaux Arts School in Paris where he chose to join Alexandre Cabanel's workshop. From 1875 onwards he took part in the French artists' Salon de la Société, to which he would remain faithful; he exhibited *Saint Sébastien* and the portrait of *Mademoiselle Angéline Charlet*, whom he married two years later. A son was born from this marriage in January 1878. The following year, after his son's and his wife's death, the painter went to Italy. During the winter, he stayed in Turin and Pisa, then he visited Florence and Rome where he immersed himself in Raphael's and Michelangelo's artworks.

A spokesman of the Northern realist school

Back in Bailleul, his work started to be acknowledged, including portraits, religious scenes, a few genre scenes: indoors and in convents. In 1887, recommended by Alexandre Cabanel and Jules Breton, Pharaon De Winter followed Alphonse Colas as professor and director at the Beaux-Arts School in Lille. In 1889, he married Julie Fagoo who had been posing for him for a few years. The young couple visited Belgium and Holland, bringing back numerous sketches from the paintings they had admired and the monuments they had visited. The newlyweds settled in Lille. Zephyr was born in 1891, followed by Rosa in 1901. After conflicts with the school administration, the artist opened his own academy in 1902, at the rue Sainte Catherine in Lille. After Julie Fagoo De Winter died in 1905, he returned to the Beaux-Arts school in Lille.

A portraitist without equal

In 1909, Pharaon De Winter achieved great success at the Salon with his *self-portrait*, which was acquired by the State. This acquisition marks a turning point in the artist's career, who then started to receive many orders for portraits. A retrospective of his work including 80 paintings was organised in Roubaix in 1911; this exhibition met with a great success.

During the First World War, he suffered from cataract. In spite of being operated six times, he continued teaching. In 1918 Bailleul was nearly destroyed, and so was the studio at rue des Moulins in which Pharaon De Winter had stored several major artworks, maybe in the hope of establishing a museum.

Despite his poor health, he kept sending previously painted works to Salons. He died in Lille on 22nd June 1924.