

Daniel Katz Gallery

ANTIQUITY TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Sir Francis Chantrey (Norton 1781 - London 1841)

Lady Gertrude Sloane-Stanley

Circa: 1813

Marble

65 cm. high (including socle)

Inscribed Lady Gertrude Sloane Stanley and signed F. L. Chantrey sculptor 1813 on the reverse

1813

Chantrey was the most successful portraitist of his generation. Admired for his penetrating studies of character, he often represented friends, luminaries and monarchs but he was also commissioned larger public statues. The lively modelling and the choice of informal dress featured on the present bust are typical of Chantrey's style. Characteristic also is the focus on the sitter's mental concentration, as well as the dry finish of the marble.

Chantrey exhibited six busts at the Royal Academy in 1811, which were his first major success at the exhibition. From that year onwards the artist also began to receive prestigious commissions for important public monuments, such as the statue of George III (1881-1815; London, Guildhall;

destroyed). His professional status was endorsed when he was elected ARA in 1816; he was made a full Academician in 1818, when he was also elected to the Royal Society. Throughout his working life Chantrey laid great emphasis on the fact that he was self-taught and a 'labourer in art'. Indeed there is no evidence that he received formal training from any sculptor. He particularly admired the Elgin Marbles and Roubiliac's portrait sculpture.

Among his portrait busts there are few of women, a notable exception being that of the eminent scientist Lady Mary Somerville (1833–4; London, Royal Society), one of his friends.

Lady Gertrude Howard (1783-1870) was the daughter of Frederick Howard, fifth Earl of Carlisle and cousin of Lord Byron. She took the name of Sloane Stanley in 1806 when she married Sir William Sloane Stanley. Her two-decade long correspondence with her brother-in-law Joseph Jekyll was published in 1894.

According to the 1991 Walpole Society publication (see lit.) the commission probably came to Chantrey by way of his wife's connections. Her father, Mr. Wale, served in the household of Mrs D'Oyly, a wealthy widow and patron of the young sculptor. She was the granddaughter of Sir Hans Sloane, whose collections formed the basis of the British Museum, and the Hans Sloane who commissioned this work was Sir Hans Sloane's nephew.

The marble bust shows Lady Sloane Stanley in thoughtful repose and demonstrates the sculptor's ability to capture the sitter's expression and render it with an easy informality that became the hallmark of his style.

Exhibitions

Exhibited:

London, The Royal Academy, 1813, n. 927

Literature:

Published:

The exhibition of the Royal Academy, London, B. McMillan, 1813, n. 927

G. Jones, Sir Francis Chantrey R.A.: Recollections of his life, practice and opinions, London, 1849

Yarrington, I. D. Lieberman, A. Potts and M. Baker, The Ledger of Sir Francis Chantrey, R.A., at the Royal Academy, 1809-41, The Walpole Society, Volume 56, 1991/92, n. 9, p. 27