



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Anna Klumpke (1856-1942)

Born in San Francisco in 1856, Anna became enamored by the celebrated French animal painter Rosa Bonheur, a giant among woman painters. Anna's mother arranged for her to study in Switzerland, then the family moved to Paris. There she and her sisters often sat around a large table, focused on sewing while one of her sisters would read aloud. Anna executed a copy of Rosa Bonheur's *Plowing in Nivernais* in the Musée du Luxembourg, which became for her a talisman.

In 1882 she entered the Académie Julian to study under Jules-Joseph Lefebvre and Tony Robert-Fleury. Right away, Klumpke's works were accepted in the Paris Salon, beginning with *An Eccentric* in 1882. By 1885 she received an Honorable Mention for a portrait and three years later, a medal at the Julian Academy. In 1886, Klumpke visited Italy. Two years later she painted *In the Wash House*, signed and dated "Paris 1888," which is in the collections of the Pennsylvania Academy. It won the Academy's Temple Gold Medal. When exhibited at the Paris Salon, the painting was noticed by Sara Hallowell, the representative from the Art Institute of Chicago (instrumental in introducing French impressionism to the Midwest), who saw to it that the work was exhibited in the Windy City as well.

Klumpke won a bronze medal for a portrait of a fashionable society lady at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1889 (no. 185). She met Bonheur that year at the painter's château. The two kept up a lively correspondence after Klumpke returned for a while to Boston. She even went out of her way to gather samples of fresh sagebrush, which she shipped to Bonheur, to be used for her painting *Wild Horses Fleeing from a Prairie Fire*. Also in 1889 she painted the fine portrait of Elizabeth Cady Stanton (National Portrait Gallery). In 1891 Klumpke exhibited *The Dream* in the Paris Salon in 1891. A year later this work became part of a one-woman show at the St. Botolph Club in Boston, one of thirty-eight oils and pastels. Following the show, six oils were sold and the artist received several commissions.

Boston reviewers were impressed by Klumpke's Parisian training. One praised her for her "fine perception of people and things." But the same critic found *The Dream* to be lacking in dramatic feeling, despite the excellent craftsmanship. On the other hand, the demanding jury in Paris had accepted the painting. In the *Boston Evening Transcript* (16 Jan. 1892) a critic stated that the portrait of the artist's mother could "hardly be too highly commended." One such portrait, dated 1889, is now in the Catherine A. Mueller Collection.

Klumpke's *Portrait of Miss M.D.* was on view at the Woman's Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, and in 1904 at the St. Louis Universal Exposition, Klumpke exhibited a *Portrait of Rosa Bonheur* and *Maternal Affection*. The latter may have been *Maternal Instruction*, painted in 1891, a delightful plein air mother and child scene, now in the New



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Later in 1898 Klumpke requested to execute Rosa Bonheur's portrait, which is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Klumpke moved in with Bonheur that year, and upon the older painter's death (1899), inherited her estate, including a château, where she remained for the next thirty years. Bonheur's oeuvre was sold by Galerie Georges Petit in 1900. She worked on a biography in French of Bonheur (published in 1908) and opened the château during the war years to be used as a hospital. Nearby, also working in the war-relief effort was Sara Hallowell, her old agent in Chicago.

After the war, Klumpke continued to be successful. Klumpke received the cross of the Legion of Honor in 1936. A year later she exhibited *Solitude and Monterey Cypress in California* at the Paris Salon. She moved back to San Francisco where she was nominated one of California's most distinguished women artists in 1940, the year in which she published her memoirs. The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco has two of her late works: *The Breeze* from 1910 and *The Artist's Father* (1912). Klumpke died in 1942.

Biography courtesy of Askart.com.