

The Gabriel Zendel Special



Gabriel Zendel,(1906-1992) *the Family*, ca 1939, water-colour and ink on paper, unsigned, 18 x 13.5 cm £170

Greetings from warm and sunny Norwich! Just before returning to the UK, at an auction in a sleepy spa town not far from Paris, I had the good fortune to discover a series of works on paper by Gabriel Zendel. They clearly had belonged to a single owner, and all dated from the same period, the late 1930s or early 1940s. Paintings by Zendel from this period are quite rare, since the artist was both active in military service, and persecuted as a Jew during the war.

Zendel was - and would always remain - a figurative artist. His later work is generally known as post-cubist, while his pictures from the second quarter of the 20th Century reflect the strange atmosphere of the time during which they were painted. They might be described as Neo-primitivist, Fauve, and often include a hint of surrealism (see his “Man with a Moustache” a little further on)

I love this strong, edgy depiction of a woman with bobbed hair, who makes me think of the German Expressionists from that period:



Gabriel Zendel *The Woman in the Green Dress* ca 1938, gouache and watercolour on paper, 30 x 22 cm signed lower right, £300

Gabriel Zendel was born in January 1906 in Jezov, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, into a Polish Family of Jewish origin.

His father Joseph Zendel worked as a bookbinder, his mother was called Regina. Gabriel was the eldest of three children and had two sisters, Jenny and Josée, with whom he maintained a close relationship all his life.



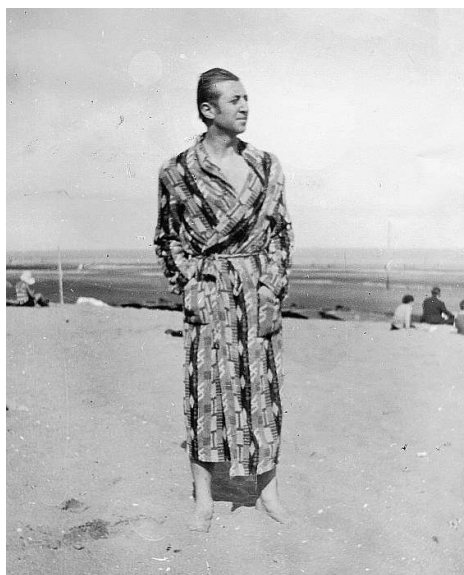
The Zendel family, circa 1916

Gabriel's vocation as a painter manifested itself from childhood, and was always encouraged by his relatives. The family settled in Paris, where the father successfully opened an art book binding workshop on Avenue Jean-Jaurès. Young Gabriel started to work there as an apprentice aged 14 - and set up an easel at the back of the shop!

In 1925, Zendel enrolled in the Institute of Contemporary Aesthetics in rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, where Paul Bornet was a professor. His studies were interrupted by eighteen months of national service in Morocco for eighteen months. Back in Paris, he resumed his studies with Paul Bornet, who taught him the techniques of engraving on copper and wood, as well as to make prints. At the same time, he earned his living by working in advertising, which in those days meant designing and drawing posters in the art deco style.

In 1929, Zendel sold his first painting, a Montmartre urban landscape, and began to enjoy a certain celebrity.

On the request of Jean Cassou, the writer, art critic and the first Director of the new Musée national d'Art moderne in Paris, the French state bought its first of Gabriel's paintings. I found a wonderful photo of Gabriel Zendel, in a dressing gown on Cabourg beach, taken that very year!



Gabriel on Cabourg beach, 1929

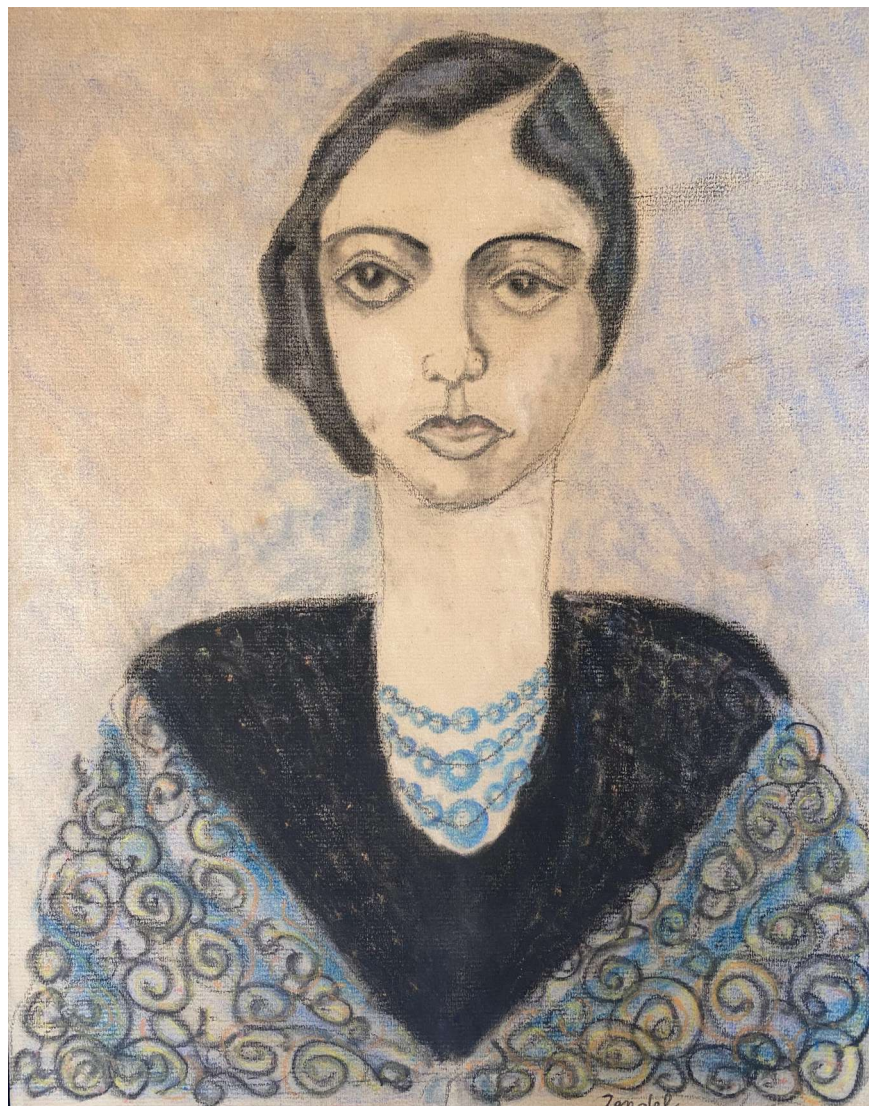
Gabriel did not travel much, but had taken study trips to Italy and the Netherlands (from which he returned with numerous drawings) and enjoyed working in the vicinity of Paris, in the towns of Meudon and Chaville.



Agathe Schneider, late 1930s

He married the love of his life, Agathe Scheider, a milliner, in late December 1939, just months after the war had broken out.

Among my paintings by Gabriel is a beautiful portrait of a young woman, evidently painted with great feeling. I believe it may well represent Agathe - wouldn't you agree?



Gabriel Zendel *Portrait of a Woman (Agathe?)*,
ca 1938, charcoal and pastel on paper, signed lower right, 36 x 29 cm, £400

A champion of the underdog, Zendel's art reflect all the pathos of the human condition. Like his namesake Gabriel Dauchot (see [here](#)), Zendel was fascinated by clowns, harlequins and pierrots and their symbolism. Consider this strange yet appealing figure:



Gabriel Zendel, *Man in a blue coat*, ca 1940, watercolour and gouache on paper, signed lower right, 42 x 30 cm £320

At the start of the war, Gabriel was mobilised to serve in a hospital train. He continued to draw and sent his works to Amiens, with the aim of organising an exhibition, but everything was lost when the city got destroyed.

When he was discharged from service, Gabriel returned to Paris. As a Jew, he was arrested, by the Germans, but managed to escape and settled in Cannes where he painted relentlessly. After the war, he returned to his Parisian studio.



Gabriel Zendel (1906-1992) *Café Liquoriste*, ink and watercolour on paper, ca 1939, unsigned, 18 x 12 cm, £ 165



Gabriel Zendel (1906-1992) *A Crowd*, ca 1939, watercolour and ink on paper, ca 1939, unsigned, 22 x 18 cm £230

For almost his entire career, from 1934, Gabriel Zendel worked at the "Montmartre aux Artistes" at 198 rue Ordener, a "city of artists" built in the 1930s in the art deco style by the architect Adolphe Thiers. It was established to provide a home for the artists who had settled in Montmartre, and who were being driven away by real estate operations and speculations.



Montmartre aux Artistes at 189 rue Ordener, Paris

Numerous artists whose work I find interesting lived and worked there: woman painter Yvette Alde, Jean Jacques Morvan (see [here](#)) Claude Groperrin (here) and Rodophe Cailloux (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

In 1947, Zendel produced twenty-five drawings for Léon-Paul Fargue's "Le Cirque" and planned to publish a book on dance. However, this book remained a draft.

In 1949, he went to America on the occasion of an exhibition of his works at the mythical Durand-Ruel Gallery in New York. The collector Stephen Clark bought a painting. Durand-Ruel also organised several exhibitions of Zendel's work in Paris.

I really cannot stress the prestige of being represented by Durand-Ruel enough. Paul Durand-Ruel had been the first to discover and support artists such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. An ambitious entrepreneur, Durand-Ruel cultivated international interest in French artists by establishing art galleries and exhibitions in London, New York, Berlin, Brussels, among other places. Durand-Ruel was the subject of a major temporary exhibition titled "Inventing Impressionism" held at the National Gallery in London in 2015.

Gabriel also had private views at the equally important Galerie de Paris, the Galerie Drouant-David, and the Galerie de la Présidence. Internationally, he showed his work in Sweden, Japan, Canada, Hungary and Switzerland.

Works by Gabriel Zendel are held by the Museum of modern art of the city of Paris, the Petit Palais, Paris, the French Embassy in Vienna, the Rennes Museum of Fine Arts , the Libourne Museum of Fine Arts, the Frédéric Blandin Municipal Museum in Nevers, the Museum of Modern and Contemporary art of Saint-Étienne, the Dunkirk Museum of Fine Arts, the Lyon Museum of Fine Arts, the Eugène-Boudin Museum in Honfleur, the André-Malraux Museum of Modern Art in Le Havre, the Denys-Puech Museum in Rodez, the Museum of Art and History of Judaism, Paris, in the French National Center for Plastic Arts, and in several other institutions.



Gabriel Zendel, *Man with a Moustache*, ca 1938, watercolour and gouache on paper, unsigned, 18 x 22 cm , £170

I hope you have enjoyed meeting the artist and hearing about his life; international and yet so very French, adventurous, creative, full of dreams; and yet so simple.

Some of the works by Zendel featuring in this newsletter are not signed. I will be happy to issue a Certificate of Authenticity, as I unconditionally guarantee the authenticity of all paintings here presented. Shipping/delivery is free for readers of this newsletter. All works have been lovingly framed - please find additional images on the pages that follow! Do feel free to email me for high definition photos.



Gabriel Zendel in his Montmartre studio in the 1970s

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For more paintings by 19th and 20th Century artists please visit

<http://www.sellingantiques.co.uk/skippingsfinearts/> .

New works of art are added regularly.

Stay safe, look after yourself, and enjoy the summer!

Tamara

To subscribe or to unsubscribe, please contact:

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Appendix:



The Family:

Overall framed size: in a mid century limed oak frame: 31 x 24 cm
£170



Woman in a Green Dress:

Overall size in a simple limed oak frame: 37 x 29 cm
£300



Portrait of a Woman (Agathe?)

Overall size in a modern hand patinated wooden frame: 52 x 46 cm
£400



Man in a blue coat

Overall size in a modern hand patinated wooden frame:
56 x 45 cm
£320



Café Liqueuriste

Overall size in an early 20th century limed oak frame: 31 x 25 cm

£165



A Crowd

Overall size in a simple oak frame:

43 x 37 cm

£230



Man with a Moustache
Overall size in an antique lacquered frame:
33.5 x 22.5 cm
£170



Some of the works by Zendel