

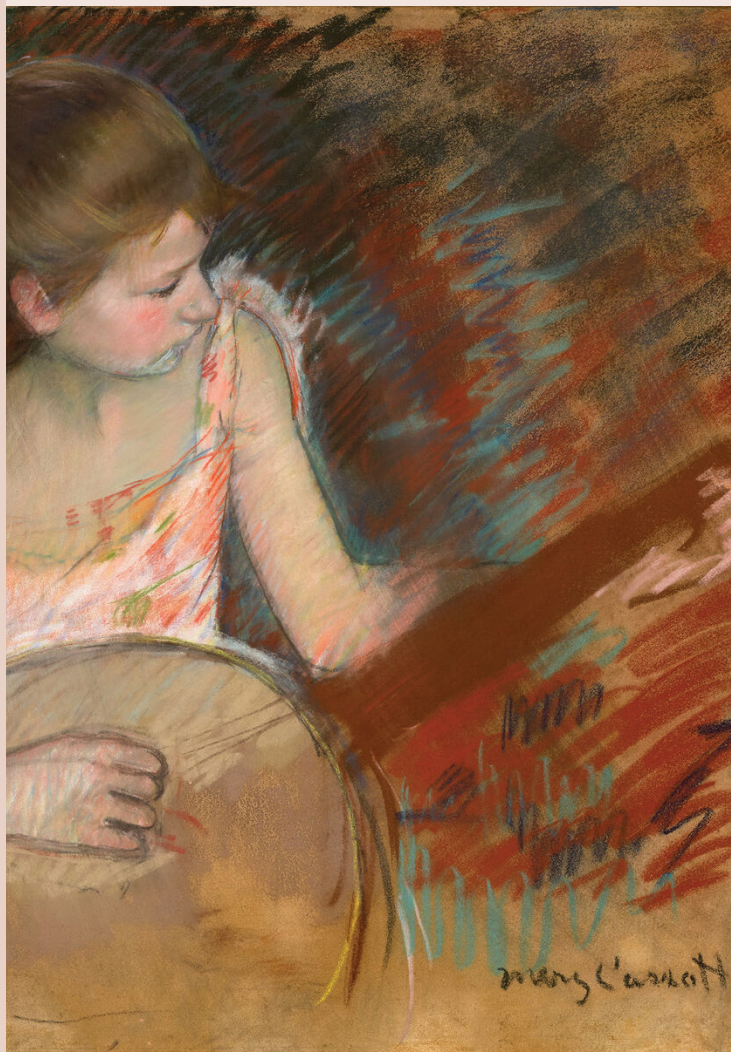
Mary Cassatt 1844-1926 | American



Girl with a Banjo

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Pastel on board | Circa 1893

Signed "Mary Cassatt" (lower right)

Paper: 23" high x 28" wide | 58.42 cm x 71.12 cm
Frame: 37 1/2" high x 42 1/4" wide x 2 3/4" deep
95.25 cm x 107.32 cm x 6.99 cm

“

She has infinite talent.

- Edgar Degas on Mary Cassatt

”



OVERVIEW

Mary Cassatt was the singular American to exhibit with the great French Impressionists. She was also one of the most important women to change art history. Please see photos of this magnificent pastel *Girl with a Banjo*. This incredible work was completed at the height of her career in conjunction with her monumental mural commission for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.

In an era when American artists in France faced significant prejudice—female artists even more so—Mary Cassatt's remarkable achievements would not have been possible had she been merely talented. She had to be extraordinary. Alongside fellow Impressionist Berthe Morisot, Cassatt reshaped the course of art history forever. Before these two renowned women, many exceptionally talented female artists had emerged, yet they largely conformed to the styles established by their male counterparts. Cassatt and Morisot were the first female artists to not only depict scenes of women and domestic life but to portray them through a distinctly feminine lens.

By the year 1893, Cassatt was by far the most famous American female artist, and she was revered as a true master. In 1891, the organizers of the future Chicago World's Fair were looking for an artist to paint the giant mural in the Gallery of Honor in the Woman's Building. They of course turned to Mary Cassatt. She chose for her theme the “modern woman” and created a canvas that was an incredible 54 feet long by 14 feet high. In her mural, she not only wanted to show the talents of women but also their new opportunities in the modern world. On the right side of the mural was a woman playing a banjo, while another woman next to her danced with her skirt high in her hand. Whereas playing the piano or violin was considered ladylike, playing the quintessential American banjo—which evolved from the instrument originally brought over by African slaves—was unequivocally pushing the boundaries.

At this time during the height of her career, Cassatt painted a handful of works of women playing the banjo with most of these being preparatory works for her mural. Our work is only one of two complete works she created, with the other residing in the collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. *Girl with a Banjo* is by far the finest of all surviving banjo paintings, including the example in the Virginia

Museum. The mural itself was sadly lost after the fair, presumably in a warehouse fire.

Encouraged by her close friend Edgar Degas, Cassatt turned to the medium of pastel around 1880, quickly mastering a range of techniques for which she is most beloved today. *Girl with a Banjo* is an exceptional example of her virtuoso in this medium. Its superbly explosive color and mark-making enhance the beautifully delicate rendering of the girl's pale skin and soft hair. Every inch of the composition is layered with vibrant color and dynamism that brings the young musician to life.

A groundbreaking artist, Cassatt was one of the first to shed light on the unseen world of modern femininity with unrivaled depth and beauty. Her legacy endures, with her works—particularly her pastels—remaining highly coveted by esteemed institutions and discerning collectors alike. Major retrospective exhibitions of her work have been held by the world's leading museums, including the Musée d'Orsay, and an important 2024 exhibition organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art is traveling soon to the Fine Art Museum of San Francisco. An important part of her legacy as one of the most important American female artists, this painting was highlighted in the Art Institute of Chicago's 1998 exhibition, *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, and also at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1999. ●



OVERVIEW

PROVENANCE

Roger Marx, Paris

Private collection, Tokyo, acquired from the above

Sale, Sotheby's London, 26 June 1990, lot 13, sold by the above

Private collection, Texas

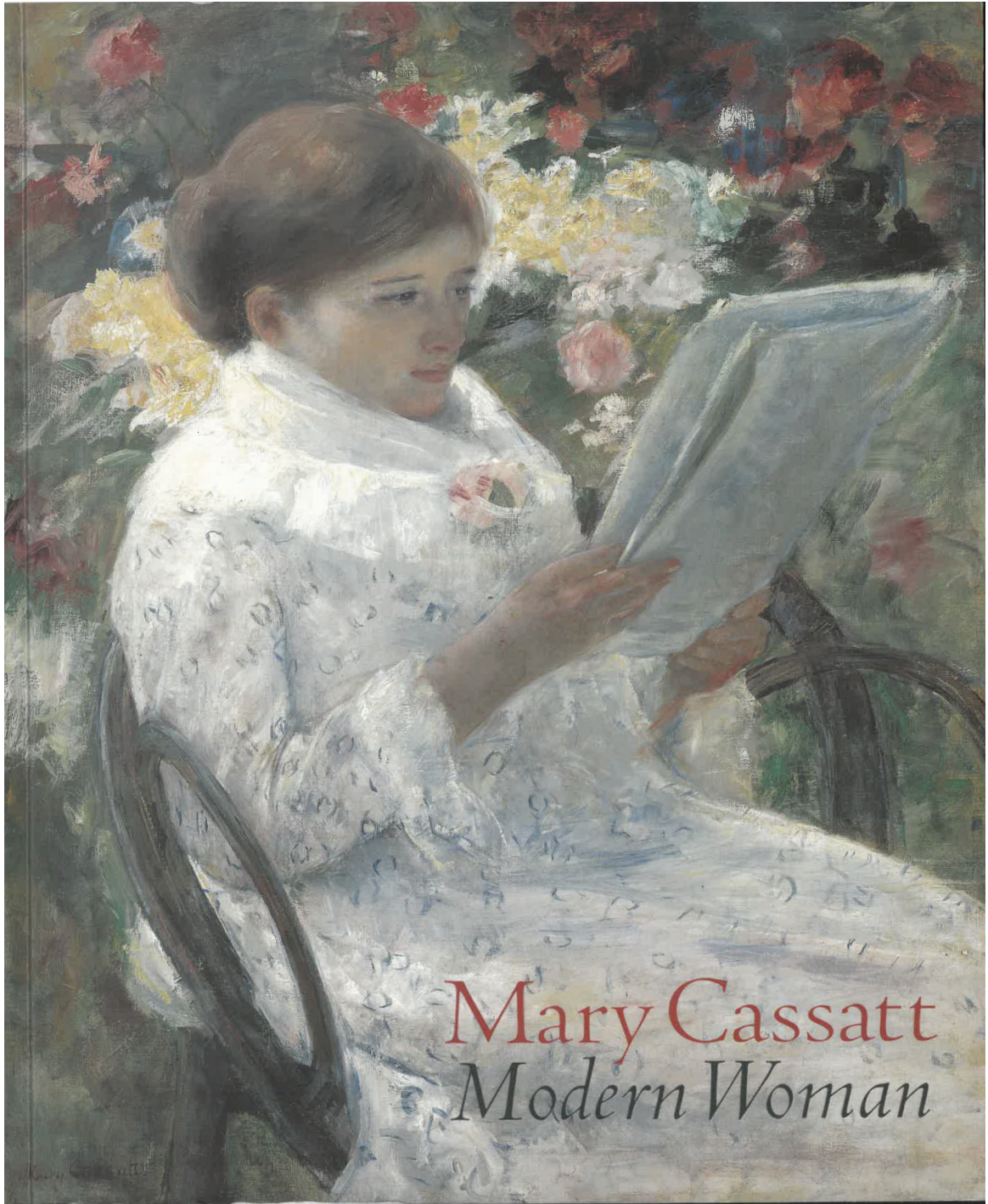
Private collection, Los Angeles, by 1998

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

EXHIBITED

The Art Institute of Chicago, *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, 10 October 1998 - 10 January 1999, no. 74, p. 218, 296, 325, illustrated in color (Traveled: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 6 February - 10 May 1999; Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 5 June - 6 September 1999)





The Art Institute of Chicago, *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, 10 October 1998 - 10 January 1999, no. 74, p. 296, 325, illustrated in color (Traveled: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 6 February - 10 May 1999; Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 5 June - 6 September 1999)



Mary Cassatt: *Modern Woman*

Organized by Judith A. Barter

*With contributions by Erica E. Hirshler, George T. M. Shackelford, Kevin Sharp,
Harriet K. Stratis, & Andrew J. Walker*

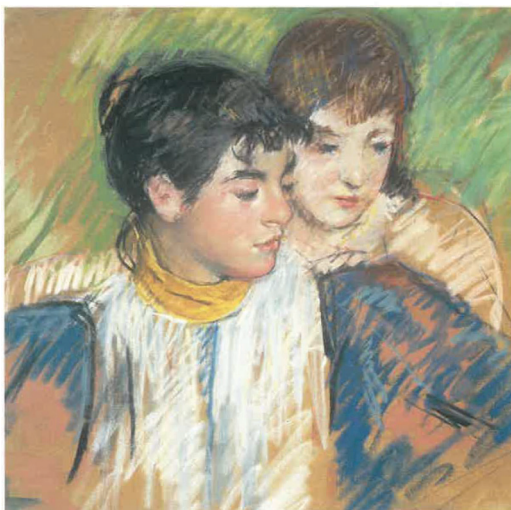
The Art Institute of Chicago

in association with

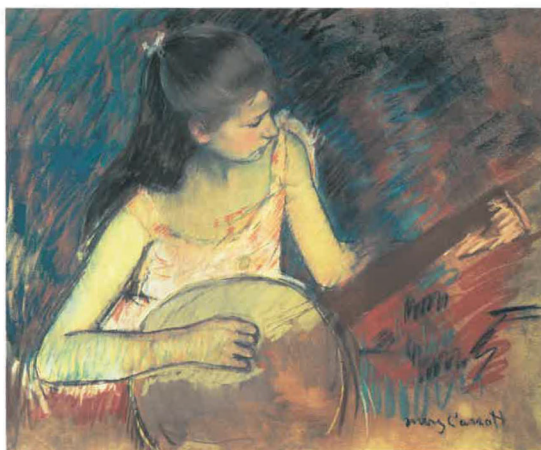
Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers

The Art Institute of Chicago, *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, 10 October 1998 - 10 January 1999, no. 74, p. 296, 325, illustrated in color (Traveled: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 6 February - 10 May 1999; Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 5 June - 6 September 1999)





73. *The Two Sisters*, 1893/94. Pastel on tan wove pumice paper; 44.5 x 44.5 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.



74. *Girl with a Banjo*, 1893/94. Pastel on tan wove paper; 60 x 73 cm. Los Angeles, private collection.

The Art Institute of Chicago, *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, 10 October 1998 - 10 January 1999, no. 74, p. 296, 325, illustrated in color (Traveled: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 6 February - 10 May 1999; Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 5 June - 6 September 1999)



72. *The Child's Bath (La Toilette de l'enfant)*, 1893

Oil on canvas; 100.3 x 66 cm (39 1/2 x 26 in.)

Signed lower left: *Mary Cassatt*
The Art Institute of Chicago,
Robert A. Waller Fund, 1910.2

Chicago, Boston, Washington

PROVENANCE: From the artist to Durand-Ruel, Paris, Nov.-Dec. 1893; Durand-Ruel, New York, Dec. 1893-1910

EXHIBITIONS: Paris 1893, no. 1; New York 1895b, no. 21 (as *La Toilette*); Pittsburgh 1897-98, no. 41 (as *La Toilette*); Philadelphia 1898, no. 62 (as *The Toilet*); New York 1898; Boston 1898, no. 13 (as *La Toilette*); Omaha 1898, no. 132 (as *La Toilette*); Cincinnati 1900, no. 13 (as *La Toilette*); Worcester 1901, no. 32 (as *La Toilette*); New York 1902a, no. 6 (as *La Toilette*); Worcester 1905, no. 37 (as *The Toilet*); Boston 1909, no. 5 (as *La Toilette*); Minneapolis 1915, no. 151 (as *The Toilet*)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Marks 1895c; Marks 1898; *New York Times Saturday Review of Books and Art* 1898; *Philadelphia Inquirer* 1898; *Brush and Pencil* 1900; Mauclair 1902; *New York Times* 1903b; Cary 1905; Henderson 1905; *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* 1909; Hartmann 1909; *New York Times Magazine* 1910c; Segard 1913, ill. opp. p. 53; Hoerber 1914

LETTER REFERENCES: MC to Harris Whittemore, Nov. 14, 1893; Hill-Stead

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: Breeskin 1970, 205 (as *The Bath*, 1892)

73. *The Two Sisters (Les Deux Soeurs)*, 1893/94

Pastel on tan wove pumice paper, mounted on cardboard; 44.5 x 44.5 cm (17 1/2 x 17 1/2 in.)

Signed lower right: *M.C.*
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts,
Charles Henry Hayden Fund, 32.98
Boston

PROVENANCE: From the artist to Payson T. Thompson; American Art Association, New York, Collection of Payson T. Thompson sale, Jan. 12, 1928, no. 80; to J. P. Henry

EXHIBITIONS: New York 1917, no. 6; New York 1923, no. 3

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Field 1920

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: Breeskin 1970, 237 (as *Study for "The Banjo Lesson,"* 1894)

74. *Girl with a Banjo*, 1893/94

Pastel on tan wove paper, mounted on linen, on a strainer; 60 x 73 cm (23 1/2 x 28 1/2 in.)

Signed lower right: *Mary Cassatt*
Los Angeles, private collection
Chicago, Boston

PROVENANCE: Roger Marx, Paris; private collection, Tokyo; private collection, Texas

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: uncatalogued

75. *The Banjo Lesson*, 1893/94

Pastel over oiled pastel on tan wove paper (originally blue-gray), mounted on mat; 72.2 x 58.6 cm (28 1/2 x 23 1/8 in.)

Signed lower right: *Mary Cassatt*
Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Williams Fund, 58.43
Chicago

PROVENANCE: From the artist to Ambroise Vollard, Paris 1904 (as *Femme à la guitare avec enfant*); Durand-Ruel, Paris; Durand-Ruel, New York; Sarah Choate (Mrs. Montgomery) Sears; Helen Sears (Mrs. J. Cameron) Bradley, Boston
CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: Breeskin 1970, 238 (as *The Banjo Lesson*, 1894)

76. *Summertime*, c. 1894

Oil on canvas; 100.7 x 81.3 cm (39 1/2 x 32 in.)

Signed lower right: *Mary Cassatt*
Terra Foundation for the Arts,
Daniel J. Terra Collection, 1988.25
Chicago, Boston, Washington

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: uncatalogued

77. *The Boating Party (Les Canotiers)*, 1894

Oil on canvas; 90 x 117 cm (35 1/2 x 46 1/8 in.)

Unsigned
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Chester Dale Collection, 1963.10.94
Washington

PROVENANCE: In the possession of the artist until c. 1914; Durand-Ruel, Paris and New York; Chester Dale, New York, Oct. 1, 1929

EXHIBITIONS: New York 1895b, no. 1; St. Louis 1915, no. 31 (as *A Boating*

Party); New York 1917, no. 12 (as *La Partie en bateau*); New York 1920b, no. 16 (as *La Partie en bateau*); New York 1923, no. 13 (as *La Partie en bateau*)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Marks 1895c; Walton 1896; Mauclair 1902; Geoffroy 1904; Segard 1913, ill. opp. p. 36; *New York Times* 1917

LETTER REFERENCES: MC to LH, Nov. 24, 1914; NGA

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: Breeskin 1970, 230 (as *The Boating Party [Near Antibes]*, 1893)

78. *Feeding the Ducks*, c. 1895

Drypoint and aquatint with monotype additions on cream laid paper; 29.5 x 39.3 cm (11 1/2 x 15 1/2 in.)

Signed lower right: *Mary Cassatt*
The Art Institute of Chicago,
bequest of Laura May Ripley,
1992.159
Chicago, Boston

LETTER REFERENCES: LH to JDR, Apr. 17, 1914, in Weitzenhoffer 1986, p. 217; LH to JDR, Apr. 24, 1914, in Weitzenhoffer 1986, p. 217; JDR to LH, Apr. 30, 1914, in Weitzenhoffer 1986, p. 218

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: Breeskin 1948, 158 (as *Feeding the Ducks*, c. 1895)

79. *Summertime*, c. 1894

Oil on canvas; 73.6 x 96.5 cm (29 x 38 in.)

Signed lower right: *Mary Cassatt*
Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Collection, UCLA at the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center, AH.90.9
Chicago, Boston, Washington

PROVENANCE: Mrs. W. A. Carr, Philadelphia; M. Knoedler and Co., Inc., New York; Huntington Hartford Collection, New York; Sotheby's, New York, Mar. 10, 1971, no. 28
CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ: Breeskin 1970, 240 (as *Summertime*, 1894)

80. *In the Park*, c. 1894

Oil on canvas; 75 x 95.2 cm (29 1/2 x 37 1/2 in.)

Signed lower right: *Mary Cassatt*
Collection of Mr. Fayez Sarofim
Chicago, Boston, Washington

PROVENANCE: From the artist to

The Art Institute of Chicago, *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, 10 October 1998 - 10 January 1999, no. 74, p. 296, 325, illustrated in color (Traveled: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 6 February - 10 May 1999; Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 5 June - 6 September 1999)



AUCTION COMPARABLES



Mary Cassatt
Young Lady in a Loge Gazing to Right

pastel, gouache, watercolor and charcoal with metallic paint on paper
Height 64.1 x Width 50.5 cm.
Height 25.236 x Width 19.882 in.
1878

20 October 2022 *almost 2 years ago*
Christie's New York

The Ann & Gordon Getty Collection: Volume 1 | Important Paintings and Decorative Arts, Evening Sale – [Lot 00003]

est. 3,000,000 - 5,000,000 USD **7,489,000** USD [Ⓟ]
↑ 50% est



Mary Cassatt
Children playing with a dog

oil on canvas
Height 100.3 x Width 73.7 cm.
Height 39.488 x Width 29.016 in.
1907

24 May 2007 *over 17 years ago*
Christie's New York

Important American Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture – [Lot 00054]

est. 3,000,000 - 5,000,000 USD **6,200,000** USD [Ⓟ]
↑ 24% est



Mary Cassatt
A GOODNIGHT HUG

pastel on brown paper
Height 42 x Width 62.8 cm.
Height 16.535 x Width 24.724 in.
1880

14 May 2018 *over 6 years ago*
Sotheby's New York

Impressionist & Modern Art Evening Sale – [Lot 00011]

est. 700,000 - 1,000,000 USD **4,518,200** USD [Ⓟ]
↑ 352% est



Mary Cassatt | *The Banjo Lesson*

1894

Medium: Pastel over oil pastel on paper

Dimensions: 28 x 22^{1/2} inches | 71.12 x 57.15 cm



Mary Cassatt | *Portrait de Madame Alfred Lavergne*

Circa 1902

Medium: Pastel on brown paper

Dimensions: 24 x 19^{7/8} inches | 61 x 50.5 cm



M
O

Musée d'Orsay
Paris, France



Mary Cassatt | *Susan in a Straw Bonnet*

Circa 1878-88

Medium: Pastel on paper

Dimensions: 24^{1/2} x 20^{1/8} inches | 62.3 x 51.2 cm



The Art Institute of Chicago
Chicago, IL, United States



Mary Cassatt | *Sketch of Mother Looking at Thomas*

Circa 1893

Medium: Pastel on brown paper

Dimensions: 27 x 22^{1/2} inches | 68.58 x 57.15 cm



HIGH

High Museum of Art
Atlanta, GA, United States



Mary Cassatt | *Woman Arranging Her Veil*

Circa 1890

Medium: Pastel on wove paper

Dimensions: 25^{1/2} x 21^{1/2} inches | 64.8 x 54.6 cm



Philadelphia
Museum of
Art

Philadelphia Museum of Art
Philadelphia, PA, United States



Mary Cassatt | *Adaline Havemeyer in a White Hat*

Circa 1898

Medium: Pastel on wove paper, mounted on canvas

Dimensions: 25^{1/2} x 20 inches | 64.8 x 50.8 cm



**THE
MET**

Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, United States



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