LOT 542
MARIE-GENEVIÈVE BOULIAR
PARIS 1763 - 1825 CHÂTEAU D'ARCY
PORTRAIT OF A LADY WEARING A FLORAL WREATH, POSSIBLY AS FLORA
inscribed on the stretcher: Mlle Bouliard
oil on canvas
24 1/2 by 20 1/8 in.; 62.8 by 51.2 cm.

ESTIMATE 25,000-35,000 USD
Lot Sold: 31,250 USD

EXHIBITED
Paris, Salon du Louvre, September 1791, no. 324 ('Tête de Femme couronnée de roses. Par Mlle. Bouliard'), awarded the prix d'encouragement in 1792;
Paris, Salon de la Société des Amis des Arts, 1791, no. 85 ('Melle Bouliard. Une tête de femme couronnée de roses').
LITERATURE
Y. Jackall, 'Recovering the work of Marie-Geneviève Bouliar (1763-1825). The invention of self in Revolutionary France', in Les cahiers d'Histoire de l'Art, no. 7, 2009, pp. 50 and 59, notes 20 and 22;

CATALOGUE NOTE
This work is an exciting rediscovery in the oeuvre of Bouliar, a relatively little-known portraitist and history painter, notwithstanding the high critical claim and official recognition accorded to her paintings during her lifetime. Indeed, on the presentation of this work at the Salon of 1791, Bouliar’s first exhibition, a commentator likened her skill to that of the highly-respected Jean-Baptiste Regnault: ‘Ma foi! Si tu ne m’avais pas nommé l’auteur de ce chef d’oeuvre, j’allais, au charme et à la fraicheur qui y règnent, le donner à M. Regnault. Quoi de plus joli, de plus gracieux, de plus séduisant...!’1 In 1997, Louis Govier suggested that another painting, known only in a monochrome image until its re-emergence on the market in 2013, may be synonymous with the ‘Tête de Femme couronnée de roses’ exhibited in 1791.2 That picture, however, represents a lady with a floral corsage rather than a crown of roses and, moreover, it is signed and dated 1785. As well as a discrepancy in the description, it seems unlikely that the artist would have submitted a work for the Salon executed six years previously.3

We are grateful to Dr. Yuriko Jackall for confirming the attribution to Bouliar and for identifying the present work as that exhibited in the 1791 Salon, no. 324, on the basis of digital images.

2. See Govier (under Literature) for this argument. The painting was sold by descendants of the Hirsch family, Paris, Artcurial, 10 April 2013, lot 157.
3. For a full discussion of the ex-Hirsch painting and its relationship with the present work, see Jackall 2014 (under Literature), pp. 80-82.