

WILLIAM MERRITT CHASE (1849-1916)

Portrait of the Artist Albert Beck Wenzell

Inscribed upper right with a message from the artist.

oil on canvas

20 x 16 in. (32 1/8 x 28 1/8 x 1 3/4 in.)

50.8 x 40.64 cm (81.6 x 71.44 x 4.45 cm)

48063

PROVENANCE:

Wenzell, from the Artist

Wenzell family, by descent from the above

Private Collection, Massachusetts

Private Collection

William Merritt Chase (1849-1916) was an American painter, known as an exponent of Impressionism and as a teacher. Chase worked in all media. He was most fluent in oil painting and pastel, but also created watercolor paintings and etchings. He is perhaps best known for his portraits, his sitters including some of the most important men and women of his time in addition to his own family.

In addition to painting portraits and full-length figurative works, Chase began painting landscapes in earnest in the late 1880s. His interest in landscape art may have been spawned by the landmark New York exhibit of French impressionist works from Parisian dealer Durand-Ruel in 1886. Chase is best remembered for two series of landscape subjects, both painted in an impressionist manner. The first was his scenes of Prospect and Central Parks in New York; the second were his summer landscapes at Shinnecock. Chase usually featured people prominently in his landscapes. Often he depicted woman and children in leisurely poses, relaxing on a park bench, on the beach, or lying in the summer grass at Shinnecock. The Shinnecock works in particular have come to be thought of by art historians as particularly fine examples of American Impressionism. Chase continued to paint still lifes throughout his career as he had done since his student days. Decorative objects filled his studios and homes, and his interior figurative scenes frequently included still life images. He was particularly adept at capturing the effect of light on metallic surfaces such as copper bowls and pitchers. Perhaps Chase's most famous still life subject was dead fish, which he liked to paint against dark backgrounds, limp on a plate as though fresh from a fishmonger's stall.

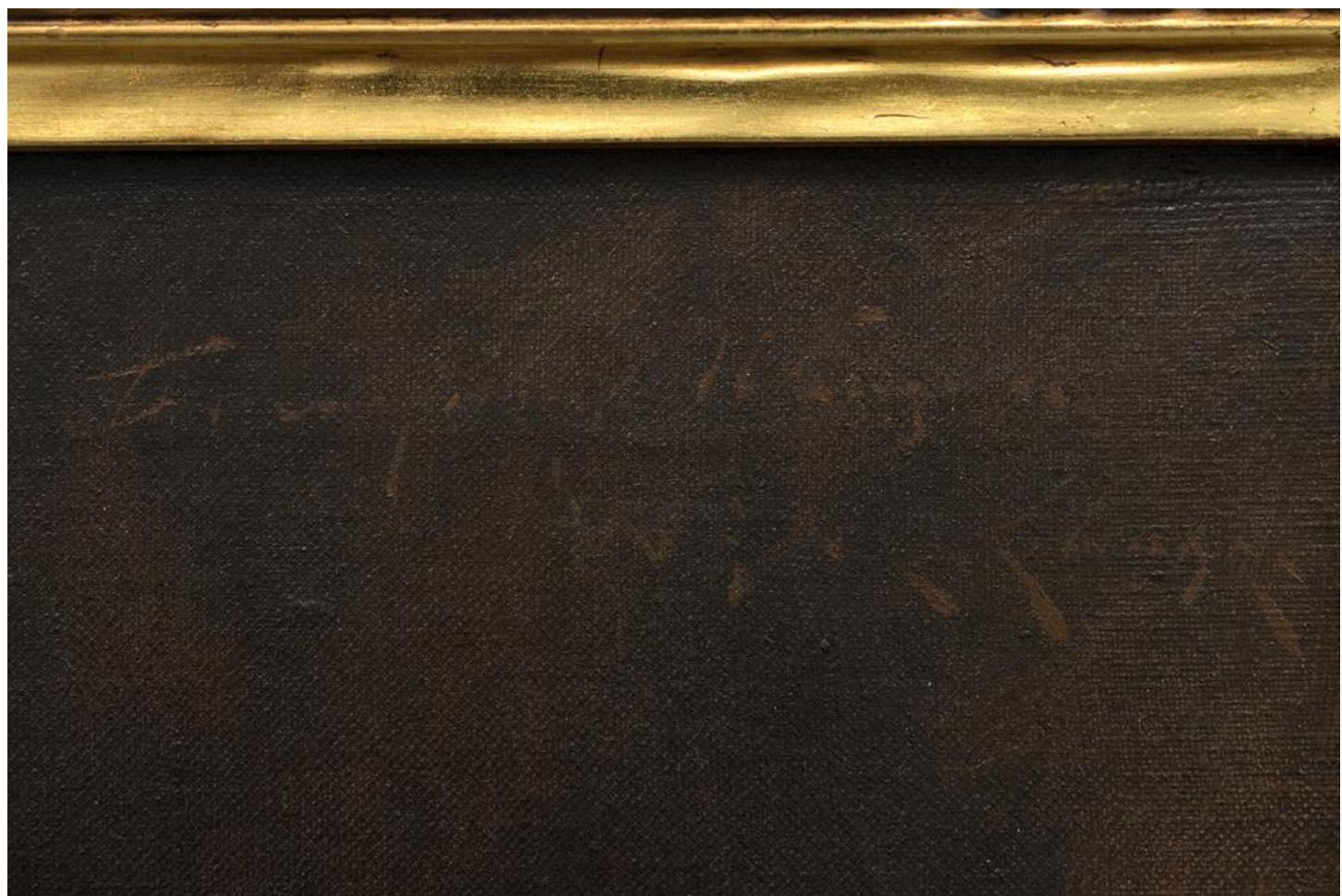
Chase won many honors at home and abroad, was a member of the National Academy of Design, New York, and from 1885 to 1895 was president of the Society of American Artists. He became a member of the Ten American Painters after John Henry Twachtman died. Chase's creativity declined in his later years, especially as modern art took hold in America, but he continued to paint and teach into the 1910s. During this period Chase taught such up and coming young artists as Wilhelmina Weber Furlong, Arthur Hill Gilbert, and Edward Hopper. One of his last teaching positions was at Carmel, California in the summer of 1914. Chase died on October 25, 1916 at his home in New York City, an esteemed elder of the American art world. Today his works are in most major museums in the United States. His home and studio at Shinnecock Hills, New York was added to the National Register of Historic

Places in 1983 as the William Merritt Chase Homestead.

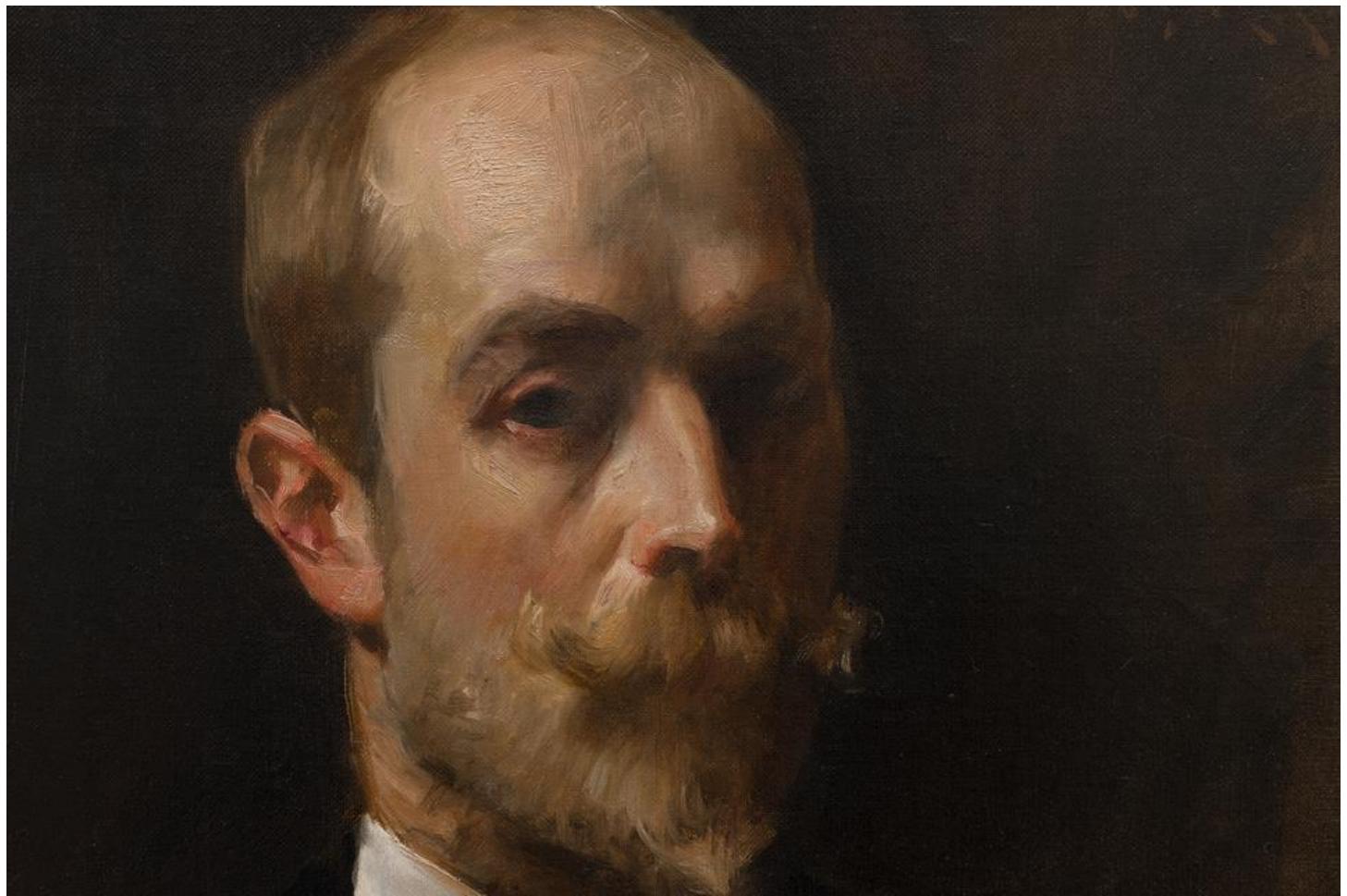
The information and material herein represents Gallery's best efforts and understanding of the current history and scholarship with respect to the provenance of the Work(s) of Art described and is not part of any warranty.

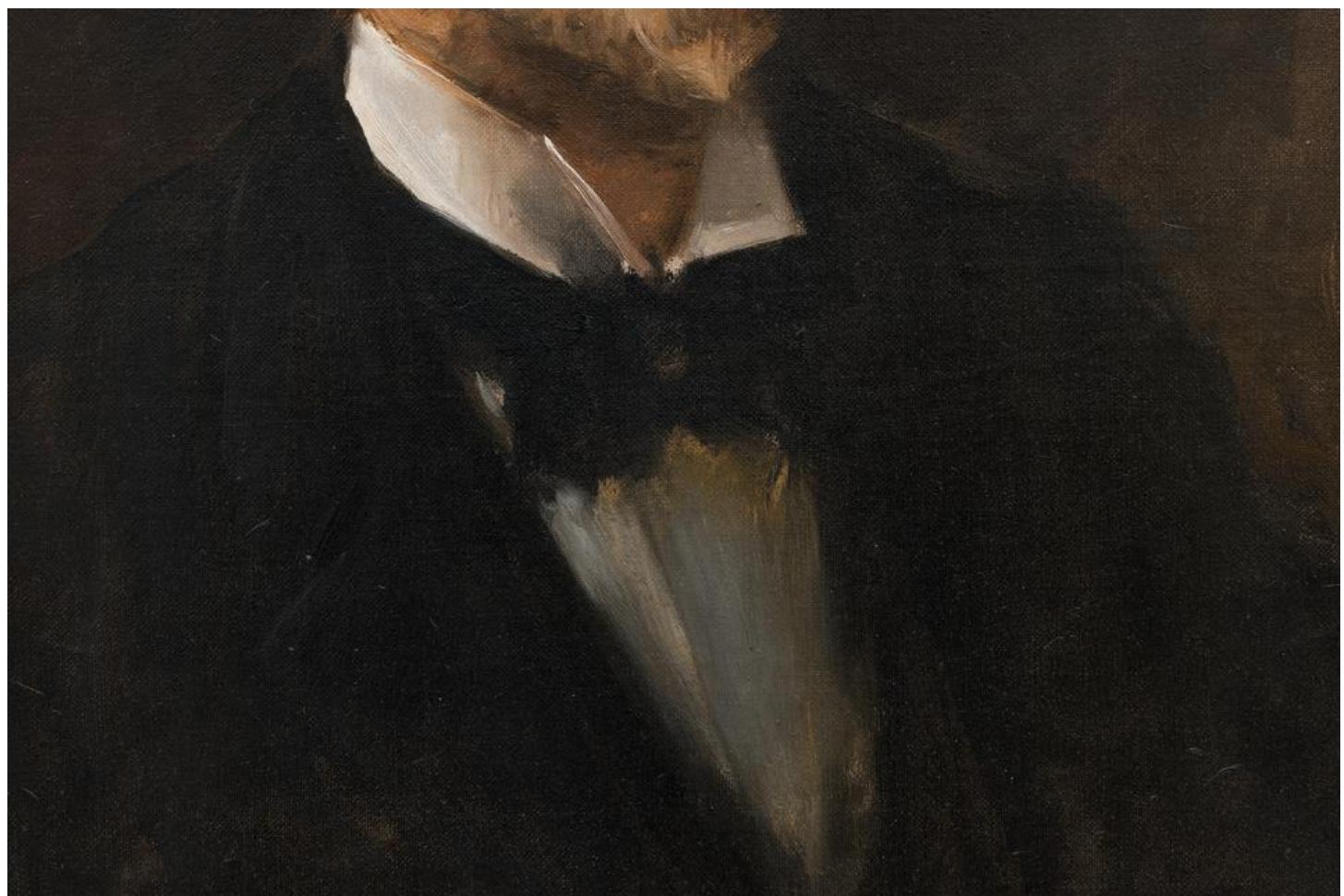


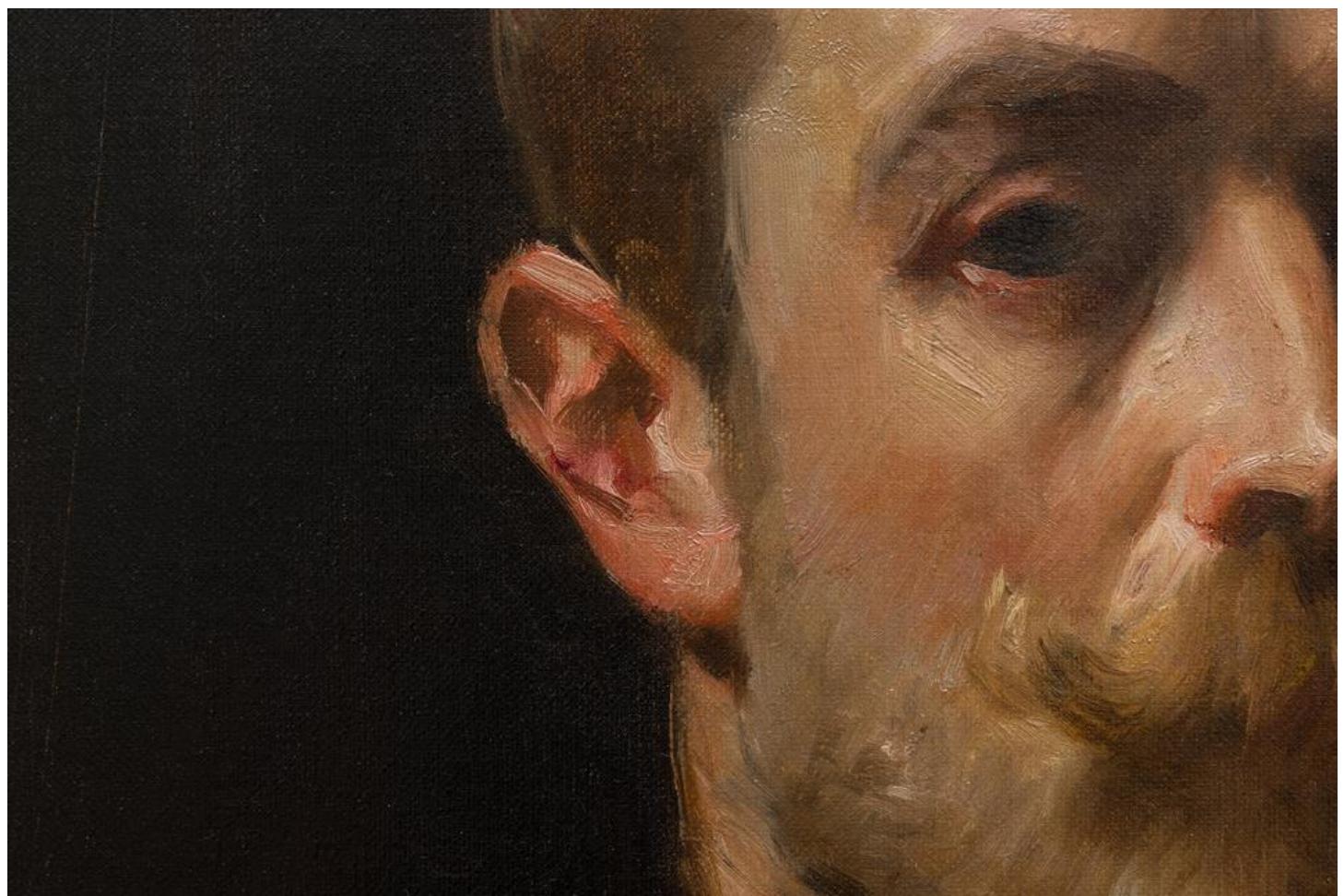
1891 · WILLIAM MERRITT CHASE · 1911
PORTRAIT OF ARTIST ALBERT BIERSTADT



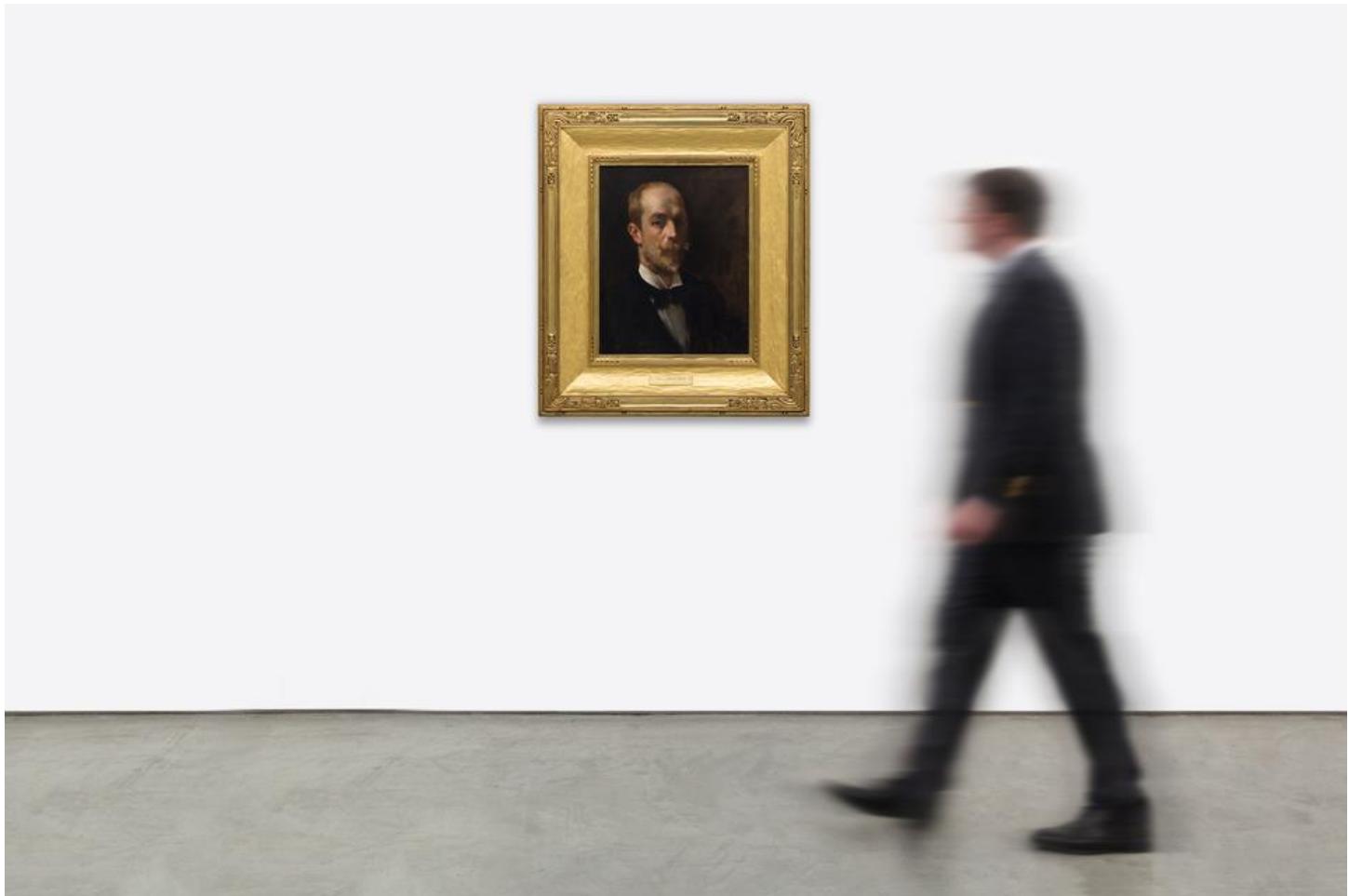














New Britain Museum of American Art
Artist: William Moulton Claiborne
Title: Portrait of Avery Beck Womell
Date: c. 1800
Medium: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 42 1/8 x 36 1/4 in.
Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Avery Beck Womell
Acq. 1982.25.10
Perm. Loan