

The painting is a portrait of a woman, likely a companion of the artist. She has dark, wavy hair and a pale, almost white face, which contrasts sharply with the surrounding colors. Her expression is serene. She is wearing a garment with a complex, organic pattern in shades of yellow, orange, and brown. The background is a rich, textured red, with a vertical strip of blue and purple on the right side. The overall style is characteristic of the Fauvism movement, with bold colors and visible brushstrokes.

PIERRE BONNARD









**PIERRE BONNARD (1867-1947)**

**La robe de chambre rouge (Marthe Bonnard)**

**The Red Dressing Gown (Marthe Bonnard)**

Signed upper left, "Bonnard"

oil on canvas

21 x 27 1/4 in. (28 x 33 3/4 x 2 7/8 in.)

53.34 x 69.22 cm (71.12 x 85.73 x 7.3 cm) 1912

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**PROVENANCE:**

Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, acquired from the artist  
Alphonse Kahn, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, acquired from the above  
Me Lair-Dubreuil, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, November 20, 1922, lot 40 (titled 'La robe de chambre orange')  
Eugène Blot, Paris, acquired at the above sale  
Me Baudoin, Paris, June 2, 1933, lot 33 (titled 'Femme assise dans un intérieur')  
Collection Huet, Paris, acquired at the above sale  
Jacques Dupont, Paris, December 1940  
Private Collection, by descent from above  
Christie's, Paris, October 17, 2018, lot 37  
Private Collection, acquired at the above sale

**EXHIBITION:**

Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, *Bonnard, Œuvres récentes*, June 17 – July 6, 1912, no. 15  
Paris, Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, *Pierre Bonnard, Œuvres récentes*, May 19 – June 7, 1913  
Paris, Galerie d'art Braun & Cie, *Portraits de Pierre Bonnard*, June 1933, no. 21, p. 4 (titled 'Portrait de femme au turban')  
Paris, Galerie Frommont, *La compagne du peintre*, 1953  
Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, *Bonnard*, 1953, no. 45 (dated 'vers 1910-11')  
Paris, Maison de la Pensée française, *Pierre Bonnard*, Summer 1955, no. 20 Munich, Haus der Kunst; Paris, Orangerie des Tuileries, *Pierre Bonnard, Centenaire de sa naissance*, October 8, 1966 – April 15, 1967, no. 75

**LITERATURE:**

*Le courrier européen*, May 23, 1913 (illustrated, titled Étude de femme)  
Gustave Coquiott, *Les indépendants*, 1884-1920, Paris, 1921, p. 78-79 (illustrated)  
Gustave Coquiott, *Bonnard*, Paris, 1922, p. 54 (titled 'La robe de chambre orangée')  
Léon Werth, *Bonnard*, Paris, 1923 (illustrated, pl. 25)  
André Fage, *Le collectionneur des peintures modernes*, Paris, 1930, p. 252 Galerie d'art Braun & Cie, *Portraits de Pierre Bonnard*, Paris, 1933, no. 21, p. 4 (titled 'Portrait de femme au turban')  
M.-T. Mauguis, *Arts*, June 25, 1955  
Haus der Kunst & Orangerie des Tuileries, *Pierre Bonnard, Centenaire de sa naissance*, Munich & Paris, 1967, no. 75 (illustrated)  
Raymond Cogniat, *Bonnard*, Paris, 1968 (illustrated on the cover)  
Jean & Henry Dauberville, *Bonnard, Catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre peint*,

Pierre Bonnard's *La robe de chambre rouge (Marthe Bonnard)* (1912) is a richly intimate portrait of the artist's lifelong muse and wife, Marthe de Meligny, painted at a moment when Bonnard was redefining modern interior painting through color, memory, and psychological nuance. Seated and absorbed in a private moment, Marthe is enveloped by a saturated red ground that presses close to the picture plane, dissolving traditional depth in favor of chromatic intensity. Her patterned robe and softly modeled face emerge through Bonnard's layered brushwork, where color functions less as description than as emotional atmosphere.

Painted in 1912, the work was exhibited extensively from the year of its creation, appearing in seven exhibitions across Paris, Rotterdam, and Munich, signaling its immediate recognition within Bonnard's circle and the broader European avant-garde. The painting also boasts a distinguished provenance, having passed through the collections of notable French Jewish collector Alphonse Kahn; Eugène Blot, the influential gallerist, collector, and sculpture castor; and Jacques Dupont, the celebrated Olympic cyclist.

*La robe de chambre rouge* is published seven times, including Bonnard's 1968 catalogue raisonné, where it is listed as no. 674. The artist's portraits of Marthe occupy a central place in his oeuvre. Closely related examples are held in the permanent collections of major institutions such as the Tate, the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, underscoring the enduring significance of these deeply personal yet formally radical compositions.

## ARTIST BIO:

Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) was a French painter, printmaker, and designer celebrated for his luminous color and intimate, poetic depictions of everyday life. Born in Fontenay-aux-Roses near Paris, he initially studied law before turning to art, enrolling at the Académie Julian and the École des Beaux-Arts. There he formed close friendships with artists including Édouard Vuillard and Maurice Denis and became a founding member of Les Nabis, a group that emphasized decorative pattern, flat color, and expressive form.

Bonnard first gained recognition for posters, prints, and illustrations, but he is best known for paintings of domestic interiors, still lifes, landscapes, and scenes featuring his lifelong companion and wife, Marthe. Over time, his work moved beyond the Nabi aesthetic toward a highly personal style that blended Impressionist light with intensely saturated color, often painted from memory rather than direct observation.

In his later years, Bonnard lived primarily in the south of France, particularly in Le Cannet, where he continued to paint until his death in 1947. He is regarded as one of the great colorists of modern art and a key figure bridging Impressionism and twentieth-century modernism.

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