

ROB INTERVIEWING ADÈLE BAILLEU AT MUSÉE DU FAOUËT

Adèle: Painters used to come a lot in Le Faouët, between 1850 and 1950, to find the rural world preserved of modernity

Rob: Many painters came to settle in Le Faouët. Everyone knows Pont-Aven because of Gauguin and his coterie, but fewer people know about Le Faouët as a centre. Were they mostly French painters?

Adèle: There were many French painters coming from Paris, from the School of Fine Arts for example, because Brittany was considered as an exotic destination. And also many painters and artists from England, for example, or other countries

Rob: Can you name some of the English artists for our listeners?

Adèle: Yeah, for example, one of the most famous, Sydney Curnow Vosper, Guy Wilthew. The exhibition in 2020, last year, was about that painter, Guy Wilthew.

Rob: The first painter you mentioned...

Adèle: Sydney Curnow Vosper

Rob: He's a bit of a mascot here for the museum, isn't he?

Adèle: Yeah, absolutely, because one of his drawings was chosen by the museum to be the, yeah the mascot, to represent the museum.

Rob: And tell me about that painting.

Adèle: Yeah, we can see it if you want. We can go to see that painting now.

Rob: Okay, let's go.

Adèle: Yeah, let's go.

Rob: Ah, now here we're in the cloister

Adèle: Absolutely. We're in the cloister of the museum, as the museum is located in a former convent, so there is a cloister and a chapel as well. We just left the chapel.

Rob: We could hear the echoes. It's a lovely place to exhibit

Adèle: Yeah, absolutely.

Rob: Ah, so this is the famous *Cultivateur Mécanique*.

Adèle: Yes, we are in front of that drawing of Sydney Curnow Vosper, and he made it in 1906. And it is a very humoristic drawing.



- Rob: Yes, because we can see a peasant with his overall blowing in the wind, from behind, on a bicycle.
- Adèle: And Sydney Curnow Vosper used to draw as well in a very famous British magazine which is called *Punch*. It is a satiric magazine, and so he used to make a lot of funny drawings.
- Rob: So tell me a little bit about him, because he's a very interesting character, obviously with a sense of humour.
- Adèle: Yes, he seemed to have been a very funny man, a very British man I could say, and he decided to settle in Le Faouët when he discovered it in 1898, alongside Guy Wilthew. And he self-claimed him Mayor of St Fiacre, which is the chapel not far from Le Faouët, because he loved so much the city, and he decided to learn how to speak Breton, to be able to speak with all the people here.
- Rob: So that's...
- Adèle: Sydney Curnow Vosper
- Rob: And the other English painter that you mentioned...
- Adèle: Guy Wilthew. He married one of the girls from Le Faouët.
- Rob: And was it at the same period?
- Adèle: Yeah. They were friends.
- Rob: So what other paintings are there that we mustn't miss?
- Adèle: Well, that one, just in front of le *Cultivateur Mechanique*
- Rob: And there's the covered market
- Adèle: Yes, we can see the covered market here. It is very recognisable, so we can see we are in Le Faouët, and it is a scene of market actually, and two men are settling the sale of a cow just behind – yeah, can I say that? So one man is holding his hand right above his head, to go on the hand of the other man, to say 'okay, I'm going to sell my cow to you, at that price'. It is a very typical scene we could see back then in Le Faouët.
- Rob: And not only can we see the sale going on in the centre of the painting, but there's a lady there walking with her pig!
- Adèle: Yes, she's walking her pig. To sell it of course, not just to walk him. It's not her dog, yeah? It is really funny to see that nowadays, because people don't understand, especially children, they can't understand why the woman or a man would walk the pig.



- Rob: We've got lots of different scenes of peasant life here. Can you summarise some of the main themes?
- Adèle: Yes. We have six rooms in this exhibition, and many themes to discover. In the first room, there are portraits of Breton peasants. We are here in the second room, showing market scenes as well. The cloister we just left was only about scenes from Le Faouët, and on the exhibition it is from all Brittany. So market scenes from the end of the nineteenth century for example, we can see another one if you want. This painting is from Adolphe Leleux. He was a painter from Paris, but he was called Leleux le Breton because he always did paintings from Brittany. So on this painting we can see many Breton men and women in market scenes. Those are the costumes and the clothes around Quimper.
- Rob: And I can see that the men are all sitting around talking. Long hair, flat hats. The woman in the front there is making crêpes.
- Adèle: Probably.
- Rob: On the billig
- Adèle: On the billig, yes, absolutely.
- Rob: A typical scene for – what kind of date is this?
- Adèle: 1875
- Rob: So, you have market scenes, you have Le Faouët scenes, you have portraits
- Adèle: Yes. In the chapel we just left, where we were at first, it is work scenes which are represented, because it was most of the time of the Breton peasants of course, they spent almost all of their time working in the fields. So this is the largest room of the exhibition of course. And we can go upstairs if you want to see the other rooms. Yeah?
- Rob: Why not?
- Adèle: Okay
- Rob: Oh, can I just stop you a second, Adèle? I can see here – we are walking though the chapel here – some very modern paintings. We ought to say that nineteenth century is a very important time for painters here. But also contemporary painters have come here
- Adèle: Yes, we have a few painters of the twentieth and the ...



Rob: Twenty-first?

Adèle: Twenty-first ! Thank you, twenty-firstcentury, But here it is very specific. It is an art movement from Nizon, which is close to Pont-Aven, and it is a collective art called Le Hangar't.

Rob: It makes a strong contrast to some of the more traditional paintings we can see here

Adèle: Yeah, people are sometimes frightened by it, because it's so different from the other paintings

Rob: Let's carry on upstairs

Adèle: Okay

Rob: Ah, so what have we got in this upstairs room?

Adèle: We arrive here upstairs with a large painting in front of us – we can't miss it, it is so huge, from Théophile Deyrolle. He was a painter who settled in Concarneau, and here Théophile Deyrolle he represents a hunt theme. So we can see two Breton peasants holding rifles, with three dogs, and they are looking for hares. We can see they already found one – see, on his bag, we can the ears of the hare, already dead.

Rob: So, these are different scenes I can see around

Adèle: Scenes of when Breton peasant would have days off. When they weren't working, what would they do? They would play cards, they would go hunting, or they would just rest in their homes, drinking cidre of course, cider.

Rob: Altogether, how many paintings have you got here to look at?

Adèle: About 160 paintings

Rob: Okay. Tell me about the opening times, for people who come to visit.

Adèle: The exhibition is on display until October 31, and we are open every day in July and August, from 10am to 6pm

Rob: Well, Adèle Bailleul, thank you ever so much for showing us around

Adèle: Thank you for inviting me