


238 Putnam Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
July 13, 1994

Mr. Ken Ratner  


Re: Eastman Johnson, Portrait of a Woman, pastel on paper mounted on heavy matt board, 21 3/4 x 17 1/4 inches oval. Signed lower right: "E. Johnson/ 1847." I examined this pastel at Child's Gallery, Boston, on June 28, 1994.

In my opinion Eastman Johnson (1824-1906), the American genre painter and portraitist, executed this work. And I will include it in my catalogue raisonné.

I do not know of many pastels by the hand of Johnson. I think it is a question of not many surviving. On April 8, 1981, a New York dealer brought this same work to me to examine, and I then had my doubts about it. However, I have seen more drawings by Johnson since then and have also published on his drawings. Now I am convinced that Johnson did the pastel. The eyes, the design of the eyebrows, the cast shadows, the quality of the strokes on the face, hair and dress all seem characteristic of Johnson's work.

Your work could well be the pastel listed as No. 373 in John I. H. Baur, Eastman Johnson, 1824-1906: An American Genre Painter (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1940).

I hope this has been helpful.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia Hills  
art historian and  
author,  
Eastman Johnson, 1972