

Portrait of Princess Belozersky



Portrait of a Young Boy



Portrait of Princess Belozersky, 1798

Portrait of a Young Boy, 1817

The Eyes Have It

Known for her flattering portraits, **Élisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun (1755–1842)** earned commissions throughout Europe and Russia. Royalty, aristocrats, writers, and actors alike coveted her idealized renderings.

Take a closer look

The subjects' large, expressive eyes—a Vigée-LeBrun signature—invite our approach. Flawless skin and rosy complexions imply youth and health. Her illusionistic handling of texture distinguished glossy locks, a glinting gun barrel, diaphanous fabrics, and lustrous amber.

Something to talk about

Vigée-LeBrun satisfied her patrons' vanity by rendering them more attractive and approachable than they might truly have been. Today, what techniques do artists use to achieve similar results?

Who knew?

The artist experienced perks and peril as court painter to Marie Antoinette. With the onset of the French Revolution in 1789, this connection to the vilified queen forced Vigée-LeBrun to flee her homeland. In exile for 15 years, her fame ensured her welcome in cities and courts across the continent.

Élisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun, *Portrait of Princess Belozersky*, 1798; Oil on canvas, 31 x 26¼ inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Rita M. Cushman in memory of George A. Rentschler; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

Élisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun, *Portrait of a Young Boy*, 1817; Oil on canvas, 21¼ x 18¼ inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

