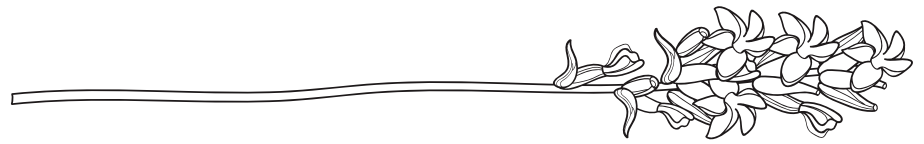
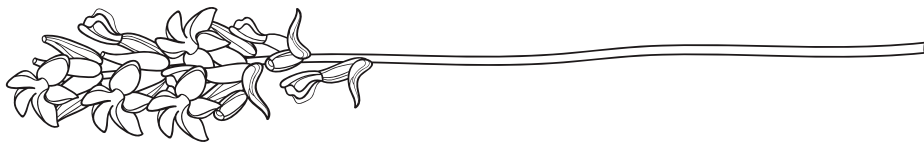


**Virtual**



LAVENDER



**Labels**

**MARIE LAURENCIN  
(French, 1885–1956)**

*Untitled: Two Women, ca. 1935*

**Watercolor on paper | 7 7/8 x 6 1/2 in.**

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Myers, Jr., '42,  
and June Reinhold Myers, '41, 1996.25



**Marie Laurencin** lived in Paris, France during the early 20th century. She is associated with Cubism and Fauvism and worked alongside notable figures such as artist Henri Matisse, American writer and collector Gertrude Stein, and French poet Guillaume Apollinaire. While deeply embedded in the avant-garde scene, she made work distinctly apart from her predominately male counterparts. Laurencin was an openly queer woman in relationships with people of different genders. In her drawings, watercolors, and prints, she depicts primarily women. Men were charged double to sit for portraits.

In this work, *Untitled: Two Women*, the two dancers share a tender moment, painted in pastels of blues and greys. It was likely inspired by her work drawing costumes and creating set designs for the 1924 one-act ballet, *Les Biches* (The Does) performed by the Ballets Russes. The lightness and softness of the composition emphasize and value the presence of femininity. It intersects her feminist and queer contributions to defining the independent “New Woman” of post-war Europe. Laurencin saw the lives of women as their own world with no need for patriarchal validation or influence.

In her own accounts of her process, she states, *“I feel perfectly at ease with everything that is feminine.”*

Her iconic style features soft-toned figures, contrasted with dark, intense eyes.

The gaze is centralized, commanding only the female gaze. Employing color in a bold and quintessentially feminine fashion, she defines womanhood on her own terms.

It advances her own point of view: a well-known successful-in-her-own-time queer artist.