



Oudry's Painted Menagerie: Portraits of Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Europe (J. Paul Getty Museum)

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This beautiful volume--published to coincide with an exhibition at the J. Paul Getty Museum to be held from May 1 to September 2, 2007--is the first to focus on the series of life-size portraits painted by the eighteenth-century artist Jean-Baptiste Oudry of the animals in Louis XV's royal menagerie at Versailles. A tiger, a lion, a leopard, and, most impressive of all, the famous rhinoceros known as Clara joined a group of other exotic animals in Oudry's "painted menagerie," which was purchased in 1750 by his German patron, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

The book's insightful essays situate this suite of paintings within the context of Oudry's career; discuss Oudry's remarkable drawings of animals; and present a fascinating history of menageries and of the phenomenon known as "Claramania"--when the real rhinoceros, Clara, traveled through Europe and caused a public sensation.

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