Armand Guillaumin
(1841-1927)

Rock at Baumette Point
(Rocher à la pointe de la Baumette)

1893
signed bottom left: "Guillaumin"
dated verso: "Jer 93 4h"
Oil on canvas
h 33.0 cm x b 46.0 cm
WRM Dep. FC 559
Since the early 1890s, Guillaumin had painted numerous views of the rock formations in the little seaside town of Agay on the Côte d’Azur [Gray 1996, p. 50], among them the Rock at Baumette Point, which, according to an inscription verso was painted in January 1893 at 4 o’clock in the afternoon [“Rocher à la pointe de la Baumette Jer 93 4h”, figs. 2, 7]. An exact dating such as this is the best possible evidence for the work’s having been painted en plein air, and is nothing unusual in the œuvre of Guillaumin, who, as far as is known, painted predominantly outdoors all his life. The figure “4” is also to be found on the bottom foldover edge of the canvas, maybe also a note by the artist as a quick reminder, when the picture was in transport or storage, of the time of day he had painted it (fig. 7). Another indication of its being painted outdoors can be found at the top edge in the form of a semicircular impression in the still wet paint. It could have been made by the fastener used to hold the picture to the inside of the lid of a commercially available painting box (fig. 12).

The picture was painted on a densely woven standard P 8 canvas pre-primed in white, and bears verso the stencil of the Parisian dealer Tasset & l’Hôte (fig. 2). The ground does not adhere well to the support, presumably a result of the manufacturing process, and also shows abrasions, discolorations and losses due to careless handling of the primed canvas before it was painted, either by the dealer or by the artist himself. For various reasons, the white ground looks altogether darker today than originally, and thus visually resembles an unprimed canvas, such as Guillaumin often used in other works [Callen 2000, p. 67] (fig. 9). Using a black graphite or lead pencil, the artist rapidly sketched a few contours of the horizon and rock on the white ground, before completing the subsequent painting with dynamic lineation in presumably just two or three working sessions (fig. 11). A few final corrections, accents and additions, as well as the signature, followed after the paint was dry (fig. 9).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Picture support canvas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard format</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weave</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canvas characteristics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stretching</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stretcher/strainer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stretcher/strainer depth</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traces left by manufacture/processing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manufacturer’s/dealer’s marks</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Ground

**Sizing**
- not determined

**Colour**
- white; the original chalk-white ground now looks altogether darker, presumably because of 1) dirt, 2) increased transparency due to the thin application and the absorption of oily binding agent from the paint layer, 3) colour saturation due to insulation of the ground (fig. 8)

**Application**
- very thin, single-layer application before the canvas was cut to size and stretched (à grain); the raised parts of the canvas are exposed in places; cohesion between ground and support is poor, owing to production method; beneath the paint-layer abrasions and small losses are evident in the ground, as well as a circular dark discoloration (Ø 5.6 cm) at the top edge, all signs that the pre-primed picture support was showing signs of age and/or storage even before it was painted; along the foldover edges can be seen the drying edge of a transparent, binding-agent-rich coating, presumably an insulation applied by the artist to the ground in order to regulate the absorbency of the support (fig. 8)

**Binding medium**
- not determined

**Texture**
- –

### Composition planning/Underpainting/Underdrawing

**Medium/technique**
- anthracite-to-black pencil app. 1.0 mm broad, presumably graphite or lead; stereo-microscopic inspection reveals fine black, powdery crystal-like particles with a metallic sheen (fig. 11)

**Extent/character**
- in the IR reflectogram under the stereo-microscope individual fine lines and dynamic short arcs of an underdrawing along the horizon and the rocks can be seen; it cannot be excluded, however, that the underdrawing also extended to other parts which cannot be completely documented

**Pentimenti**
- –
### Paint layer

**Paint application/technique and artist’s own revision**

brisk painting in presumably two or three working sessions; dynamic brushwork; the procedure was “fat on lean”: first the glaze-like lay-in of a few colour areas, then increasingly thicker applications of paint, becoming extremely dry and impasto; the sea and rocks were painted first, the rocks and spray being left out when the sea was painted, followed by the sky, the spray and the wave crests; finally the last corrections and colour accents and/or additions on the dry paint-layer (e.g. pentimenti along the boundaries between rocks, spray and sea, shape of the violet shadows beneath the rocks); paint-layer covers the picture relatively completely, with only a few places where the ground is visible.

**Painting tools**

flat-ferrule brushes of various breadths between 0.2 and 0.9 cm

**Surface structure**

varies between smooth and impasto applications, all of them however with clearly visible brushwork (fig. 3)

**Palette**

hues revealed by visual microscopic examination: white, medium yellow, orange, light red, light and dark red lakes (orange fluorescence under UV, fig. 6), violet, medium blue, two dark blues, pale green, dark green, the colours were rarely applied in their pure form, but mostly mixed

VIS spectrometry: chrome yellow(?) or cadmium yellow(?), cadmium orange(?), vermilion, carmine lake, cobalt violet, cobalt blue, ultramarine, Prussian blue(?), copper green, viridian

**Binding mediums**

presumably oil

### Surface finish

**Authenticity/Condition**

authentic unvarnished condition (fig. 4)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Signature/Mark</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When?</td>
<td>autograph signature “Guillaumin” was applied with a thin round brush in dark red (red lake mixed with violet) only after the main paint layer had dried, albeit presumably not long after, as the cracks due to aging affect the paint-layer and the signature in equal measure (fig. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autograph signature</td>
<td>autograph signature which corresponds unambiguously with other signatures by Guillaumin (cf. Guillaumin, WRM Dep. FC 749)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Frame</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>not original</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>State of preservation</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original stretching edges</td>
<td>have been shifted 4 mm inwards by excessive tensioning at some later date, in particular at the bottom edge; loss of substance in the ground along the edges of the picture and at the stretching edges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Additional remarks</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The painting bears evidence of having been completely painted out of doors (see above, Brief Report).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Armand Guillaumin – Rock at Baumette Point
Brief Report on Technology and Condition

Literature

- Bourgeois Ainé 1888: Bourgeois Ainé, Catalogue général illustré, Paris
- Rosenberg 1908: “Retrospective d’œuvres de Guillaumin”, Galerie Rosenberg, Paris 1908

Source of illustrations

Fig. 12: painting box from Bourgeois Ainé 1888, p. 95
All further illustrations and figures Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud

Examination methods used

- Incident light
- Raking light
- Reflected light
- Transmitted light
- Ultraviolet fluorescence
- Infrared reflectography
  - False-colour infrared reflectography
  - X-ray
  - Stereomicroscopy
- VIS spectrometry
  - Wood identification
  - FTIR (Fourier transform spectroscopy)
  - EDX (Energy Dispersive X-ray analysis)
  - Microchemical analysis

Author of examination: Annegret Volk Date: 05/2007
Author of brief report: Caroline von Saint-George Date: 04/2008

Caroline von Saint-George, Annegret Volk: Armand Guillaumin – Rock at Baumette Point, Brief Report on Technology and Condition
Fig. 1
Recto

Fig. 2
Verso
Fig. 3
Raking light

Fig. 4
Reflected light from an angle
Fig. 5
Transmitted light

Fig. 6
UV fluorescence
Armand Guillaumin – Rock at Baumette Point
Brief Report on Technology and Condition

Fig. 7
Detail top, pencil inscription verso with indication of time when picture was painted “Jer 93 4 h”[Fr. Janvier 1893, 4 h; Engl. January 1893, 4 o’clock (pm)]; detail bottom, pencil inscription with the figure “4” on the bottom foldover edge, presumably a further indication of the exact time of the painting.

Fig. 8
Detail, right-hand turnover edge with traces of corrosion caused by the original tacks and the drying edge of an insulation coat rich in binding agents, applied to the ground.
Fig. 9
Detail, signature

Fig. 10
The last paint applications were executed wet-in-wet on the already dry paint-layer, microscopic photograph (M = 1 mm)
Fig. 11
Mapping of the visible underdrawing lines in the IR reflectogram (detail bottom left)

Fig. 12
Detail, semicircular impression in the wet paint, due presumably to the fastener used to hold the picture to the inside of the lid of a standard commercial painting box of the time