



Jacques Sablet the Younger, *Family Portrait in front of a Harbour*, 1800, oil on canvas, 64.8 x 81.4 cm, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Well known at Napoléon Bonaparte's (1769–1821) court, Jacques Sablet the Younger (1749–1803) was a Swiss portraitist, landscape artist and genre painter who depicted the daily lives of the upper class. The harbour in the background in this painting suggests that this is a portrait of an upper-class merchant family. The figures are dressed in contemporary fashions, with long muslin gowns on the female figures and older military-inspired attire on the male figures. Their clothing is different from the styles of the previous regime, therefore distancing this family from the *vieux régime*. This portrait reflects the desire of members of the upper bourgeoisie who supported Napoléon's new regime to formally express their rejection of the old regime. The

family stands near the waterfront as one of its members plays the violin. Two children or teenagers are engaged in what seems to be a dance, with the younger boy acting like a gentleman towards his sister. Meanwhile, the mother is sitting on a bench and watching the couple dancing, as is her husband, who is standing behind her with his hand on her back. An older man, probably the grandfather, is seated next to the mother. Departing from the rococo aesthetic of the previous regime, this painting exhibits a more restrained and formal style.

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