

	<div>Object: Woman Sleeping</div> <div>Museum: Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de</div> <div>Collection: Alte Meister, Gemälde und Skulpturen</div> <div>Inventory number: 832-1960/24</div>
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Description

Jean-Baptiste Deshayes, a pupil and son-in-law of François Boucher, executed the painting Woman Sleeping, which was exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1759, entirely under the influence of the galant, erotic painting tradition of the French Rococo. Arranged diagonally on opulent drapery, the sleeping woman is depicted in a diaphanous white garment. Her left shoulder, breast, and leg are exposed. A red ribbon is plaited through her hair, while her lapdog, historically called a Punzenlecker (“fanny licker”) in vulgar German, is kept on a blue ribbon. A golden ring adorns her left hand. The primary colors—red, blue, and yellow (gold)—stand for love, fidelity, and eternity, and the woman’s legs are spread open. Coupled with the, certainly intentional, undulating blue ribbon to the woman’s Punze, and her fingers being linked right in her lap, the composition is charged with eroticism. We may only guess at the nature of the desire of the woman sleeping so peacefully. The viewer’s gaze explores the female body exposed to him, only to be met by the stern, unwavering stare of the dog, which unmasks him as a voyeur. At the same time, the “watchdog” refuses to let the viewer approach.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on canvas
Measurements:	101.5 x 76.0 cm

Events

Painted	When	1756-1759
	Who	Jean-Baptiste-Henri Deshays (1729-1765)
	Where	

Keywords

- Painting