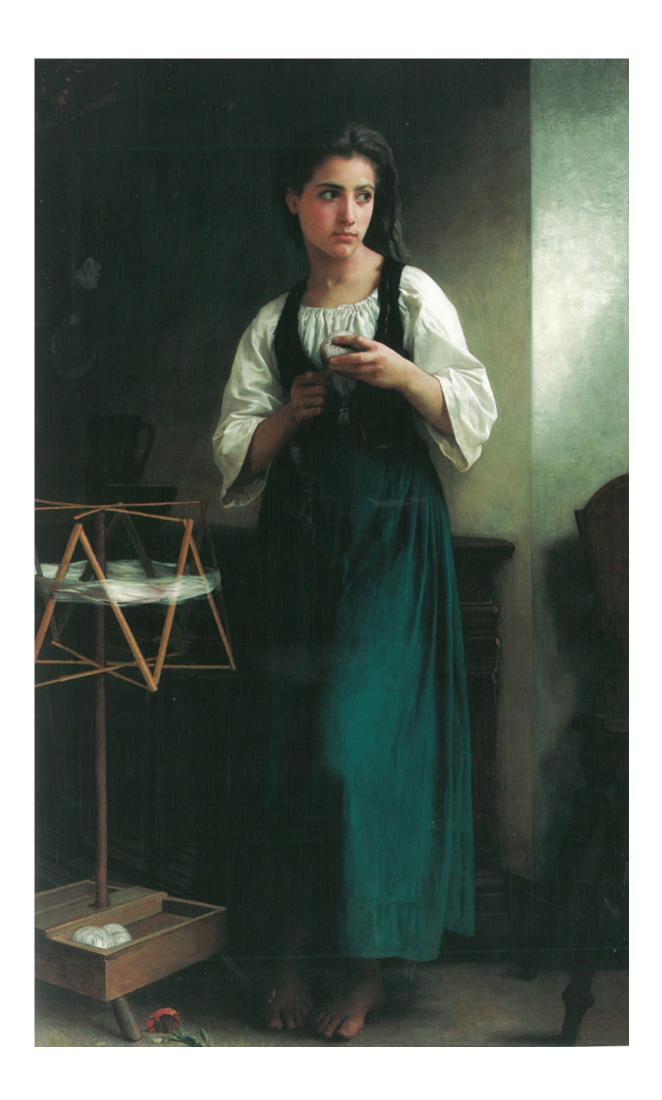
On William-Adolphe Bouguereau's Dévideuse (1877)

by <u>Jeffrey Burghauser</u> (April 2021)



See the mantel's moldings, con-Founded of the edge they had By the friction of those un-Numbered girls so keen to pad Past it to the daylight-mad, Stucco'd alcove. Here's a spun Spinner's weasel. Here's a sad Flower of vermillion,

Once a Perfect Future's ore,
Relegated to a Thing
Near her naked feet, this soreParadox-remembering
Woman sweatless as a wing,
White as an abandoned shore,
Fondling a burl of string
Soft & white as doubtful lore.

Some tableaux can circumvent
The essential hunger one
Brings to them: for logic pent
Underneath, within, upon
What the artist's mind has grown.
See the canvas. This unrent
Beauty's an adynaton
Conjured for an argument.

To what end? Explain to me.

Let this painted image flex

Just as much reality

As a breeze that stops the clocks,

As some songs that bridge the Styx,

As souls that displace the sea. Only that which cannot exist exists eternally.

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Jeffrey Burghauser is a teacher in Columbus, OH. He was educated at SUNY-Buffalo and the University of Leeds. He currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have appeared (or are forthcoming) in Appalachian Journal, Fearsome Critters, Iceview, Lehrhaus, and New English Review. Jeffrey's booklength collections are available on Amazon, and his website is