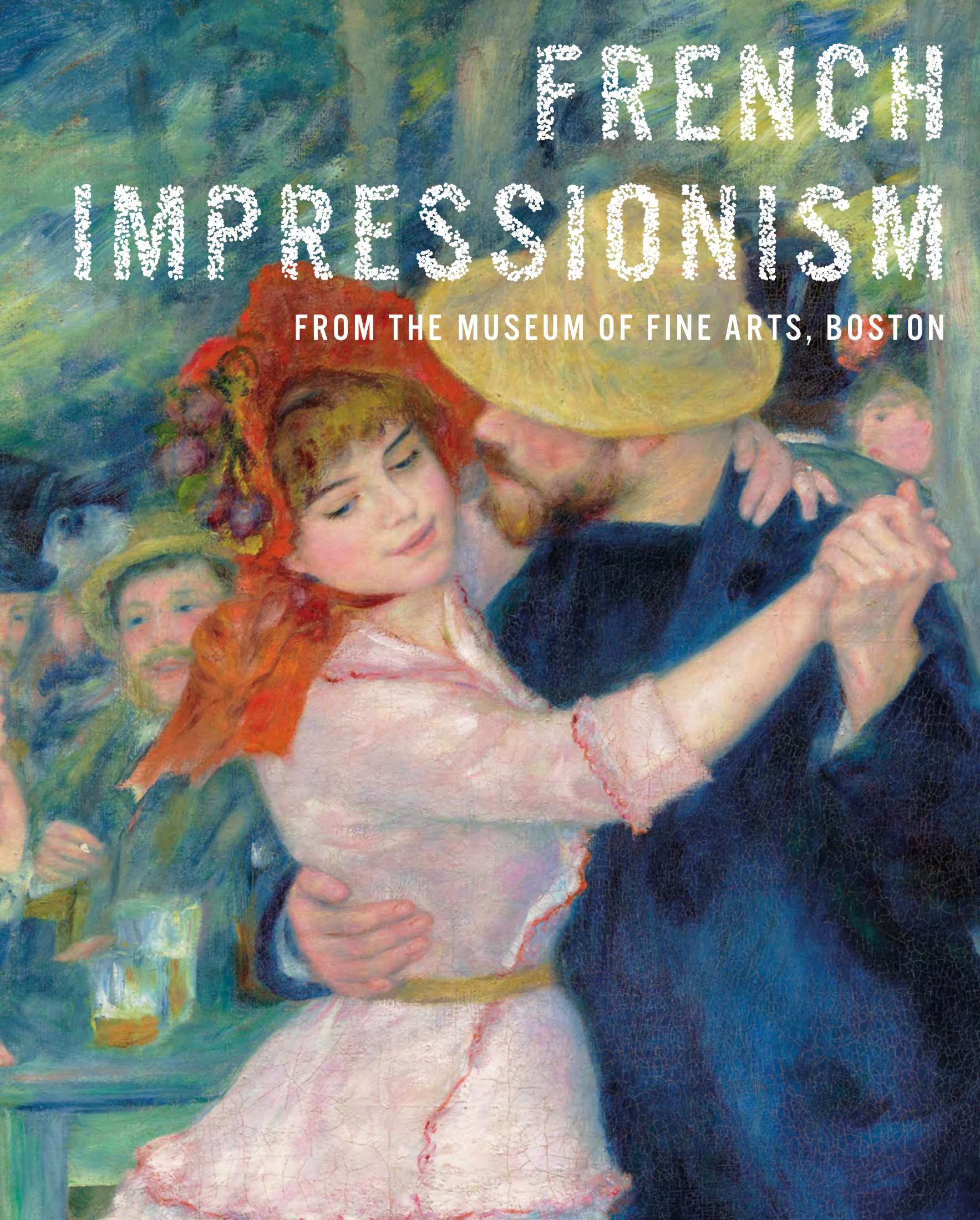


FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM

FROM THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON





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IMPRESSIONISM FRENCH

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By Katie Hanson, Julia Welch, Ted Gott and Miranda Wallace
with contributions from Angela Hesson, Cathy Leahy and Meg Slater





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DIRECTORS’
FOREWORDS

FOREWORD, NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

While French Impressionism is now entrenched in the Western art canon, it is worth remembering that the Impressionists were very much the rebels of their day. The Impressionist project was to exhibit work independently of the traditional Paris Salon, and to promote a new style of painting that privileged ‘impressions’ – often painted outdoors, directly in front of the subject – over what the orthodoxy of the time deemed ‘finished’ works.

This publication draws on the renowned collection of Impressionist works of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, with which the NGV has partnered on the 2021 Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibition. Works are reproduced in rich colour, and are accompanied by a suite of essays by both MFA and NGV curators. Texts include an overview of the Impressionist project as well as explorations of the conditions leading to the birth of Impressionism, influences and modes of experimentation.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in particular Matthew Teitelbaum, the Ann and Graham Gund Director, and Edward Saywell, Chair, Prints and Drawings, and former Chief of Exhibitions Strategy and Gallery Displays, who have championed this project and led its development over many years. Additionally, we are grateful to the MFA Boston’s Board of Trustees for their support of this unparalleled loan project.

We also acknowledge the commitment and ongoing support the NGV receives from the Victorian Government, through the Honourable Daniel Andrews MP, Premier of Victoria; the Honourable Danny Pearson MP, Minister for Creative Industries; and the Honourable Martin Pakula MP, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events. We thank Presenting Partner Visit Victoria and Chief Executive Officer Brendan McClements, and acknowledge the support of Creative Victoria and the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, in particular Simon Phemister, Secretary and Andrew Abbott, Deputy Secretary, Creative, Sport and Visitor Economy and Chief Executive, Creative Victoria.

We acknowledge the Honourable Paul Fletcher, Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, and the Australian Government, through the Australian Government International Exhibitions Insurance (AGIEI) Program. AGIEI was established by the Australian Government to provide funding for the purchase of insurance for significant cultural exhibitions, and without it the high cost of commercial insurance would prohibit the organisation of many touring exhibitions. Additionally, we acknowledge that works in this exhibition were protected under the Australian Government’s Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Scheme.

This exhibition and publication would not be possible without the galvanising support of our corporate partners. I thank Premium Partner HSBC and Chief Executive Officer Australia Kaber Mclean, who we are pleased to welcome into their first partnership with the NGV. I thank Major Sponsor EY and Managing Partner Melbourne Rodney Piltz; Major Partner Telstra and Chief Executive Officer Andrew Penn; and Learning Partner The University of Melbourne and Vice-Chancellor Professor Duncan Maskell.

We acknowledge our Partner Corrs Chambers Westgarth and Senior Partner and Chief Executive Officer Gavin MacLaren; and Supporters Asahi Super Dry and Group Chief Executive Officer, Asahi Beverages Regional Hub Oceania – Robert Iervasi;

Dulux Australia and Chief Executive Officer Patrick Houlihan; and Champagne Pommery and Co-owner of Vranken-Pommery Monopole, Madame Nathalie Vranken. I also thank Event Partner Yering Station and owner Doug Rathbone AM; and Media Partners *Herald Sun* and *The Australian* and Managing Director, Victorian and Tasmanian Publishing – NewsCorp Australia Peter Zavec; Val Morgan Cinema and Managing Director Guy Burbidge; Smooth FM and Chief Executive Officer, Nova Entertainment, Peter Charlton; and QMS Media Australia and Chief Executive Officer John O’Neill. We also thank Learning Patron, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family and Tourism Partner Sofitel Melbourne On Collins and General Manager Clive Scott.

I would also like to acknowledge the many staff who have contributed to this project across the NGV and the MFA. From the MFA, I acknowledge Katie Hanson, Curator of Paintings, Art of Europe, and Julia Welch, Curatorial Research Fellow, Paintings, Art of Europe.

From the NGV, I thank Andrew Clark, Deputy Director; Don Heron, Assistant Director, Exhibitions Management and Design; Donna McColm, Assistant Director, Curatorial and Audience Engagement; Misha Agzarian, Assistant Director, Fundraising and Events; and Jane Zantuck, Assistant Director, Marketing and Corporate Partnerships, for their leadership and support. I also thank the NGV’s curatorial team for this project: Ted Gott, Senior Curator, International Art; Miranda Wallace, Senior Curator, International Exhibition Projects; and Meg Slater, Assistant Curator, International Exhibition Projects.

We are proud to present the work of these much-loved artists, and to celebrate them as the innovators they truly were.

Tony Ellwood AM
Director, National Gallery of Victoria

FOREWORD, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

One of the first public art museums in the United States, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA) was founded in 1870 with a mission to acquire, exhibit and preserve works of art for the enjoyment and enlightenment of the public. Over the past 150 years, the MFA has served as steward to a remarkable collection of more than 500,000 works of art, held in trust for future generations.

We believe in the power of art to connect people across time and serve as a meeting place of world cultures. The MFA is committed to engaging deeply with audiences to share our extraordinary collections and to foster cross-cultural understanding. Our Traveling Exhibitions Program collaborates with museums and cultural institutions around the globe to share exhibitions and scholarship. In the past decade alone, these exhibitions have welcomed more than 15 million visitors. And now, the MFA is honoured to partner with the National Gallery of Victoria in presenting *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*.

The Museum was shaped by the foresight and generosity of Boston collectors who, in the forty years after its opening, quickly built one of North America’s most enduring collections. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the collection has grown through judicious acquisition of both singular works of art and truly remarkable collections. And since then, it has grown in stature through generous lending and sustained scholarship. Works of art come alive in both our contemplation and our interpretation, animated by the many ways we recall history, challenge it, and bring ideas into the present.

On the occasion of the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874 in Paris, critic Jules Castagnary described the participating artists as ‘a collective force in our disintegrated age’. The ‘new painting’, as it was termed in its heyday of the 1870s, required community, an expression of shared values and ambitions, and a desire to create a new art for new sensibilities. In technique and subject matter, there was a commitment to creating images that reflected ‘modern life’, its energies and uncertainties. Artists in the moment aspired to tell the stories of both urbanisation and changing social conventions – ideas they felt central to understanding their time – while celebrating the recurring and sustaining beauty of the natural world. And they did so together – painting side by side, sharing meals in Paris and the countryside, and writing to one another and about one another. Their paintings, and their words, had deep connections. Monet later reminisced about the group’s formative years and the importance of their discussions, recalling that at a cafe in the Batignolles, he

met with Fantin-Latour and Cézanne, Degas, the art critic Duranty, Émile Zola ... and several others. For my part, I took along Sisley, Bazille, and Renoir. Nothing could be more interesting than these conversations with their perpetual clash of opinions. They kept our wits sharpened, they encouraged us in sincere and objective research, they provided us with stores of enthusiasm that for weeks and weeks kept us up, until the final shaping of the idea was accomplished. From them we emerged tempered more highly, with firmer will, with our thoughts clearer and more distinct.

In its organisation, *French Impressionism* highlights the words of the artists and their peers to create links between the works of art themselves. Words are the collective thread that declare the

idea of community, mutual respect and pervasive influence. Featuring more than ninety paintings along with fifteen works on paper created by leading Impressionist artists, the exhibition brings alive a transformational moment in the history of art and declares the many connections that are often under-recognised. While some names will be familiar, such as Monet and Cézanne, others will be novel encounters. And so it should be. History is always more complicated and layered than we first think, and the threads of influence and consequence often unexpected and exciting in the discovery.

French Impressionism would have been impossible without the extraordinary team at the National Gallery of Victoria, who were instrumental in conceiving and fulfilling this exhibition, and I give particular thanks to Ted Gott (Senior Curator, International Art) and Miranda Wallace (Senior Curator, International Exhibition Projects), as well as my colleagues in Boston, including Katie Hanson (Curator of Paintings, Art of Europe) and Julia Welch (Curatorial Research Fellow, Paintings, Art of Europe). Our mutual endeavour has been one of notable vision, creativity, patience and teamwork. After a challenging period across the globe, this exhibition is a joyous celebration of our connections and a reminder that individuals and institutions thrive through reciprocity and generosity.

Matthew Teitelbaum
Ann and Graham Gund Director, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Edgar Degas *Visit to a museum* c. 1879–90 (detail)



GOVERNMENT
MESSAGES

FROM THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

The NGV’s Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series has been a feature of Victoria’s cultural calendar since 2004.

This year’s exhibition – *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* – adds to the NGV’s impressive roll call of international collections hosted. Since 2004, we have welcomed work from the likes of Picasso, Dalí and Van Gogh, right into the heart of Melbourne.

The 2021 exhibition brings us highlights from the renowned Museum of Fine Arts, Boston – one of the best collections of Impressionist paintings in the world. At a time when many galleries around the world remain closed, we are fortunate to have the NGV deliver this special showcase.

This major event is particularly important given the difficult year we’ve just had. The exhibition plays an important role in our state’s recovery – by getting Victorians back to work, bringing visitors back to our cultural precinct and boosting our local economy.

French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston is set to be another memorable Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibition, and it can be experienced again for years to come through this magnificent publication.

The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

I am pleased to add my welcome to the National Gallery of Victoria’s publication *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* on behalf of the Australian Government.

The NGV has developed a reputation for presenting the best in international art of the past and present, particularly through its celebrated Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series. For this iteration in the series, the NGV has partnered with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which houses one of the most important collections of Impressionist art in the United States.

French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston is supported by the Australian Government International Exhibitions Insurance (AGIEI) program. By providing assistance with insurance costs, the Australian Government is able to encourage and support the staging of major exhibitions drawn from some of the world’s most significant collections.

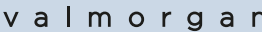
I am delighted that the Australian Government has been able to assist the NGV in staging *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*. I encourage all Australians to immerse themselves in the works of these artists, which bring such pleasure and are so widely admired.

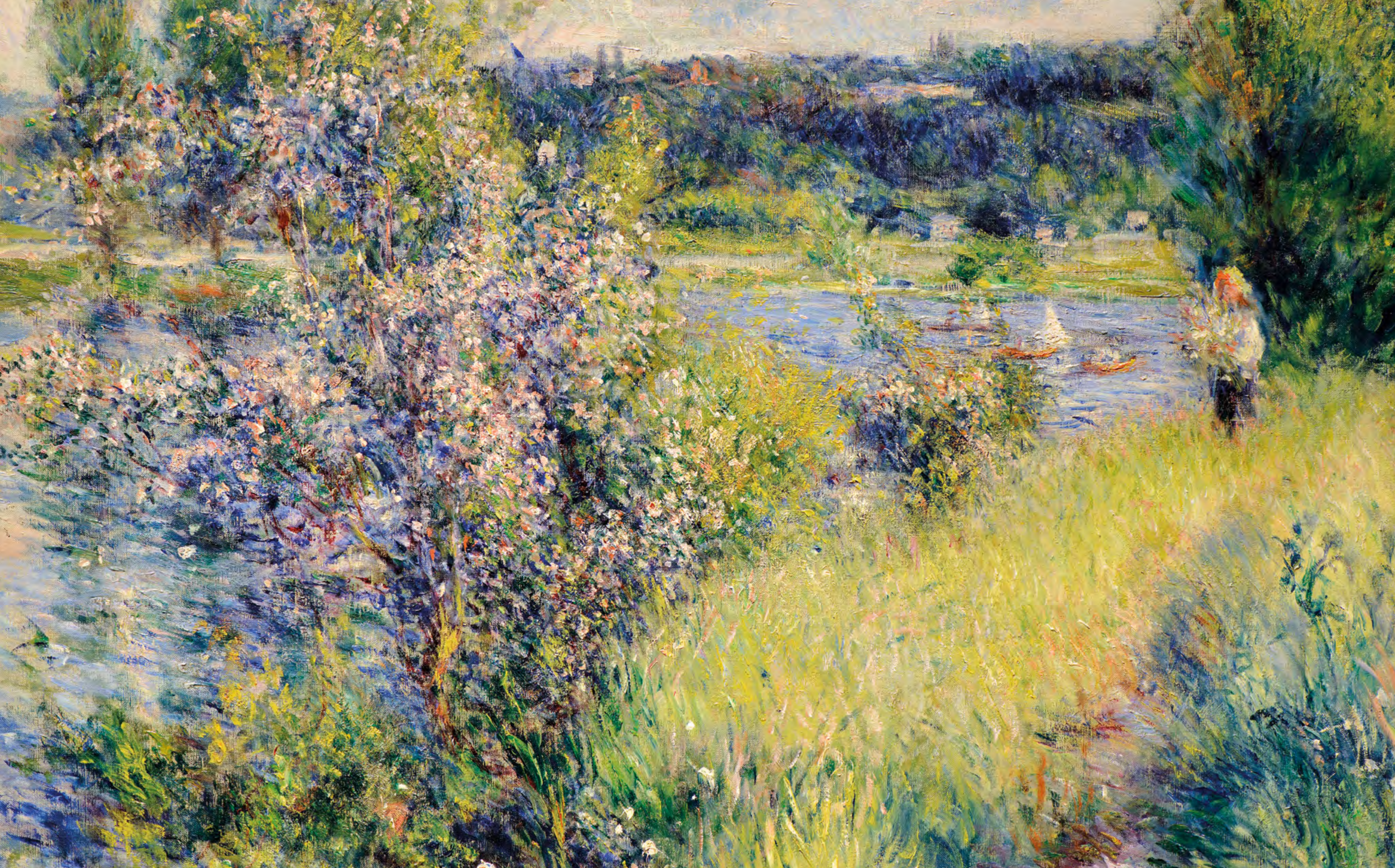
The Honourable Paul Fletcher MP
Federal Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts



Édouard Manet *Street singer* c. 1862 (detail)

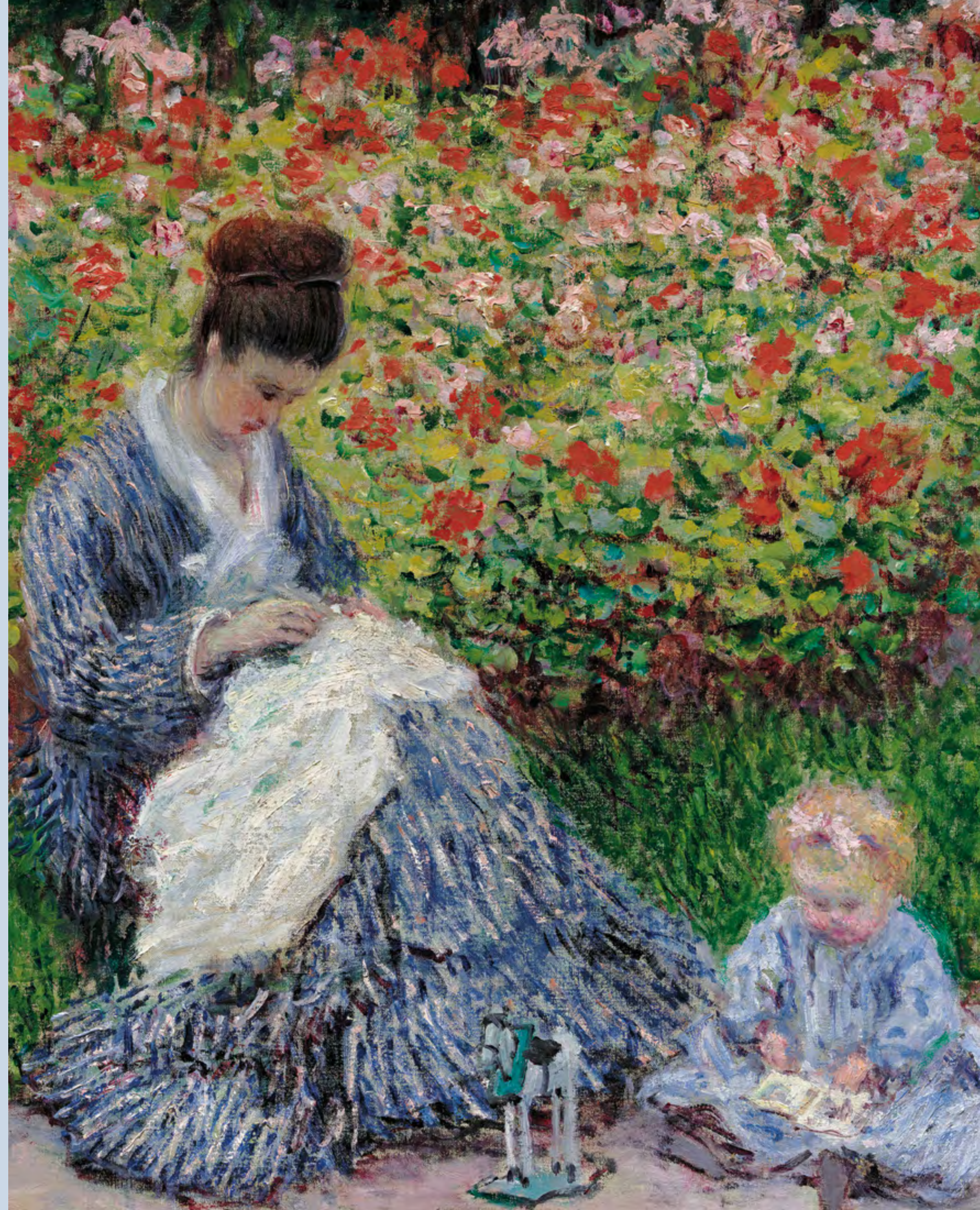
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1. INTRODUCTION: VISION AND VOICE

KATIE HANSON



‘PAINT AS YOU SEE
NATURE YOURSELF.
IF YOU DON’T SEE
NATURE WITH AN
INDIVIDUAL FEELING,
YOU WILL NEVER BE
A PAINTER, AND ALL
THE TEACHING CAN-
NOT MAKE YOU ONE.’

—*Claude Monet*

Renoir thrived on human interaction, working in the company of others. Late in life, he reminisced about the advantage ‘the Impressionists had of being a group of friends who were able to benefit from each other’s research’.⁸ During the 1870s, the painter’s brother Edmond wrote of Renoir’s sociable painting practice:

he will make friends with all of these people who have their unique charm that his models would not be able to imitate ... So, his work, besides its artistic value, has the entire spell of an exact picture faithful to modern life. What he pictured, we can see it every day, is our real life that he captured in images that will be remembered as being among the most lively and the most harmonious of our time.⁹

Whereas Renoir sought interaction, Monet cultivated solitude. In an 1880 interview, journalist Émile Taboureaux pointed out to Monet: ‘Nowadays you seem to be keeping to yourself. I no longer see your name on the roster of “Impressionist” events.’ ‘You’re wrong’, Monet replied. ‘I still am and will always be an Impressionist ... But, except on rare occasions, I hardly see my colleagues anymore.’¹⁰ Two decades later, he was more explicit: ‘I live in the country so as to be left alone’.¹¹

Distinctive brushwork, peculiar viewpoints, and subjects featuring faces and places dear to the artist are all hallmarks of Impressionism. In recent decades,

Late in Monet’s life, an interviewer asked him, ‘How could you bear to give up that kind of luminous and simple composition that included people? It was so innovative.’ To which the painter responded: ‘Well, I was driven to it for a simple reason: posing bores people’.³ What is more, Monet preferred to work alone, in solitude before nature, writing in 1868:

Don’t you think that directly in nature and alone one does better? ... I’ve always been of this mind, and what I do under these conditions has always been better. One is too much taken up with what one sees and hears in Paris, however firm one may be, and what I am painting here has at least the merit of not resembling anyone ... because it will be simply the expression of what I shall have felt, I myself, personally.⁴

This sentiment resonates with comments found throughout Monet’s career: for example, when he asked his dealer Paul Durand-Ruel in 1884 to keep a trip secret, lest Renoir attempt to join;⁵ and this advice Monet offered younger artists seeking their own directions:

Paint as you see nature yourself. If you don’t see nature with an individual feeling, you will never be a painter, and all the teaching cannot make you one. A painter must work out his own problem in art, as everyone must work out his own problem in life.⁶

Part of the way Monet worked out his own problem was to be alone as he created.

Even when they painted more superficially similar works, such as Monet’s *Camille Monet and a child in the artist’s garden in Argenteuil*, 1875 (p. 187), and Renoir’s painting discussed above – each depicting a woman and child (perhaps even the same duo) up close and at leisure outdoors – Monet gives the setting the same attention as the figures, perhaps imbuing it with even greater intensity, while Renoir’s landscape is generalised and secondary to his people. Monet’s figures are absorbed by what they hold in their hands – needlework and a book – not demanding our attention, whereas Renoir’s female figure engages us with her outward gaze and cheerful expression.⁷

TWO LUMINOUS IMPRESSIONIST canvases – *Woman with a parasol and small child on a sunlit hillside*, c. 1874–76 (p. 9), by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and *Meadow with poplars*, c. 1875 (p. 8), by Claude Monet – present radiant outdoor light and vegetation, scenes suggestive of leisure and ease. While the former focuses on human presence close-up, the latter suggests it from afar; and whereas Renoir paints in feathery brushstrokes, Monet uses thicker dabs and dashes. So closely were these two painters affiliated – they met as art students in Paris, shared space in Frédéric Bazille’s studio, and undertook numerous painting excursions together in the 1860s – that it comes as little surprise that the brunette in Renoir’s painting is often, albeit tentatively, identified as Camille Monet, his friend’s wife. The small figure in Monet’s landscape is also thought to be Camille, or perhaps their son Jean (b. 1867), so distant and indistinct is the figure’s rendering. Despite Renoir and Monet’s circle being close-knit and its cast of characters well-documented, the figures cannot be securely identified in either painting. Nevertheless, each work’s respective focus on figure or landscape as primary motif, and distinct handling of paint, readily identifies its maker.

It is not only with the benefit of hindsight that we associate Renoir with the figure and Monet with landscape; this distinction was already recognised in the 1870s. Critic Georges Rivière declared in 1877:

Monet seems to be the very antithesis of M. Renoir. The strength, the animation, in short, the life that [Renoir] infuses into people, M. Monet infuses into things; he has endowed them with a soul. In his paintings, water laps, locomotives move, wind fills sails; plots of land, houses, everything in this great artist’s work has an intense and personal life that no one before had discovered or even suspected.¹

Journalist and critic Théodore Duret observed in 1878 that ‘Renoir, contrary to Monet, Sisley, and Pissarro, is above all a figure painter, the landscape only plays an ancillary role in his oeuvre’.² Why might Renoir and Monet have taken these different tracks?

PREVIOUS: **Claude Monet** *Camille Monet and a child in the artist’s garden in Argenteuil* 1875 (detail)

‘WITHOUT PAINTS
IN TUBES, THERE
WOULD HAVE BEEN NO
CÉZANNE, NO MONET,
NO SISLEY OR PISSARRO,
NOTHING OF WHAT
THE JOURNALISTS
WERE LATER TO CALL
IMPRESSIONISM.’

—*Pierre-Auguste Renoir*

myriad solo exhibitions have rendered some of these artists’ names – including Monet, Renoir and Edgar Degas – and their individual styles readily recognisable. The well-known *By Himself* series of publications made excerpts of these men’s letters and sayings accessible to Anglophone audiences.¹² Using the artists’ words as its organising rubric, *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* builds on these precedents with the aim of uniting vision and voice, artworks and artists’ opinions, bringing us back to France in the late nineteenth century, where and when Impressionism was born.

While the paintings are distinctively individual, the Impressionist project – to exhibit independently of the state-sponsored and juried Salon – was a group effort. Monet wrote in 1873 to journalist Paul Alexis of

a group of painters gathered at my place who read with pleasure your article in the Avenir National. We are all happy to see you defend ideas that we have, and we hope, as you have said, that Avenir National would want to lend us its support when the Society that we are in the process of creating is entirely founded.¹³

Days later, this appeared in print along with Alexis’s characterisation of these artists:

Most of [them] have previously exhibited at the Salon, [and] belong to that group of Naturalists that has the

right ambition of painting nature and life in their larger reality. Their association, however, will not just be a small clique. They intend to represent interests, not tendencies, and hope all serious artists will join them.¹⁴

Going against the state-sponsored, juried Salon and beginning an independent exhibiting society was a risky undertaking and, as Monet noted, ‘it’s very difficult to ask people to join who don’t know you’.¹⁵ Renoir asserted that

of us the great task has been to paint as simply as possible; but you also realise how much the inheritors of tradition – from such men as Abel de Pujol, Gérôme, Cabanel, etc., with whom these traditions, which they did not comprehend, were lost in the commonplace and the vulgar, up to painters like Courbet, Delacroix, Ingres – were bewildered by what seemed to them merely the naïve efforts of an Epinal printmaker ... We were trying to paint in joyous tones and carefully eliminate all literature from our pictures.¹⁶

These were individuals who knew each other and each other’s work well and held strong opinions on the aims, limits and directions of their own art and the art world of their time. They wrote to and about one another; they sometimes painted side by side; and, of course, they exhibited together. The latter effort began with the 1874 exhibition of the so-called Société anonyme coopérative d’artistes peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs, etc. (Anonymous society of painters, sculptors, engravers, etc.), resulting in eight co-organised shows, the last of which occurred in 1886. ‘I was the one who objected to using a title’, Renoir confessed.

The critics would immediately start talking of a ‘new school,’ when all that we were really after, within the limits of our abilities, was to try to induce painters in general ... everything that was being painted was merely rule of thumb or cheap tinsel – it was considered frightfully daring to take figures from [Jacques-Louis] David and dress them up in modern clothes. Therefore it was inevitable that the younger generation should go back to simple things.¹⁷

In the exhibition *French Impressionism*, which unfolds in ten interrelated sections, outlined below – and in the following chapters – these easy-to-enjoy (seemingly ‘simple’, to use Renoir’s word) artworks and their makers’ artistic relationships are analysed in terms of emulation and innovation, friendships and rivalries, shared interests in artistic motifs and times of introspection. Herein, we explore the provocative and compelling tensions between the individual and the collaborative aspects of Impressionism. It is by no means an exhaustive account; rather, it focuses on presenting a selection of acclaimed and exemplary works, from the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in a new light.

INTRODUCING IMPRESSIONISM OF
THE 1870S

Woman with a parasol and small child on a sunlit hillside and *Meadow with poplars*, with which this chapter began, also open this exhibition and serve to introduce Impressionism of the 1870s more generally. Like so many of the works in the exhibition, they are domestic in scale and have surfaces characterised by the artists’ light, bright palettes and idiosyncratic brushwork. These paintings are, in a sense, emblematic of the Impressionists’ works. Although their foci differed, both Renoir and Monet were committed to painting the world around them as they saw it, *sur le motif et en plein air* (directly in front of the subject and in the open air).

A commercial innovation facilitated the direction of the Impressionists’ work: metal tubes had become available in 1841 (and would become more affordable within just a few decades), allowing greater storage and transportation of oil paint. ‘Paints in tubes, being easy to carry, allowed us to work from nature, and nature alone’, Renoir asserted. ‘Without paints in tubes, there would have been no Cézanne, no Monet, no Sisley or Pissarro, nothing of what the journalists were later to call Impressionism’.¹⁸ The number of different colours in their works attests to the variety and convenience of these paints for working outdoors and on site, and the modest scale of their canvases confirms the necessity of portable supports for this

work.¹⁹ In addition to ease of transport, this size of canvas had other potential merits. As poet Stéphane Mallarmé stated in 1876, the Impressionists ‘restrict their pictures to that size easiest to look at, and with shut eyes preserve the remembrance of’.²⁰ Although the faces and places that feature in their works may not be immediately recognisable today, there remains a sense of intimacy and immediacy: a person seated casually and observed at close range; a child toddling in the verdant grass; an open vista, breeze rustling the flowers and foliage; nothing grander than grain-stacks, trees and the bright sky to see. Valorisation of the here and now, the mundane and local, is at the heart of the Impressionists’ achievement, but they were encouraged in that direction by an older generation: ‘There is nothing like [working in] the nature in which one lives every day, where one truly enjoys being’, noted the Impressionists’ informal mentor Charles François Daubigny. ‘Then the paintings show the effects of one’s inner life and the sweet sensations one feels there.’²¹

BEFORE IMPRESSIONISM

As a teenager, Monet ventured from Le Havre, where he grew up, to Paris to see the 1859 Salon, observing: ‘Théodore Rousseau made some very beautiful landscapes ... Daubigny, now there is a fellow who does well, who understands nature! The Corots are unadorned marvels.’²² After moving to Paris to pursue further artistic training, Monet and his peers, who admired these artists and their direct engagement with the land, undertook extended painting sojourns to the Forest of Fontainebleau in the early 1860s, their formative years as aspiring artists, staying in the villages of Barbizon and Chailly, where the older artists had lodged and earned the name School of Barbizon. Monet’s *Woodgatherers at the edge of the forest* (p. 38), painted when he was in his early twenties, resonates with the themes of rural labour and the earthy, autumnal colour palette seen in works by Barbizon artists and may come as a surprise in light of *Meadow with poplars*, painted a decade later and so characteristic of our expectations of Monet. Many of the future Impressionists revered the work of their elders,



Claude Monet *Meadow with poplars* c. 1875



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Woman with a parasol and small child on a sunlit hillside* c. 1874–76

‘... A WORK PAINTED
DIRECTLY ON THE
SPOT HAS ALWAYS A
STRENGTH, A POWER,
A VIVIDNESS OF
TOUCH THAT ONE
DOESN’T FIND AGAIN
IN THE STUDIO.’

—*Eugène Boudin*

with the youthful Renoir reportedly claiming: ‘I go to Barbizon to make Diaz paintings’.²³ Much later in life, Renoir credited Narcisse Diaz de La Peña with having advised him to lighten his palette during an early encounter in the forest.²⁴ It was both the artists themselves and their artworks that provided important guidance and models for emulation to the younger painters.

BOUDIN AS AN EXEMPLAR TO THE IMPRESSIONISTS

Another key exemplar for the Impressionists was Eugène Boudin, who encouraged the young Monet to paint outdoors, telling him ‘a work painted directly on the spot has always a strength, a power, a vividness of touch that one doesn’t find again in the studio’.²⁵ Monet would continue to credit Boudin with his artistic formation throughout his career:

One day Boudin said to me: ‘Learn to draw well and appreciate the sea, the light, the blue sky’. I took his advice and together we went on long outings during which I painted constantly from nature. This was how I came to understand nature and learned to love it passionately ... I have said it before and can only repeat that I owe everything to Boudin and I attribute my success to him.²⁶

Boudin’s paintings show spaces of leisure and of work with a unifying focus on his fascination, shared with the younger Impressionists, with water. As a teenager,

Monet had observed to Boudin that there was a real lack of marine paintings at the Paris Salon, and it was perhaps a niche the older artist could fill; while Boudin would devote his career to coastal scenes, Monet would become ‘the painter of water *par excellence*’ of his generation.²⁷

WATERY SURFACES

The flickering of colour and light on rippling watery surfaces was a favoured subject for the Impressionists and their friends. In these works, engagement with the fleeting and momentary is paired with innovative compositions, often allowing the body of water to spread across the foreground as though the viewer hovers above it or floats on its surface. Édouard Manet dubbed Monet the ‘Raphael of water’,²⁸ and his achievements in capturing its many moods and appearances have perhaps overshadowed those around him. Daubigny, an older artist who was a great champion of Monet’s work, led the way in creating a studio boat, a floating atelier for painting rivers, quite literally, on location. ‘It’s very much on the banks of rivers that one sees the most beautiful landscapes’, was Daubigny’s stance on painterly motifs.²⁹ Johan Barthold Jongkind, like Boudin, encouraged the young Monet’s marine painting. Monet’s peers took a variety of approaches to waterways: some, like the Norwegian Frits Thaulow, reveling in the rippling colours (pp. 80–1); and others, like Paul Cézanne, allowing a band of pond water to complicate his composition’s presentation of depth and space (pp. 76–7). Alfred Sisley also experimented with compositions and effects, describing the river Loing, a regular subject in his work, as ‘so beautiful, so translucent, so changeable’.³⁰

STILL LIFE AS STUDIO PRACTICE

Of course, it was not all waves and weather for the Impressionists and their friends, who also worked in the studio, for many purposes. This is perhaps seen most evidently in their still-life paintings. ‘I’m astonished that these painted studies of flowers find any takers, it is such a painterly feeling I’m always astounded that anyone but painters has a

taste for them’, confided Henri Fantin-Latour about his still-life paintings. ‘I feel so strongly that anyone who hasn’t done any painting is bound to find them somehow lacking, even painters must be of a certain quality to appreciate them.’³¹ For Fantin-Latour and his peers, such paintings were not only painters’ paintings, they also found a ready market.³² With compositions somewhat more conventional than their vanguard landscapes, still life was, for some, a sure-fire money-maker. Gustave Courbet claimed to be ‘coining money out of flowers’.³³ Still life was an expedient option when conditions were not conducive to outdoor work. In terms of composition and lighting, it was easier than landscape to control – a creative alternative to the vagaries of weather and working *en plein air*. It also allowed the artists to work toward their painterly goals, as Berthe Morisot observed: ‘To catch the fleeting moment – anything, however small, a smile, a flower, a fruit – is an ambition’.³⁴ Others, like Cézanne, were more specific and enthusiastic:

As to flowers, I have given them up. They wilt immediately. Fruits are more reliable. They love having their portraits done. They sit there as if demanding pardon for changing color. They come to you in all their perfume, speaking of the fields they have left, the rain that has nourished them, the sunrises they have seen. In circling with pulpy brushstrokes the skin of a beautiful peach, the melancholy of an old apple, I see in their reflections that they speak to each other of the same shadows of resignation, love of the sun, memory of freshness.³⁵

RENOIR AND EXPERIMENTATION

Unearthing and examining preferences and ambitions underpins a deeper understanding of Renoir’s artistic development. ‘I am suffering from the illness of experimentation’, Renoir confided to his dealer Paul Durand-Ruel in 1881.³⁶ This was the year of the Impressionists’ sixth independent exhibition, and a year before Durand-Ruel would offer Renoir the opportunity to mount a solo show, from which paintings would travel from Paris to London and New York.

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—*Berthe Morisot*

Nevertheless, Renoir worried that he had undertaken insufficient artistic training in his youth, and was not adept enough as a draughtsman:

I am still making those mistakes, and I’m 40 years old. I went to see the Raphaels in Rome. They are very beautiful and I should have seen them sooner. They are full of knowledge and wisdom. He was not searching for the impossible, like I am, but it’s beautiful.³⁷

Renoir’s drive to continue learning and experimenting was not without a sense of purpose and pride. On a visit to southern France, Renoir described himself as ‘in the process of learning a lot’. This was thanks, in large part, to the weather.

I have perpetual sunshine and I can scrape off and begin again as much as I like. This is the only way to learn, and in Paris one is obliged to be satisfied with little ... [I] am staying in the sun ... while warming myself and observing a great deal, I shall, I believe, have acquired the simplicity and grandeur of the ancient painters.³⁸

This monographic grouping focuses on Renoir’s work in the 1880s, and the range of pictorial effects he experimented with in landscapes and figural works, scenes of suburban Paris and more far-flung destinations as he travelled, pursuing his ongoing self-education.

By the end of the decade, the artist’s friends feared he had gone too far in this pursuit. ‘Renoir, lacking a gift for drawing, lacking the beautiful colors that he instinctively felt before, becomes incoherent’, Camille Pissarro opined. ‘I do not understand what he is trying to do; it’s very good not to want to stand still,

‘PERHAPS WE ALL COME FROM PISSARRO.’

—*Paul Cézanne*

‘HE LOOKED AT EVERYBODY, YOU SAY! WHY NOT? EVERYONE LOOKED AT HIM, TOO, BUT DENIED HIM. HE WAS ONE OF MY MASTERS AND I DO NOT DENY HIM.’

—*Paul Gauguin*

but he chose to concentrate only on line; his figures detach themselves from one another without regard for color; the result is something unintelligible.’³⁹ While certainly not indecipherable, as Pissarro stated, Renoir’s range of painterly touches across works and within single compositions urges careful, sustained consideration.

PISSARRO AS MENTOR AND MENTEE

Although Pissarro reacted against Renoir’s experimentation, he was no stranger to innovation himself. He engaged in numerous non-hierarchical relationships with other artists, learning from and teaching them, irrespective of relative age or status. He was a dedicated family man, living outside of Paris where costs were more manageable, but despite living away from the artistic centre, Pissarro remained abreast of new directions and was sought out by others for advice. ‘Perhaps we all come from Pissarro’, Cézanne avowed. ‘As early as 1865 he eliminated black, dark brown and ochres, this is a fact. Paint only with the three primary colors and their immediate derivatives, he told me.’⁴⁰ Paul Gauguin, too, recognised Pissarro’s impact:

If we observe the totality of Pissarro’s works, we find there not only an extreme artistic will which never lies, but what is more, an essentially intuitive pure-bred art ... He looked at everybody, you say! Why not? Everyone looked at him, too, but denied him. He was one of my masters and I do not deny him.⁴¹

For a time, in the latter half of the 1880s, Pissarro experimented with Neo-Impressionism, having been introduced to its younger practitioners by his son Lucien. In 1886, he wrote of their shared desire

to seek a modern synthesis of methods based on science, that in turn is based on Chevreul’s theory of color ... To substitute optical mixture for mixture of pigments. In other words: the breaking up of tones into their constituents. For optical mixture stirs up more intense luminosities than does mixture of pigments.⁴²

Yet his experimentation with Pointillism was short-lived:

I think continually of some way of painting without the dot. I hope to achieve this, but I have not been able to solve the problem of dividing the pure tone without harshness ... How can one combine the purity and simplicity of the dot with the fullness, suppleness, liberty, spontaneity and freshness of sensation postulated by our impressionist art? This is the question which preoccupies me, for the dot is meager, lacking in body, diaphanous, more monotonous than simple.⁴³

To maintain his own distinctive vision required a less rigorously theoretical approach.

By 1895, Pissarro was exasperated with critics who derided superficial similarities between his works and others’

They imagined that artists are the sole inventors of their styles and that to resemble someone else is to be unoriginal. In Cézanne’s show at Vollard’s there are certain landscapes of Auvers and Pontoise that are similar to mine. Naturally, we were always together! But what cannot be denied is that each of us kept the

only thing that counts, the unique ‘sensation’! This could easily be shown.⁴⁴

The locations he named, modest towns outside Paris, took on artistic weight and familiarity as Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Daubigny and Pissarro successively worked there and others followed, including Cézanne, Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh.

URBAN REALISMS

Others preferred the capital, its inhabitants and diversions, as their creative fodder. ‘Paris is charming and is not work the only possession one can always have at will?’, Degas wrote of his home and the source of his subjects.⁴⁵ Increasing urbanisation and industrialisation brought rapid change to social customs and fashions, as well as to the city’s fabric. Commodities, entertainments, and anonymous crowds generated interest and anxiety, as did artists’ experience of critical press and competition for exhibition space. While much Impressionist art celebrates natural light and outdoor suburban or coastal spaces, some artists thrived on the energy and rapid change of urban life and on the regular interaction with other artists that it afforded. These artists were enthralled by the vibrant entertainments, motivated by the accessibility of professional models and rapt with the quotidian experiences of the city’s streets and domestic milieux. Manet’s childhood friend Antonin Proust claimed that ‘with Manet, the eye played such a big role that Paris has never known a flâneur like him nor a flâneur strolling more usefully’.⁴⁶ He recalled that Manet revelled in the renovations of Paris under Napoléon III, its ‘Hausmannisation’, and saw art and artistry in its modernity.

Much of the urban focus these artists embraced was in the individuals they encountered and types they came to recognise. ‘We were made to look at each other, don’t you think?’, Degas asserted.⁴⁷ His friend and champion of the Impressionists, Edmond Duranty, wrote in his 1876 treatise *La Nouvelle Peinture* (*The New Painting*):

What we need are the special characteristics of the modern individual – in his clothing, in social

‘... WITH MANET, THE EYE PLAYED SUCH A BIG ROLE THAT PARIS HAS NEVER KNOWN A FLÂNEUR LIKE HIM NOR A FLÂNEUR STROLLING MORE USEFULLY.’

—*Antonin Proust*

‘WE WERE MADE TO LOOK AT EACH OTHER, DON’T YOU THINK?’

—*Edgar Degas*

situations, at home, or on the street ... It is the study of the relationship of a man to his home, or the particular influence of his profession on him, as reflected in the gestures he makes: the observation of all aspects of the environment in which he evolves and develops. A back should reveal temperament, age, and social position.⁴⁸

Duranty’s theory attests to the urgency of seeing and depicting modern people in a distinctive new way.

INNOVATIVE PRINTMAKING

This sense of shared artistic aims crossed between artists and critics and mediums. ‘I remember the time we started a little magazine called *Le Jour et la nuit* together. I was very much interested in processes then, and had made countless experiments’, Degas recalled decades later.⁴⁹ In 1879, Degas, Mary Cassatt and Pissarro had joined together with the goal of publishing an illustrated periodical highlighting their innovative printmaking. Its intended title, *Le Jour et la nuit* (*Day and Night*), played on the effects of light favoured by the Impressionists as well as the black-and-white imagery to be printed in the journal. Although the publication

‘I PAINTED A LOT OF NYM-
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BY MINUTE.’

—*Claude Monet*

never came to fruition, they discussed the project and made prints working through various states or across plates, exploring the possibilities of the medium. As far as why the journal failed to launch, opinions differed. Degas blamed the market: ‘You can get extraordinary results with copper; but the trouble is that there are never enough buyers to encourage you to go on with it’.⁵⁰ Cassatt’s mother, on the other hand, thought Degas himself was at fault:

As usual with Degas, when the time arrived to appear, he wasn’t ready – so that *Le Jour et la nuit*, which might have been a great success has not yet appeared. Degas is never ready for anything.⁵¹

Degas was notoriously reluctant to finish and release his work, preferring to continue touching and retouching, experimenting across mediums. He shared this engagement with printmaking as an exploratory mode with his collaborators. Pissarro sent Degas plates to print, and Degas would return proofs with technical notes, such as:

The prevailing blackish or rather grayish shade comes from the zinc which is greasy in itself and retains the printers’ black. The plate is not smooth enough. I feel sure that you have not the same facilities at Pontoise

as at the rue de la Huchette. In spite of that you must have something a bit more polished ... Try something a little larger with a better plate.⁵²

The proof prints made for *Le Jour et la nuit* provide insight into the creative minds of these artists at a highly experimental moment in their printmaking, and into subjects they treated in paintings as well.

MONET IN SITU

Iteration of a different sort characterises Monet’s work as he explored and learnt to depict the places and spaces he inhabited. ‘You need to live in a place for quite a while in order to paint it’, he observed. ‘You need to have worked laboriously to render it confidently.’⁵³ Monet moved from Paris to Argenteuil, and then progressively further down the Seine before settling in Giverny. He returned time and again to locations dear to him, whether they were within walking distance of his home or a bit further afield. This monographic grouping focuses on some of the most characteristic places: Argenteuil, the Normandy coast, the Mediterranean coast and Giverny, both its fields and the artist’s own waterlily garden. We come closer to the artist as a man through his experience of these locales, through his own words and in his pictures:

I painted a lot of nymphaea, each time modifying my point of view, renewing the motif with the seasons, and according to the effects of light caused by these changes. The effect changes incessantly, not only from one season to the next, but minute by minute.⁵⁴

There was an endless supply of inspiration right before his eyes. Monet found splendour in the mundane, making everyday scenes appear dazzling, teaching the modern eye to see the world anew. Thus, the exhibition concludes as it began – with Monet, the exemplar of Impressionism, then and now. As Théodore Duret noted in 1878:

If the word ‘Impressionism’ has been found to be a good one and definitely accepted as designating a

group of painters, it certainly is the particularities of Claude Monet’s paintings that first suggested it. Monet is a true Impressionist.⁵⁵

Another journalist, Émile Taboureaux, interviewed Monet in 1880, noting:

What most interested me, among the hundreds of idle remarks we exchanged, was to know how Monet had become an impressionist. I risked asking him this question. ‘I didn’t become one,’ he answered with superb serenity. ‘As long as I can remember I’ve always been one.’⁵⁶

With such insights into the voiced preferences of the Impressionist artists, we might see their works anew. Therein is the impetus for *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, with its conceptual underpinning of ‘vision and voice’. Giving voice to these artists’ thoughts and observations provides an even greater sense of familiarity with the creative individuals behind the works of art and encourages fresh consideration of their iconic paintings.



C. Monet

2. THE BARBIZON SCHOOL

TED GOTT



IN 1876, TWO YEARS AFTER THE FIRST group Impressionist exhibition was held in Paris, the artist Frédéric Henriet summarised the wonders of Fontainebleau, a vast forested area fifty-five kilometres south-east of Paris:

Fontainebleau offers all the beauties of nature joined together close to Paris: imposing views and a grandiose bleakness, majestic forests and century old beeches, clearings where heather grows among the sand and sandstone; pools and mossy ponds. The forest of Fontainebleau is a veritable school of contemporary landscape painting. There is not a single artist among the most famous who has not passed through it.¹

Fontainebleau provided refuge and inspiration for artists throughout the nineteenth century, and is recognised as the birthplace of a new school of landscape art that abandoned traditional historical and mythological landscape ‘narratives’ in favour of natural depictions of the land itself, unburdened by the need to tell any other artistic story.² As the young Impressionists struggled to define themselves in the 1860s, they were inspired by an earlier generation of artists who had redefined landscape painting as a personal interpretation of nature based on direct observation. Basing themselves primarily in the tiny hamlet of Barbizon, on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau, these artists for the most part made painting and sketching out-of-doors their modus operandi. Collectively they became known as the Barbizon School of painters.

JEAN-BAPTISTE-CAMILLE COROT

The eldest of these artists was Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot. Since he was the only Barbizon School artist born in the eighteenth century, it is perhaps not surprising that Corot’s works seem somewhat old-fashioned today. Although he began painting out-of-doors in Fontainebleau as early as 1822, inspiration drawn directly from nature was only part of Corot’s creative process and he specialised not in direct views, but in *paysages composés* (constructed landscapes) that combined naturalistic details with imaginative flourishes that



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot *Twilight* 1845–60

looked back to the lyrically artificial landscapes painted by Claude Lorrain in the seventeenth century. *Twilight*, 1845–60 (p. 21), is a classic example of this.

In the 1850s and 1860s, as seen in *Souvenir of a meadow at Brunoy*, c. 1855–65 (p. 33), Corot began to use the word *souvenir* (memory) in the titles of his paintings, deflecting head-on any suggestion that they were direct transcriptions of observed nature. Corot historian Michael Pantazzi has noted how ‘by the mid-1850s, he was seen as the quintessential painter of poetic landscapes, a poet who pursued, not visible form, but an idea’.³ Despite the retardataire quality of his art, his great appeal for the younger Impressionists lay in the manner in which, as art historian Gary Tinterow has put it, ‘Corot made his sentiments visible by rendering the *effet*, the *impression*’, no matter how much this was eventually filtered through memory and poetic licence.⁴

PAUL HUET

Early in his career, after initial training in figurative art with Neoclassical painters Pierre Guérin and Antoine-Jean Gros, Paul Huet turned his hand towards landscape, under the influence of a fellow pupil in Gros’ atelier, the young English-born landscape artist Richard Parkes Bonington.⁵ By the time the English painter John Constable’s work was unveiled at the Paris Salon of 1824 – validating pure landscape unencumbered by any other narrative – Huet was already firmly committed to renewing this genre in his own country. Equally skilled as a painter, watercolourist and printmaker, Huet had first studied nature seriously as a teenager on the then still-wooded Île Seguin on the outskirts of Paris, then had begun to explore the forest of Compiègne north of Paris in 1826, at the age of twenty-three.⁶ He recalled how from his earliest days:

to bring life to the landscape, to communicate to the spectator the passion with which I was in love, to share the impressions with which nature so often penetrated me, was a beautiful and difficult ambition.⁷

In the 1830s and 1840s, Compiègne forest studies, along with Normandy scenes, predominated Huet’s

contributions to the Salon. His first forays in the forests of Fontainebleau took place somewhat late in his career, in 1850, and were thereafter transformative for his art. ‘I am amazed by this forest of Fontainebleau’, he wrote in August 1850, ‘which is quite different from Compiègne in its savagery and variety’.⁸

In 1831 the critic Auguste Jal, who was normally hostile to the work of young artists, and not entirely approving of Huet’s ‘wild technique’, nonetheless praised him as

One who *dares*! Interested in neither modern historical landscape, nor Poussin’s style, or simple and naive reality ... he has become an *expressive landscapist* ... There is ... in his paintings an amazing *depth, feeling*, and *imaginative richness*.⁹

This would doubtless have pleased Huet, whose own thoughts on nature were of a distinctly poetical bent: ‘Like beautiful melodies’, he wrote,

nature draws the imagination into infinity. Depending on the disposition of our soul, she charms or terrifies us, consoles us or saddens us. She makes us attend her dramas as well as her feasts, and it is with reason that poets have compared her great harmony to that of an immense and divine keyboard.¹⁰

Huet’s sensitivity to nature was beautifully described by his early biographer Georges Lafenestre:

It is when the artist-poet is alone, when he sinks into the woods, aimlessly, at random, in thickets and coppices, that he feels best penetrated and revived by the diffused freshness of budding greenery and intertwined twigs, and by the quivers, splinters and caresses of light flowing through this rustling and fragrant congerie.¹¹

Such a description fits perfectly Huet’s *Forêt de Compiègne*, c. 1830 (opposite), a small canvas which the artist subdivided into five separate views of rural life, recreational activity and woodland retreat in Compiègne’s lush environs.



Paul Huet *Forêt de Compiègne* c. 1830

THÉODORE ROUSSEAU

Although receiving some instruction in his youth from two masters of French academic painting, Théodore Rousseau soon abandoned formal training, choosing instead to immerse himself in direct study of the French countryside, supplemented with observational excursions to the Dutch and Flemish Old Masters collections at the Louvre. As a child, Rousseau had been amazed to come across an artist in the Bois de Boulogne painting not a forest landscape, but a ‘portrait’ of a single tree.¹² From his childhood study of lizards and insects also came an acute awareness of the fragility of nature, and the need to conserve trees, plants and all vegetation in as pristine a state as possible.¹³

Solitary by nature, Rousseau first settled near the Forest of Fontainebleau for a sustained painting campaign in the winter of 1836–37. Entranced by the region, he also spent the next three autumns and winters in Barbizon, enjoying these seasons when

most other artists and tourists had left, and he could be alone in the nearby forest. Two commentators who knew Rousseau well recalled how he ‘had a cult for Fontainebleau’s old trees’, and spoke of ‘la famille des bois’ (the woods family), or all the creatures inhabiting the forest.¹⁴ After 1847, when Rousseau permanently rented a cottage in the hamlet, Barbizon became his second home, while the nearby forest became effectively a second, outdoor studio.¹⁵

To Rousseau’s audiences in the 1850s and 1860s, his works offered admirably diverse views of a given locale. A favourite spot within the Forest of Fontainebleau was the Belle-Croix plateau, which his friend and biographer Alfred Sensier recalled that he ‘studied on the darkest of days, in the fog, in the rain, in the frost’.¹⁶ According to Barbizon historian Robert Herbert, Rousseau’s ‘devotion to the effects of weather puts him squarely in the tradition which leads from Constable to Monet’, and he even ‘built lean-tos resembling hunters’ blinds which sheltered him



Théodore Rousseau *Pool in the forest* early 1850s

from the weather and gave him a privacy as he eavesdropped on nature'.¹⁷ There is a sense, however, in which Rousseau's raw observation of Fontainebleau's leafy secrets was also filtered through his appreciation of the seemingly uncomposed compositions of the seventeenth-century Dutch landscape tradition. The contemporaneous painter and writer Eugène Fromentin felt that Rousseau's painting career 'represents the efforts of the French spirit to create in France a new Dutch art'.¹⁸

'I heard the voices of the trees', Rousseau told Sensier. 'The surprises of their movements, their variety of shapes and even their singular attraction towards the light, suddenly revealed to me the language of forests.'¹⁹ Scholar Simon Kelly has noted that Rousseau's paintings can have 'a spiritual dimension, reflecting the artist's pantheistic belief in the immanence of the divine within nature as well as his conviction that light was a carrier of transcendent meaning'.²⁰ A clearfelling destruction of trees on the Île Seguin near Sèvres in 1847 had a profound effect upon Rousseau, who had

studied the island's ancient oaks many times. 'They are killing all my friends', he lamented, and he condemned forestry workers and loggers to Hell.²¹ Rousseau is recognised today as 'probably the western world's first conservationist' for his efforts to save Fontainebleau from further destruction.²² In 1853 he successfully lobbied Emperor Napoleon III to have four sections of the forest protected from 'tourist development, quarrying, the harvesting of old growth woods, and the planting of foreign pine species'.²³

'I will never get old, as long as I have my eyes to see', Rousseau declared, and direct observation from nature in the forests and clearings of Fontainebleau lay at the heart of his creative practice.²⁴ He liked to immerse himself completely beneath the forest canopy, allowing the limits of his peripheral vision to naturally frame a chosen setting, and to study the uneasy truce between cultivated land and untamed nature at the forest's edge. His preference for autumnal subjects contributed to his renown as a colourist, and his mastery of an immense palette of greens,

russets and browns is evident in both *Pool in the forest*, early 1850s (opposite), and *Edge of the woods (Plain of Barbizon near Fontainebleau)*, c. 1850–60 (p. 26). To provide scale to his forest views and show that a timeless and positive dialogue between humanity and nature had been possible previously (revealing what Sensier called 'the world of ancient ages'²⁵), Rousseau often inserted small staffage figures into his paintings. The cows and their minder in *Pool in the forest* fulfil this function; likewise the gatherers of fallen tree branches and twigs in *Edge of the woods* (where their reflection in a pool of muddy water provides a subtle grace note).

NARCISSE DIAZ DE LA PEÑA

Narcisse Diaz de La Peña (who signed his paintings simply as 'N. Diaz') started out working as a porcelain artist in Paris, and painting in oils in his spare time.²⁶ After 1830 he abandoned porcelain, first painting floral compositions and then Orientalist harem scenes and 'Turkish' landscapes whose exoticism was influenced by works of the Italian Renaissance master Correggio in the Louvre. In 1834 Diaz had his first work admitted to the Salon, and the following year he visited Barbizon for the first time. Unlike Rousseau, whose adherence to naturalistic landscape painting led to his rejection by the conservative juries of the Salon throughout much of the 1830s and 1840s, in these same decades Diaz seduced the art world with what the critic Philippe Burty called his 'rosy and svelte mythology' that 'made beauty weep'.²⁷ Charles Baudelaire, while praising Diaz's 'magic colour which surpasses the fantasy of the kaleidoscope', criticised his handling of the human figure.²⁸ And the academic painter Thomas Couture is said to have told Diaz to stick solely to painting forests, since he didn't know how to put a mouth under a nose.²⁹

Diaz first met Rousseau in art circles in Paris around 1831, when Rousseau was only nineteen and Diaz twenty-three.³⁰ After 1836 Diaz regularly encountered Rousseau at Barbizon, where the two often stayed at the same inn, and he quietly followed Rousseau into the woods of Fontainebleau, watching from afar as the younger landscapist painted *en plein*

air.³¹ Gradually a friendship grew between the two men, and Rousseau shared the secret of his colour palette with Diaz, particularly the use of emerald green and Naples yellow pigments, which was 'the wick that ignited gunpowder' for Diaz.³²

According to the critic Jules Claretie, Diaz first achieved his masterful command of both light and colour in 1844.³³ Reviewing the Paris Salon two years later, Théophile Thoré extolled the manner in which:

Diaz's great artifice, his extraordinary superiority, is the quality of his colour which is determined by the light. He does not show us a tree, or a figure, but the effect of the sun on this tree or this figure.³⁴

Thoré further compared Diaz's compositions to the enchanted visions brought on by opium or hashish, and attributed this to the works' popularity among collectors who might otherwise be put off by the painter's rough and busy execution.³⁵

As with Rousseau, for Diaz painting outdoors directly before nature played an important part in his art. He increasingly developed, however, a free approach to painting, in which natural observation completed free plays of colour and form begun well away from any natural setting. The painter Jean-Baptiste-Georges Gassies recalled how:

Sometimes he put down on a panel, at random with the palette knife, brilliant tones without any form which then served him as a model. He would take this to the forest, into the undergrowth, saying: it will be really extraordinary if I don't find this motif somewhere! ... Nature helping, this daub, as he called it, became a painting and often one of his best.³⁶

As is evident from comparing *Pool in the forest*, 1858 (p. 37), and *Path through the forest near Fontainebleau*, c. 1875–76 (p. 27), Diaz painted moody forest views throughout his career in a consistently dense and impastoed manner. He favoured stormy and penumbral settings, in which the light trunks of the forest's beech and birch trees shine out almost as if illuminated by lightning. Writing in 1873, Claretie mused:



Théodore Rousseau *Edge of the woods (Plain of Barbizon near Fontainebleau)* c. 1850–60



Narcisse Virgile Díaz de La Peña *Path through the forest near Fontainebleau* c. 1875–76

Who better than Diaz knows how to steal one of the sun's rays, in order to walk it cheerfully through the deep forests, on paths covered with moss, through the silver trunks of birches, on the lush foliage of oak trees?³⁷

In 1863 Diaz encountered a young man, wearing the distinct smock of a porcelain painter, struggling to compose a painting in the Forest of Fontainebleau. This was Pierre-Auguste Renoir, who received on-the-spot lessons in how to lighten his palette which he never forgot, leading him to declare Diaz as his 'grand homme' (great hero).³⁸ Taking pity on the impoverished young art student, Diaz paid for Renoir's art supplies at this time. His support of Renoir continued through to the following decade, when Diaz visited the very first Impressionist group exhibition, held in Paris in 1874.³⁹

JEAN-FRANÇOIS MILLET

Hailing from the small village of Gruchy on the Normandy coast, Jean-François Millet initially intended to be a portrait painter. In 1846 he met the landscape artists Constant Troyon and Diaz de La Peña, the latter helping him to sell works through the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel. The following year Millet befriended Rousseau, which further cemented his commitment to painting the French countryside and the rural labours of its peasant occupants. Acting on the advice of Diaz, Millet settled in Barbizon with his partner and children in the summer of 1849. He and Rousseau now became firm friends, with Rousseau acting behind the scenes as a silent patron to his impecunious colleague.⁴⁰

Millet appreciated Rousseau's deep communion with the majestic trees in the Forest of Fontainebleau, telling him in 1867 that 'Right from the start you were a little oak seedling, destined to become the great oak that you are today'.⁴¹ Millet's own interests lay, however, in documenting the daily lives of the poor workers who eked out a subsistence living in Barbizon and Fontainebleau. In Millet's works these impoverished labourers, who had appeared as tiny staffage figures in Rousseau's compositions, frequently became the

principal subjects, as in his *Shepherdess leaning on her staff*, c. 1852–53 (opposite). He often imbued the works with the stately gravitas of the Old Masters (Millet owned hundreds of Renaissance prints).⁴² For Barbizon historian Steven Adams, Millet's peasant subjects exemplified the manner in which 'from the late 1840s the peasant was seen by some as the traditional symbol of everything that was unspoiled in a nation gripped by industrialization'.⁴³

Millet at times also painted bucolic landscape scenes. With the idyllic depictions of the artist's home town in Normandy, *Family home at Gruchy*, 1854 (p. 30), and *End of the hamlet of Gruchy*, 1856 (p. 31), Millet's goal 'was to show the habitual peacefulness of [Gruchy], where each act, which would be nothing anywhere else, here becomes an event'.⁴⁴ The latter painting recalls immediately Claude Monet's *Fisherman's cottage on the cliffs at Varengeville*, 1882 (pp. 198–9).

Strong echoes of the work of both Millet and Rousseau are also to be found in Monet's *Woodgatherers at the edge of the forest*, c. 1863 (pp. 38–9). Alfred Sisley first visited Barbizon in 1861, and Monet organised an Easter vacation at Fontainebleau for himself, Renoir and Sisley in 1863.⁴⁵ Renoir declared that Diaz's paintings were 'as sparkling as gems', while Camille Pissarro later recalled how 'I knew Corot very intimately. I passionately admired him, and it's not surprising that his influence can be felt in my early work'.⁴⁶ The baton of *plein air* painting was thus handed down from one generation of painters to the next, nurtured in the sylvan glades of Fontainebleau.



Jean-François Millet *Shepherdess leaning on her staff* c. 1852–53



Jean-François Millet *Millet's family home at Gruchy* 1854



Jean-François Millet *End of the hamlet of Gruchy* 1856



Constant Troyon *Sheep and shepherd in a landscape* c. 1854



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot *Souvenir of a meadow at Brunoy* c. 1855–65



Charles François Daubigny *Road through the forest* c. 1865–70



Narcisse Virgile Diaz de La Peña *Clearing in the forest* c. 1855–70



Narcisse Virgile Diaz de La Peña *Pool in the forest* 1858



Claude Monet *Woodgatherers at the edge of the forest* c. 1863

3. BOUDIN, MENTOR TO MONET

JULIA WELCH



IN 1890, MONET WROTE TO MARINE painter Eugène Boudin: ‘You know the affection that I’ve always had for you, as well as gratitude. I haven’t forgotten that you were the first to teach me to see and to understand.’¹ This declaration is one of many Monet made to acknowledge the impact of Boudin on the formative years of his artistic development. Decades later, Monet recounted more emphatically:

One day Boudin said to me: ‘Learn to draw well and appreciate the sea, the light, the blue sky.’ I took his advice and together we went on long outings during which I painted constantly from nature. This was how I came to understand nature and learned to love it passionately and how I became interested in the high-keyed painting of Boudin ... I have said it before and can only repeat that I owe everything to Boudin and I attribute my success to him. I came to be fascinated by his studies, the products of what I call instantaneity.²

Monet shared his admiration for Boudin publicly in several interviews, and a number of their letters reflecting mutual sentiments were published in two early biographies of Boudin that remain the definitive records of his life.³

Both painters grew up in Normandy and maintained a lifelong friendship after meeting early in their careers. Their enduring relationship is often characterised as one of mentor and mentee, based in large part on Monet’s oft-repeated recollections later in life. In actuality, Boudin’s own tenuous beginnings, tinged with self-doubt, reveal a more nuanced relationship between the two artists, expressed in repeated exchanges of mutual encouragement. Boudin, sixteen years older, undoubtedly provided inspiration to the younger artist, as Monet would later proclaim. However, when they met, Boudin was by no accounts an established, successful painter. Only in his early thirties at the time, he faced his own challenges as an emerging artist. Struggling to hone his artistic vision, he had yet to secure substantial financial or critical success through his art.⁴

Born in the small town of Honfleur on the Normandy coast, Boudin grew up surrounded by the ocean



Eugène Louis Boudin *Fashionable figures on the beach* 1865

vistas that would inform his painting throughout his career. When he and Monet were introduced in the late 1850s, the latter was still a youthful teenager, sketching caricatures of local personalities in Le Havre.⁵ Boudin soon convinced the younger artist to attempt painting *en plein air*, described by Monet as a revelatory experience:

At his request, I accepted to go work in the outdoors with him: I bought a box of paint and we thus left for Rouelles, without great conviction on my part. Boudin set up his easel and put himself to work. I watched him with some apprehension, I watched him more attentively, and then all of a sudden a veil was ripped off: I had understood, I had grasped what painting could be; by the sole example of this artist in love with his art, and with independence, my destiny in painting was opened.⁶

Following Boudin’s example, Monet soon abandoned his caricatural drawings and devoted himself to painting.

Boudin’s first Salon acceptance came in 1859 with his depiction of a religious festival of Breton peasants (*The Pardon of St. Anne at the Bay of Douarnenez*, 1858, Musée d’art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre).

Despite this accomplishment, his confidence floundered. Boudin described the painting as ‘full of flaws, I certainly dream of better ... colors and the light leaves something to be desired. I must achieve greater purity, more radiance, more finesse.’⁷ Monet visited Paris that year to see the Salon for the first time, writing to Boudin: ‘In short, the marine painters are totally lacking and it’s a path that will take you far’ – foretelling the genre that would ultimately bring Boudin sustained success.⁸ Over the course of the following year, Monet, hoping for Boudin’s painting advice, wrote repeatedly to encourage him to come to Paris and escape ‘the filthy city of Le Havre’.⁹

The 1859 Salon appearance was both a beginning and an end. Boudin would continue to exhibit at the Salon for decades to come, but soon shifted his attention to a newfound niche, specialising in beach scenes of Parisians on summer holiday. *Fashionable figures on the beach*, 1865 (above), exemplifies this style, featuring a horizontal format, densely crowded figures in an array of eye-catching fashions and an expansive, brilliant sky that fills more than half of the picture. Mainly painted at the Norman resort towns of Deauville and Trouville, such works not only harness his acute power of observation to convey details of

PREVIOUS: Eugène Louis Boudin *Ships at Le Havre* 1887 (detail)



Eugène Louis Boudin *Harbour entrance* 1873

up-to-the-minute trends, but also capture subtle, yet distinct, qualities of light and weather. He exhibited such pictures regularly at the Salon throughout the 1860s, but with little result, lamenting in September 1864 that he hadn't made 'a sou from our bathers this year. [I] must just be happy painting them.'¹⁰ Still seeking both financial and critical recognition, Boudin referenced these works again several months later:

Our little dolls are progressing slowly ... I need a success at the Salon, a success that I won't have this year, not yet being knowledgeable enough in the genre that I've undertaken recently, but I'll work towards it next year. Nonetheless, it's good that I have found this little thing that will, I hope, be my lifeline.¹¹

Boudin fell into a pattern of spending summers in Normandy and winters in his studio in Paris, where he completed the pictures started on his coastal excursions.¹² During his city stays, Boudin would consult with artist friends, including Monet:

I have gone back to my little ladies, but for a few days I have done nothing good, nothing worthwhile. Today I gave myself leave and took myself off to the other side of the Seine; I saw Courbet and others who are happily daring to paint large canvases. Young Monet has one that's twenty feet long to cover ... I would also like to undertake something more extensive than my little canvases, but not as ambitious as that.¹³

Despite such lapses of confidence, Boudin plodded along, and by the end of the 1860s had slowly but steadily achieved more consistent sales of his beach scenes and marine paintings.¹⁴ With ever an eye to the sky and its varied effects, he also employed unexpected compositions, like that of *Harbour at Honfleur*, 1865 (opposite), where the quay juts into the foreground, its triangular shape drawing your eye towards the horizon.

Although he was consistently overlooked for official commendations, Boudin explained in an 1868 letter how he attracted occasional attention from critics and fellow artists, some of whom congratulated him for

having dared to put into paint the things and people of our time ... a number of young painters, chief among whom I would put Monet, find that it is a subject that until now has been too much neglected ... I still persist in following my own little road, however untrod it may be, wishing only to walk with a surer and firmer step, smoothing it a bit if need be.¹⁵

The next year, critic Jules-Antoine Castagnary noted that Boudin

invented a genre of seascapes which is his alone ... what finesse and liveliness in these figures ... The clouds move in the sky, the tide rises, the breeze plays with flounces and skirts. This is the ocean and you can almost smell the salty fragrance.¹⁶

Although his distinctive genre was assuredly to thank for his growing professional reputation, by the latter part of the 1860s he had grown disenchanted with the crowds of chic Parisians, writing: 'the sight of the hordes of gilded parasites with their triumphant airs seems somehow pitiful, and one feels almost ashamed at painting the idle rich'.¹⁷ Nevertheless, he continued to paint such pictures, albeit with less frequency, for years to come. This subject was now tied closely to his identity, as Boudin acknowledged: 'I shall do other things but I shall always be the painter of beaches'.¹⁸

Working *en plein air* remained integral to Boudin's practice, and imparted familiarity and sincerity in his paintings, as he explained: 'Everything painted directly and on site always has a strength, a power, a vivacity of touch that we cannot find in the studio'.¹⁹ By the 1870s, his marines shifted away from the crowded beaches to focus on views of harbours, ports and coastlines. The unassuming *Harbour entrance* of 1873 (pp. 44–5) reveals a quiet energy humming beneath the subtle shimmer of the water's surface as the sun's warm light yearns to break through the clouds. Quick brushstrokes animate the placid reflections of the boats, while the nearly monochrome palette mirrors grey skies in the silvery water below. With a keen eye for observation, Boudin depicted sites at different seasons or times of day, even marking specific tidal effects, as in *Trouville, jetties at*



Eugène Louis Boudin *Harbour at Honfleur* 1865

low tide, 1885 (pp. 48–9). Boats, tipped on their side, are precarious in their haphazard positions as they await the return of high tide. Detailed views of ships in harbours or ports (pp. 44–5, 47, 48–9, 51, 56, 58–9) illustrate seemingly repetitive, yet endlessly inventive, compositions. Boudin painted hundreds of such pictures, with myriad effects of watery reflections and sunlight through the clouds – each a unique expression of a particular place and moment in time.

Intimate in scale, Boudin's marine paintings were well suited to the middle-class buyers who became a driving force in the art market in the late nineteenth century. It was not until 1881 that Boudin achieved more formal recognition, receiving his first medal at the Salon.²⁰ That same year, the art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel became his representative and was responsible for bringing many of Boudin's works to American collections in the years to follow (see pages 52, 54–5, 60–1).

Durand-Ruel also organised Boudin's first solo exhibition, held in Paris in 1883.²¹ Upon seeing this show, critic Gustave Geffroy described Boudin, along with Camille Corot and Johan Jongkind, as the immediate precursors of Impressionism, commenting:

[Boudin] learns that opaque black does not exist, that the air is transparent. He observes at what value objects take in light and how compositions establish themselves along the horizon ... he captures the movement of things at the same time as their form and their color; the rising cloud, the sparkling water, the sail gleaming in the sun.²²

Noting his awareness of colour, light and composition, Geffroy contextualises Boudin's oeuvre with that of Monet and his Impressionist colleagues. However, Boudin maintained his distinct vision and avoided



Eugène Louis Boudin *Trouville, jetties at low tide* 1885

the improvisational nature of a truly Impressionist approach, ‘arriving at his conclusions by reasoning, comparisons, and trials’ as Philippe Burty observed upon his visit to the same exhibition.²³

Boudin travelled frequently, whether to scattered locations across the Netherlands, Italy (pp. 62–3), the south of France (pp. 54–5) or between coastal towns in Brittany and his native Normandy. Never tiring of these familiar sites, he wrote to a friend in 1894:

Here we are in Paris. Time to pack our bags and then back to Deauville ... yes, indeed! I must admit I am looking forward to seeing our beaches again and our overcast skies.²⁴

Rather than highlight the glamorous beachgoers seen in his pictures of the same location in the 1860s, *Deauville at low tide*, 1897 (p. 52), emphasises the expansive stretch of dunes and beachfront that recedes into the distance. Tiny sailboats dot the sliver of ocean at right, beneath a sweep of billowing clouds tinged with delicate purple shading. Boudin’s continued devotion to painting outdoors remains visible in the nuanced effects of light and atmosphere in these late works, such as the loosely painted *Figures on the beach*, 1893 (p. 53). Figures wade in the water, unfazed by the approaching threat of an incoming storm made visible in swift diagonal brushstrokes along the horizon.

Despite shaky beginnings, Boudin secured his professional reputation as a *petit maître* (little master) of marine painting, and was content with that status.²⁵ He remained emphatically modest, stating that he felt ‘it is enough that I make a living from my art’ – never vying for greater accolades.²⁶ Although Boudin was remarkably prolific – producing more than 4000 paintings and 7000 works on paper – he certainly did not achieve the celebrity of his one-time protégé and lifelong friend Monet. Despite Monet’s passionate proclamation, ‘If I became a painter, I owe it to Eugène Boudin’, the distinction between teacher and student was evidently blurred as both artists developed their artistic practice.²⁷ The two artists corresponded throughout their lives, with their lasting affection palpable in an 1892 letter Boudin sent to Monet in which he reminisces about artist friends and various trips to paint *en plein air*, expressing nostalgia for the bygone days of their youth. Having tracked Monet’s ever-growing success, Boudin reveals admiration and a sense of pride, signing the letter: ‘the oldest of your painting friends, E. Boudin’.²⁸ Regardless of the exact nature of their decades-long relationship, whether truly that of mentor and mentee – or perhaps simply two ‘painting friends’ – their histories remain forever intertwined.



Eugène Louis Boudin *Ships at Le Havre* 1887



Eugène Louis Boudin *Deauville at low tide* 1897



ABOVE: Eugène Louis Boudin *Figures on the beach* 1893
OVERLEAF: Eugène Louis Boudin *Juan-les-pins, the bay and the shore* 1893



quartier des pines et l'océan.

• Boudin 93 -



Eugène Louis Boudin *Port scene* c. 1880



Eugène Louis Boudin *The Inlet at Berck (Pas-de-Calais)* 1882



Eugène Louis Boudin *Harbour scene* c. 1888–95



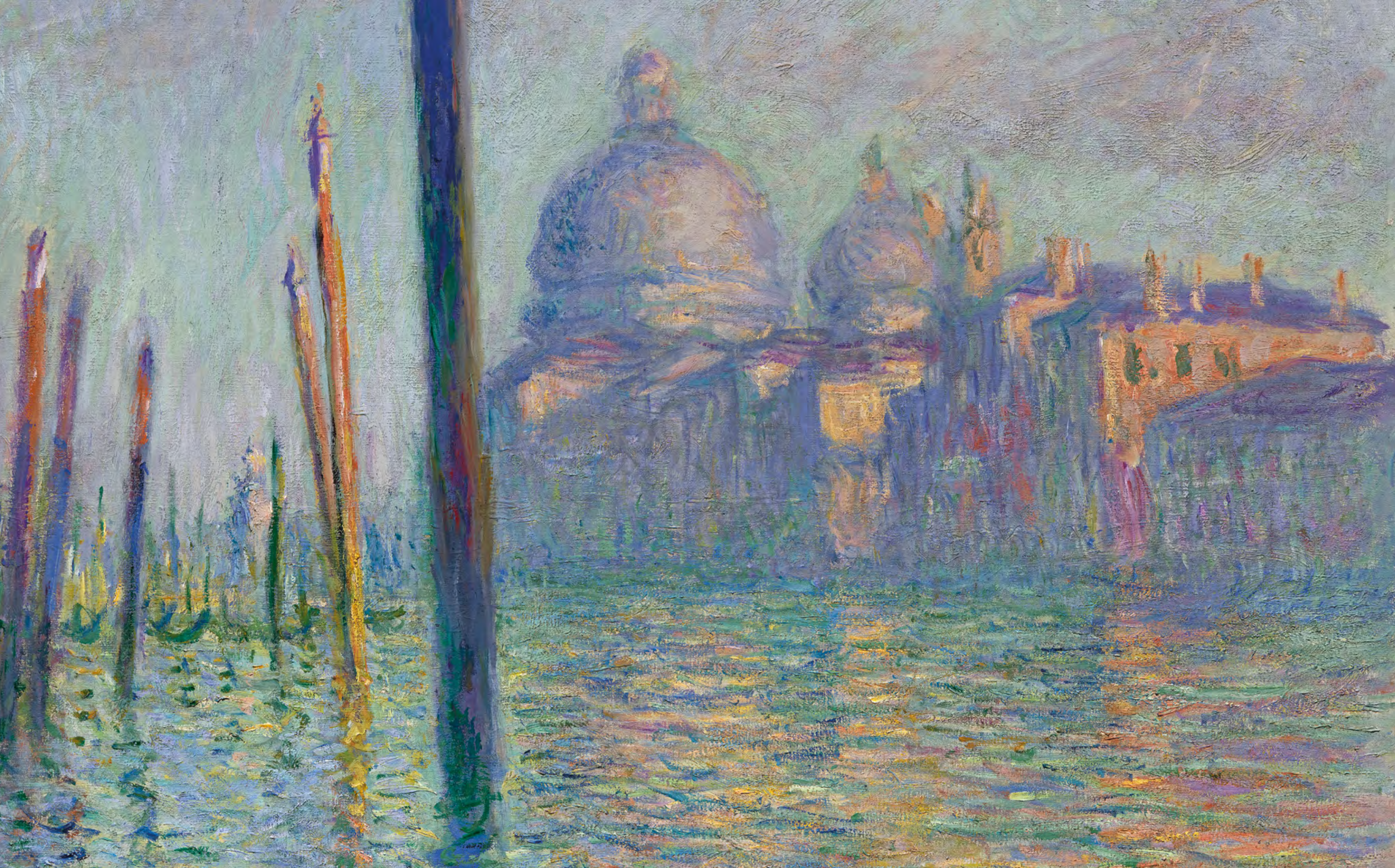
Eugène Louis Boudin *Port of Le Havre* c. 1886



Eugène Louis Boudin *Washerwomen near a bridge* 1883



Eugène Louis Boudin *Venice, Santa Maria della Salute from San Giorgio* 1895



4. WATERY SURFACES: MASTERY AND INNOVATION

JULIA WELCH



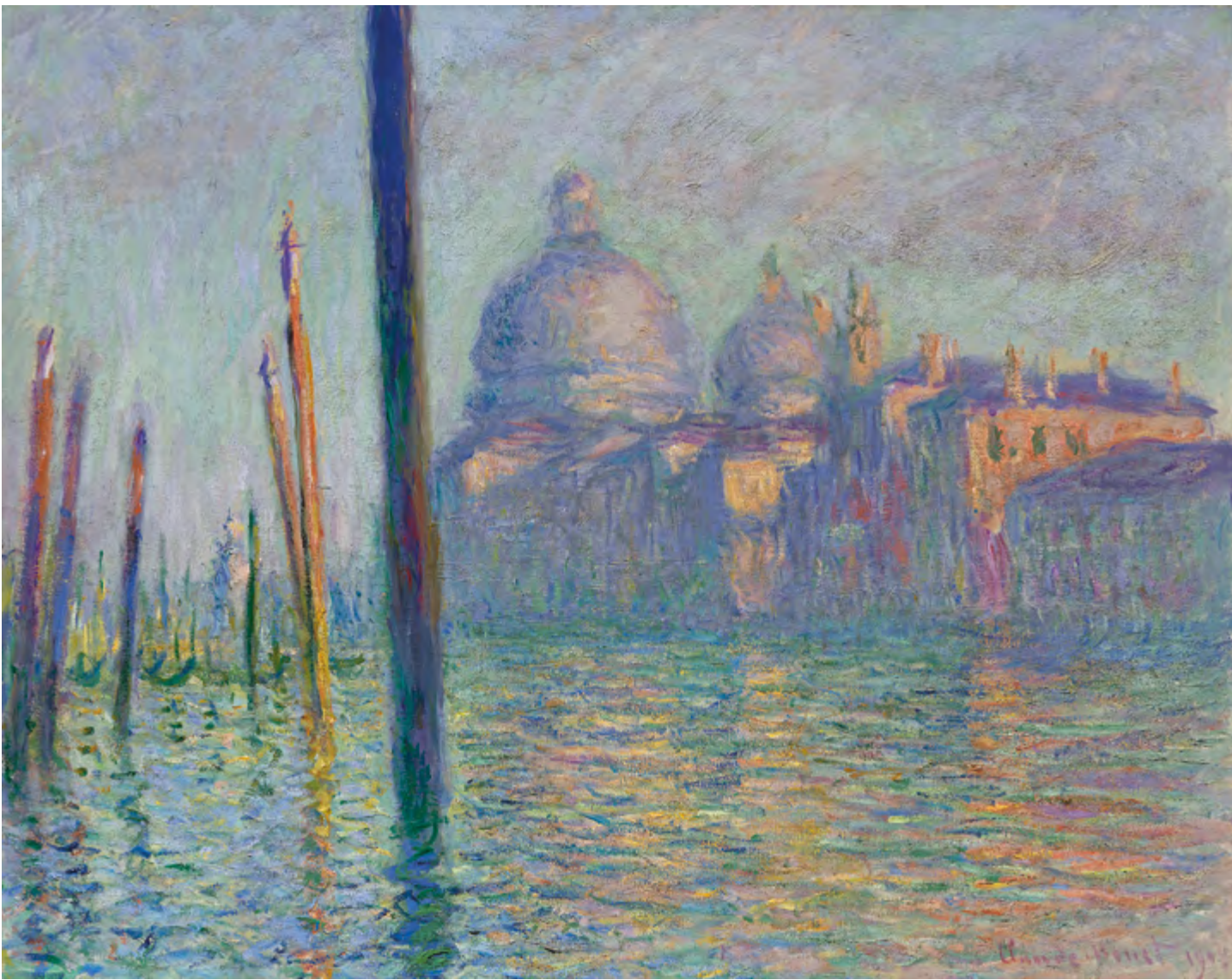
Fritz Thaulow

IN 1878 ART CRITIC THÉODORE DURET dubbed Claude Monet the ‘painter of water *par excellence*’, a designation that would follow him throughout his career.¹ Water views – whether river, sea or his backyard waterlily pond – remain a defining component of Monet’s oeuvre. He gravitated towards water-side locales, especially while travelling, evidenced by noteworthy trips to London, the south of France and, of course, the ‘city of water’ itself: Venice. In the autumn of 1908, Monet travelled there for what would be his last significant working trip abroad. During his two-month stay, Monet painted dozens of views of Venice’s glittering canals, including *Grand Canal, Venice*, 1908 (opposite), which he later completed in his Giverny studio. The thirty-seven pictures resulting from that trip added a new dimension to Monet’s enduring role as a master of watery landscapes. However, his lifelong fascination with the subject is rooted in encounters with a number of artists during his younger years.

Growing up on the Normandy coast, Monet learned about painting *en plein air* from Eugène Boudin (see chapter 3) in the late 1850s, and soon embarked upon his own career as a landscape painter. Boudin, whose luminous marines impressed the young Monet, was also closely acquainted with the Dutch painter Johan Barthold Jongkind, whom Monet met in 1862. Monet described his first encounter with Jongkind:

He was a simple, good hearted man, murdering French atrociously, and very timid. That day he was very talkative. He asked to see my sketches, invited me to come and work with him, explained to me the why and the wherefore of his manner, and thereby completed the teachings that I had already received from Boudin. From that time on he was my real master, and it was to him that I owed the real education of my eye.²

Jongkind, although of Dutch origin, studied and painted in France from the mid 1840s onwards, later meeting Monet and Boudin, among other artists, during repeated stays in Normandy in the 1860s. *Harbour scene in Holland*, 1868 (p. 71), underscores Jongkind’s vivacity of touch, shown in a complex arrangement of



Claude Monet *Grand Canal, Venice* 1908

light and shadow. The sun, positioned high in the sky just out of view, backlights the large ship in the foreground. Broad swirling strokes form the clouds and sky, while more precise details delineate the ships, trees and houses shown at right. Sparkling upon the water’s surface, small dabs of paint create a palpable sense of movement and energy throughout the bustling harbour. Monet valued the freshness and spontaneity of Jongkind’s approach, stating that one had ‘always something to gain from studying Jongkind’s landscapes because he paints what he sees and what he feels with sincerity’.³ *Harbour by moonlight*, 1871 (p. 70), exhibits a similarly varied application of paint, resulting in dramatic contrasts in this night-time scene. The glow of the white moon illuminates the centre of the composition, while the periphery remains obscured in murky shadows. A windmill, at right, identifies this as a Dutch setting, although Jongkind rarely painted on site and likely created this work based on sketches in his studio.⁴

Boudin and Jongkind were not alone in providing early inspiration to the young Monet. Upon his first visit to the Paris Salon in the spring of 1859, Monet wrote to Boudin enthusiastically about Charles François Daubigny: ‘Here is one who does well, who understands nature!’⁵ *Woman washing clothes at the edge of a river*, c. 1860–70 (pp. 78–9), places the viewer in the middle of the river itself – the placid water spreads nearly from edge to edge. Daubigny realised this immersive composition through his inventive use of a boat repurposed as a floating studio, an idea later taken up by Monet himself in the 1870s. By then, Daubigny had become a renowned landscape painter of great wealth, famed for such sweeping, nearly panoramic views. The delicate shimmer of light upon the river in *Woman washing clothes at the edge of a river* reflects the riverbanks and sky to poetic effect – an effect that garnered much praise but also occasional criticism for its looseness of application, as noted by Théophile Gautier:

PP. 64–5: Claude Monet *Grand Canal, Venice* 1908 (detail)
PREVIOUS: Frits Thaulow *River view* c. 1890–1900 (detail)



Johan Barthold Jongkind *Harbour by moonlight* 1871

It is really too bad that this landscapist whose sentiment is so real, so true, and so natural, is content with an impression and neglects to such an extent the details. His pictures are nothing more than not very finished sketches. The landscapes of M. Daubigny offer nothing but juxtaposed touches of color.⁶

It is, of course, the sincerity and naturalness of Daubigny's 'not very finished sketches' that attracted Monet as he developed his own *plein air* practice.

Daubigny's nuanced watery reflections also speak to one of the most committed adherents of an Impressionist approach: Alfred Sisley. Although less celebrated than some of his colleagues, such as Monet, Sisley maintained an emphatically Impressionist sensibility throughout his career, as he described in 1893:

The animation of the canvas is one of the hardest problems of painting. To give life to the work of art

is certainly one of the most necessary tasks of the true artist. Everything must serve in this end: form, colour, surface. The artist's impression is the life-giving factor ... And though the artist must remain master of his craft, the surface, at times raised to the highest pitch of liveliness, should transmit to the beholder the sensation which possessed the artist.⁷

Painted nearly twenty years earlier, *Waterworks at Marly*, c. 1876 (p. 74), exemplifies Sisley's enduring search for the 'sensation'. From the rippling water to the rustling foliage of burnt orange and ochre, Sisley ignites the senses in a view of what may otherwise be a rather unremarkable subject. Painted by the artist at least six times, this pumping station provided water for the fountains at the Palace of Versailles, and had been replaced in 1855 by the modern facility shown on the left in the painting. The lines of the building, the dock projecting toward the left and the row of posts



Johan Barthold Jongkind *Harbour scene in Holland* 1868

extending across the width of the river provide an underlying structure for the soft, natural effects that dominate the rest of the picture. Reflections of the building's pink facade echo those of the golden trees, harmonising the man-made structure with its surrounding environment.

Sisley's landscapes frequently feature similarly mundane subjects, but each captures a specific atmospheric effect, like the bright, richly coloured *The Loing at Saint-Mammès*, 1882 (pp. 82–3). Here, a quiet bend of the Loing River is lined with towering poplar trees, nondescript boats, houses and an arching railway viaduct that spans the distant horizon line. Sisley was particularly attached to this area:

I have lived in Moret or nearby for nearly twelve years. It is at Moret, in this thickly wooded countryside with its tall poplars, the waters of the River Loing here, so beautiful, so translucent, so changeable; at Moret my art has undoubtedly developed most.⁸

Most distinctive about this unassuming view is the incredible 'variation of surface within the same picture' that Sisley explained was crucial to

rendering a light effect. Because when the sun lets certain parts of the landscape appear soft, it lifts others into sharp relief. These effects of light, which have an almost material expression in nature must be rendered in material fashion on the canvas.⁹

Diagonal marks form the grassy bank in the right foreground; small horizontal dashes dapple the water's surface in blue, purple and white; and long, loose strokes sweep across the sky and clouds.

The focus of *La Croix-Blanche at Saint-Mammès*, 1884 (pp. 72–3) – named for the seventeenth-century manor glimpsed at right – lies within Sisley's masterful blending of light and colour throughout all elements of the landscape. The sky was of particular importance to Sisley.



Alfred Sisley *La Croix-Blanche at Saint-Mammès* 1884



Alfred Sisley *Waterworks at Marly* c. 1876

The sky must be the medium, the sky cannot be a mere backdrop. Not only does it give the picture depth through its successive planes (for the sky, like the ground, has its planes), but through its form, and through its relations with the whole effect or with the composition of the picture, it gives it movement ... I always begin by painting the sky.¹⁰

In this work, the bright sky graduates from delicate blue at the upper left to a nearly white glow at centre. Mimicking the sky's gentle shift, the water's distant, pale tones deepen to navy as the river approaches. The gently flowing river subtly blends with the earth tones of the riverbank at right, while the spindly, bare trees' slender blue shadows traverse the path to meet the water's edge. Although Sisley's vision may begin with the sky, it is indeed the water's surface that subtly connects land, water and sky in the finished work.

The freshness of Sisley's work provides a visual and conceptual counterpoint to that of his contem-

porary Paul Cézanne. Whereas the water's surface in Cézanne's *The pond*, 1877–79 (pp. 76–7), extends across the foreground of the picture just as it does in Sisley's *Waterworks at Marly*, in Cézanne's composition the water is static, in contrast to the immersive experience of Sisley's view. Cézanne exhibits greater concern with the relation of forms in space, using the band of water as a structural component of the work. The water, like the land and sky, evades a sense of time, location or atmosphere. The trees hover upon a hill that hangs flat like a backdrop. The faceless figures sit motionless; their inert bodies physically populate the landscape but remain detached from their surroundings. Cézanne worked closely alongside his elder colleague Camille Pissarro in the 1870s and emulated his technique of using regular, directional brushwork – as seen in the foreground of *Sunlight on the road, Pontoise*, 1874 (see chapter 7, p. 129). *The pond's* rhythmic, even brushstrokes, particularly visible in the hillside and the tree at right, create a feeling of solidity instead of

the depth and movement of Pissarro's composition. Cézanne's often hard-to-read compositions even prompted Pissarro to acknowledge:

From far off one often gets an entirely different idea of things. But likewise when one is too close one sees nothing; you can't see a Cézanne by holding it against your nose.¹¹

Cézanne exhibited in two of the eight Impressionist exhibitions, including the first one, held in Paris from 15 April to 15 May 1874. That spring, Norwegian painter Frits Thaulow travelled to Paris for the first time and may have visited the exhibition during his stay.¹² Although he did not participate in the Impressionist exhibitions, Thaulow spent much of his career in France. He was a brother-in-law, through marriage, to Paul Gauguin¹³ and had close ties to many French artists, including Monet, whom he met at a January 1895 banquet honouring Pierre Puvis de Chavannes; he offered advice on Monet's upcoming trip to Norway.¹⁴ Thaulow was a devoted practitioner of working outdoors: 'I will remain ... the naturalist that I always was: I will always attempt to produce the illusion that I observed in nature'.¹⁵ Thaulow created immersive compositions, and was known especially for his enveloping watery views, such as *River view*, c. 1890–1900 (p. 81). Glistening ripples extend across the river to the edge of the canvas in this late autumn scene. The last orange-red leaves drift upon the river's surface; above, glimmers of sky, clouds and trees swirl together. A critic applauded how 'the mass, the fluidity and the depth' within such works surpasses the mere flickering sensations of Impressionist painting.¹⁶

Thaulow achieves a similar effect in *Abbeville*, c. 1894 (p. 80), painted from a bridge over a river or canal in a town in northern France. He details the architectural features and varied brick and stone facades lining the waterway; however, the visual interest of this painting lies in the green-hued water that takes up more than half the composition. Thaulow's friend Monet used this type of configuration on numerous occasions, as in *Grand Canal, Venice* (p. 69). During his 1908 trip, Monet was enchanted with the city's beauty, writing to critic Gustave Geffroy:

Well, [my enthusiasm] increases by the day and I'm very sad that I'll soon have to leave this unique light ... what I shame I didn't come here when I was a younger man, when I was full of daring!¹⁷

Monet painted this view of the Grand Canal receding towards the dome of Santa Maria della Salute from the steps of Palazzo Barbaro, where he stayed during his visit. The buildings dissolve into one another, their indistinct forms merging with the dappled pastel-coloured canal. The harmonious pink and purple light unites water, city and sky within a singular vision.

Monet exhibited twenty-nine Venice paintings in 1912.¹⁸ In the preface to the exhibition's catalogue, critic Octave Mirbeau described how the artist created this visual unity

by translating [the light of the city] as the most intelligent dancer translates a feeling. Movements ... are so well interwoven one with the other that they seem to be a single movement and that the dance is perfect and complete like a circle.¹⁹

Upon seeing the exhibition, the younger artist Paul Signac wrote to Monet:

When I looked at your Venice paintings with their admirable interpretation of the motifs I know so well, I experienced a deep emotion ... where everything supports the expression of your vision, where no detail undermines the emotional impact ... I admire them as the highest manifestation of your art.²⁰

As seen in the work of his forebears and his contemporaries, Monet was not alone in his mastery of watery landscapes, yet his lasting innovation in the subject would continue to set him apart. More than thirty years after earning Duret's poetic nickname, both critics and artists alike still recognised Monet's role as 'the painter of water *par excellence*'.



Paul Cézanne *The pond* c. 1877–79



Charles François Daubigny *Woman washing clothes at the edge of a river* c. 1860–70



Frits Thaulow *Abbeville* c. 1894



Frits Thaulow *River view* c. 1890-1900



Alfred Sisley *The Loing at Saint-Mammès* 1882

5. BEYOND CONVENTION: IMPRESSIONIST STILL LIFE

MEG SLATER



THROUGHOUT ITS LONG HISTORY, still life has often been relegated to the bottom of the hierarchy of artistic genres. Contempt for pictures of motionless, inanimate objects lasted well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as evidenced by the Salon exhibitions held in Paris between 1791 and 1800, which included very few still lifes.¹ Such paintings were considered by influential academicians as ‘mere decorations’,² created by ‘servile copyists’³ who lacked the imagination required to attempt superior subjects – namely, the figure and the landscape.

However, a significant shift in the reception of still life occurred in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Théophile Gautier, Jules-Antione Castagnary and other liberal French critics ushered in a more progressive view of the genre by insisting that all artistic subjects held the same worth.⁴ There were also several major exhibitions and publications dedicated to the eighteenth-century master of still life, Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin, who had fallen into relative obscurity after his death in 1779.⁵ Distinguished by his unique use of colour and preference for painting modest, domestic objects, Chardin played a crucial role in dissociating still life from the academic tradition, and, according to critic Edmond de Goncourt, elevating ‘this secondary genre to the highest and most wonderful artistic rank’.⁶

This revision of the genre’s worth in the 1840s and 1850s established the conditions necessary for a group of artists to produce modern and experimental still lifes. While the indoor art form only constituted a relatively small part of their practice and was often undertaken as a means of revenue raising, these artists were inventively engaged with it. For a group who often fell prey to the critique of journalists, academics and collectors of the time, embracing what had long been considered a minor subject in painting was a bold gesture. Furthermore, the still lifes they produced shook the very foundations of the genre by representing a diversity of subjects and styles and a broadened conception of the centuries-old tradition.

Édouard Manet’s break with convention through his radically new approach to painting is reflected in his still lifes, which constituted approximately one fifth of his oeuvre.⁷ He attached great significance to



ABOVE: Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin *Still life with teapot, grapes, chestnuts, and a pear* 17[64?] Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
PREVIOUS: Berthe Morisot *White flowers in a bowl* 1885 (detail)



Édouard Manet *Basket of fruit* c. 1864



Henri Fantin-Latour *Plate of peaches* 1862



Claude Monet *Still life with flowers and fruit* 1869
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

the unsung genre, describing it as the ‘touchstone of the painter’.⁸ While Manet observed the conventions of traditional still-life painters, he paid equal attention to transcribing the world around him, claiming that ‘one has to belong to his own time and reproduce what he sees’.⁹ By focusing on transcribing his reality using innovative and experimental pictorial techniques, Manet countered the symbolic and decorative traditions still life had long been associated with. Painted early in Manet’s career, *Basket of fruit*, c. 1864 (p. 87), is characterised by loose, abbreviated brushstrokes. A minimum of lines has been used to define the painting’s subject: a basket of fruit and a single knife on a polished wood table, set against a nondescript background. Despite the ridicule Manet received for the flatness, brevity and abstract quality that characterised his painting style, he deemed this work sufficiently finished to include in his first one-person exhibition in 1867.¹⁰

Like Manet, Henri Fantin-Latour often selected commonplace, domestic subjects, as is demonstrated in an early, intimate composition of three peaches, a plate and a fruit knife (*Plate of peaches*, 1862, p. 87). Fantin-Latour produced still lifes characterised by their casual composition, and once claimed to ‘put a great deal of

thought into the arrangement of random objects’ to give ‘the appearance of a total lack of artistry’.¹¹ This element of spontaneity is captured in *Flowers and fruit on a table*, 1865 (pp. 98–9), which records objects of varying shapes, sizes and functions. An array of fruits, flowers and kitchen utensils are removed from their domestic origins and depicted against a deep brown background. Unlike Manet, Fantin-Latour remained committed to the more conservative realist tradition, capturing a level of naturalistic detail – particularly in his compositions of roses in glass vases (pp. 100, 101) – that the former never sought to record. Fantin-Latour’s adherence to the realist tradition was partly determined by the lucrative market he found for his flower pieces, which surprised even him: ‘I’m astonished that these painted studies of flowers find any takers, it is such a painterly feeling I’m always astounded that anyone but painters has a taste for them’.¹²

Gustave Courbet similarly achieved financial success through his floral still lifes, and once claimed to be ‘coining money out of flowers’.¹³ Despite their profitability, Courbet painted very few still lifes in his career, and those he did were often created out of necessity. In September 1871, he was sentenced to six months in the prison at Sainte-Pélagie for his involvement in the destruction of the Vendôme Column during the Paris Commune of 1871.¹⁴ During this period, Courbet was denied both live models and access to the prison roof to paint landscapes, so his subjects became the fruit, fish and flowers delivered by his sister.¹⁵ *Hollyhocks in a copper bowl*, 1872 (p. 103), was likely painted once Courbet had been transferred from the prison to a sanatorium due to his poor health.¹⁶ The context of isolation within which he was working explains several of the painting’s compositional elements, including the dark, sombre background engulfing the hollyhocks.

Despite differences in context, motivation and technique, Manet, Fantin-Latour and Courbet are united in their experimentation and use of unconventional compositional and pictorial effects. A similar approach connects the artists more central to the Impressionist group, who continued to shift the genre away from its origins by applying to their still lifes a ‘living, naturalistic effect’,¹⁷ representing the



Alfred Sisley *Grapes and walnuts on a table* 1876

textures, colours and vibrancy found in nature using idiosyncratic brushwork and bright palettes. This is reflected in Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s *Mixed flowers in an earthenware pot*, c. 1869 (p. 91), which captures both the subject – an arrangement of dahlias, asters and sunflowers in a stoneware pot alongside a selection of apples and pears – and its surrounding atmosphere. With a range of brushstrokes and vibrant contrasts of yellows, reds and blues, Renoir produced a still life that is both textured and luminous. The painting’s gleaming quality is a reminder that early in his life, before he could afford to devote himself exclusively to art, Renoir was trained as a porcelain painter.¹⁸ The elaborate floral still lifes of Narcisse Diaz de La Peña (p. 90) – who also had a background as a ceramic painter in a porcelain factory¹⁹ – achieve a radiance comparable to those of Renoir.

Like his predecessors, Renoir treated floral still lifes as opportunities to experiment:

When I am painting flowers, I establish the tones, I study the values carefully without worrying about losing the picture ... The experience I gain from these works, I eventually apply to my [figure] paintings.²⁰

His still lifes also served as important exercises in collaboration. In fact, Renoir painted *Mixed flowers in an earthenware pot* alongside Claude Monet while the young artists were neighbours in the town of Bougival on the Seine.²¹ Monet’s rendering of the same scene, where a basket of apples, pears and grapes dominates the foreground of the painting while the bouquet of late-summer blossoms appears in the rear, is in the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (opposite).

The genre’s social function is also represented in Alfred Sisley’s 1876 painting *Grapes and walnuts on a table* (above), which was probably created with Monet’s encouragement.²² Like the still lifes of his fellow Impressionists, Sisley’s painting captures both the objects on display – a selection of fruit on a plate, walnuts, a knife and a nutcracker – and the changing atmospheric conditions. The casual arrangement of the items across a crisp white tablecloth resembles forms found in a natural landscape, a subject that Sisley and many of his fellow Impressionists more readily embraced.

For Berthe Morisot, still life represented more than a brief departure from paintings of natural landscapes and urban scenes. This is partly due to



Narcisse Virgile Díaz de La Peña *Flowers* c. 1850–60



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Mixed flowers in an earthenware pot* c. 1869

the social and political restrictions placed on women in nineteenth-century France. Her sustained focus on family and friends in domestic environments was likely the result of her limited access to many of the urban settings her male peers frequented.²³ Furthermore, the state-supported art school in Paris (the École des Beaux-Arts) was not open to women, preventing Morisot from receiving a formal education. She instead relied on private training and copying paintings during visits to the Louvre.²⁴ Despite these limitations, Morisot saw her paintings selected for the annual Salon exhibition in Paris on seven occasions. Her work was accepted into the prestigious state-sanctioned exhibition until 1874, when she began to exhibit independently with the Impressionists. Morisot was introduced to the Impressionist circle in 1869 by Manet, her close friend, mentor and eventual brother-in-law through Morisot's marriage to Eugène Manet.²⁵ She quickly became a core member of the group and participated in all but one of the eight Impressionist exhibitions.

As an upper middle-class woman, Morisot was unhindered by financial hardship. Unlike Monet and Renoir, her livelihood did not depend on the sale of her paintings. As a result, she was able to produce highly experimental works, including *White flowers in a bowl*, 1885 (p. 94), which exemplifies Morisot's immediate and direct approach to painting. Using sweeping brushstrokes, Morisot rendered a pitcher, bowl and bouquet of white blooms with a minimum of loose, fluid lines and forms. She also left large sections of the canvas ground exposed. The 'sketchiness' that characterises Morisot's painting technique attracted a unique kind of criticism, one often linked to her gender. The critic Paul de Charry once remarked:

With this talent, why does she not take the trouble to finish? Morisot is a woman, and therefore capricious. Unfortunately, she is like Eve who bites the apple and then gives up on it too soon. Too bad, since she bites it so well!²⁶

Gustave Caillebotte's experimental painting techniques attracted similarly animated reviews, though they were not linked to his temperament.

The originality that characterises his still lifes is reflected in *Fruit displayed on a stand*, c. 1881–82 (pp. 96–7), which depicts the produce of an upscale fruit seller. Caillebotte's unconventional choice of subject matter was praised by writer and critic Joris-Karl Huysmans, who described the artist's depiction of fruits of varying shape, size and colour on their 'white paper beds' as 'extraordinary', and heralded the painting as a 'still life freed from its routine'.²⁷

Among the Impressionists, Paul Cézanne was the only artist whose engagement with still life was sustained. Described by critic Thadée Natanson as the 'master of still life', Cézanne, like Manet, dedicated roughly a fifth of his oeuvre to the genre.²⁸ Furthermore, while his practice was informed by the Impressionists' aims, his vision was fundamentally distinct from theirs. Cézanne's chief objective was to investigate questions of form, structure and colour, and the relationships between these compositional elements, and still life was a central avenue through which he conducted his research. Cézanne embraced the genre as a site of experimentation and, according to Charles Sterling, gave it 'an importance which had never attached to it before in the whole history of painting'.²⁹ His dedication to the still life produced complex, carefully sculpted compositions laden with inanimate objects.

Cézanne's approach to still life underwent several transformations in the latter part of the nineteenth century. From the mid 1870s onwards, he moved away from intense contrasts of light and shadow to explore questions of form and colour, and began to experiment with subtle tonal variations.³⁰ In the 1880s and 1890s, he started to warp different edges and angles in his compositions, eventually abandoning traditional rules of perspective altogether.³¹ From the 1890s onwards, his subjects were built entirely from colour and presented within a distorted perspectival space,³² as demonstrated in *Fruit and jug on a table*, c. 1890–94 (p. 95). By collapsing the composition's middle ground and recording forms from multiple angles, Cézanne constructed a non-naturalistic space. A jug, bowl, fruits and patterned rug sit on a tabletop at an impossible angle. Employing a constructivist brushstroke, Cézanne has layered cool and warm tones to build each

form. The result is a composition where, to quote the artist, the 'outline and the colors are no longer distinct from each other ... the color is at its richest, the form has reached plenitude'.³³ It is using these experimental techniques that Cézanne, in his own words, was able to 'write in painting what had never yet been painted, and turn it into painting once and for all'.³⁴

Despite Cézanne's near complete detachment from the art world, particularly towards the end of his life, he profoundly influenced many of his peers. Paul Gauguin described the still life by Cézanne in his personal collection as 'the apple of my eye', and that 'except in the case of dire necessity, I'll keep it until my last shirt's gone'.³⁵ Cézanne's embrace of the genre also inspired those who would follow in his footsteps, notably the Cubists and the Surrealists. However, the lasting influence of Cézanne's contributions to still life cannot be viewed in isolation. His innovations were part of a larger chain reaction that began in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. This period of radical experimentation was set off by the rediscovery of Chardin, which established the conditions under which artists such as Manet, Fantin-Latour and Courbet could begin to create modern still lifes. A further dismantling of the tradition was carried out by the Impressionists, culminating in the genre's complete transformation by Cézanne – all in a matter of decades.



Berthe Morisot *White flowers in a bowl* 1885



Paul Cézanne *Fruit and a jug on a table* c. 1890–94



Gustave Caillebotte *Fruit displayed on a stand* c. 1881–82



Henri Fantin-Latour *Flowers and fruit on a table* 1865



Henri Fantin-Latour *Roses in a vase* 1872



Henri Fantin-Latour *Roses in a glass vase* 1890



Gustave Courbet *Hollyhocks in a copper bowl* 1872

6. 'A FANTASTIC, NERVOUS IMPROVISATOR': RENOIR AND EXPERIMEN- TATION

ANGELA HESSON



IN 1909 PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR, ENTER-
ing the final decade of his life, received an unusual
commission. The request was not for a painting, but
for an essay – the preface to a new French edition of
Cennino Cennini’s *Il libro dell’arte*, variously trans-
lated as *The Craftsman’s Handbook* and *A Treatise on
Painting*.¹ The text, believed to date to around the turn
of the fifteenth century, was intended as a technical
handbook for the apprentice, detailing the preparation
of materials as well as the practice of painting, drawn
from Cennini’s lifetime of experimentation and study.
It had gained new currency in the nineteenth century,
hailed as a paean to traditional methods and materials
and a potential corrective to industrial homogeneity.
Renoir’s preface to the 1911 French edition positioned
the text as a ‘moral lesson’, a source of continuing wis-
dom, as relevant to the artists of the twentieth century
as it was to their early Renaissance forebears. Although
the precise date of Renoir’s first encounter with the text
remains the subject of speculation, its influence on him
was profound, reinforcing the artist’s commitment to
ongoing historical study as a pivotal aspect of artis-
tic evolution.² Camille Mauclair, a writer and friend of
Renoir, recalled him, late in life,

mesmerised by a reading, of which he spoke with a
naive and touching enthusiasm. ‘An Italian of the XIV
century. It is astonishing what those people knew ...
I am learning things here about which I had doubts ...
I know what I still lack, I cannot believe it.’³

Learning, experimentation and the acceptance of mis-
steps on the path to improvement were central tenets
of Renoir’s artistic life, and ones which brought about
numerous transformations in his work. These tenden-
cies saw him both celebrated and censured, and con-
tributed to his characterisation by his contemporary,
friend and sometime critic Camille Pissarro as ‘that
most variable of men’.⁴

Unlike most of his Impressionist circle, Renoir
was born into a family of working-class artisans, and
thus did not have the financial support upon which
many of his peers relied in the early stages of their
careers. The son of a tailor and a seamstress, Renoir
moved with his family from Limoges to Paris in 1845,

where his parents hoped to find better employment
opportunities. In 1854, at the age of thirteen, Renoir
began an apprenticeship at the Levy Brothers porce-
lain factory on rue Vieille du Temple. There, he pro-
duced miniature copies of compositions by François
Boucher on porcelain plates, and earned the nickname
‘Monsieur Rubens’ for his precocious talent.⁵ Reflect-
ing upon Renoir’s artistic beginnings shortly after
the artist’s death, Walter Sickert described these early
years spent painting porcelain as ‘the finest education
conceivable ... Painting on *biscuit* imposes a certain
order on the operations, which happens to be the ideal
order for a painter. You are obliged to paint first and
draw afterwards.’⁶ The influence of this training, and
of the artists whose work Renoir encountered through
it, remained legible in his painting throughout his
life, in his luminous palette, his sensuous, tactile han-
dling of paint, and his frequent returns to idealised
Rococo subjects. Renoir himself extolled the impact
of Boucher, Jean-Antoine Watteau and Jean-Honoré
Fragonard on his painting, declaring simply, ‘I am of
the eighteenth century’.⁷

The savings that Renoir made from this employ-
ment also enabled him to begin his formal art educa-
tion; in April 1861 he entered the studio of Swiss artist
Charles Gleyre to prepare for enrolment at the École
des Beaux-Arts in Paris. There, he met fellow students
Claude Monet, Frédéric Bazille and Alfred Sisley. The
studio of Henri Fantin-Latour was nearby, and the art-
ist would become Renoir’s unofficial mentor for a time.
Foremost among Fantin-Latour’s advice was the neces-
sity of looking to the work of others: ‘There is only the
Louvre! You can never copy the masters enough!’ he
proclaimed.⁸ The 1860s was a period of great energy
and expansion for Renoir. He continued to exhibit via
the traditional channels and achieved some recognition
at the Paris Salon of 1868 with *Lise with a parasol*, 1867
(Museum Folkwang, Essen), but formal acknowledge-
ment of his progress was sparse. It was during a period
spent sketching on the banks of the Seine with Monet
in 1869 that the artists began, together, to focus on
the looser and more varied brushwork and high-keyed
palette that would later be understood to character-
ise the Impressionist movement. In 1874, after a series
of rejections by the Salon juries, Renoir and Monet

formed a group with Camille Pissarro, Sisley, Berthe
Morisot, Edgar Degas, Paul Cézanne and several other
artists to mount the first Impressionist exhibition, in
which Renoir showed six paintings. Although the criti-
cal response to the exhibition was largely unfavourable,
Renoir’s work was better received than that of many of
his fellow exhibitors, and thereafter he entered one of
the most prolific and celebrated periods of his career.

*Woman with a parasol and small child on a sunlit
hillside*, c. 1874–76 (p. 9), is emblematic of the closeness
of Renoir’s artistic relationships around this time. His
model for the painting was probably Camille Monet,
wife of Claude, who is seen languorously enjoying a
sunny hillside in Argenteuil, where Renoir was staying
with the family.⁹ His brushstrokes are long, feathery
and flowing, and the paint on Camille’s dress appears
as if still wet, contrasting with the exposed, chalky
edges of the composition. Camille and the young child
nearby seem to merge with the landscape itself, blur-
ring the boundaries between human figures and the
natural environment.

Renoir’s relationship with the Salon was less
fraught than that of many of his circle; while others
expressed disdain for the establishment that had
rejected them, by 1881 Renoir’s approach was more
philosophical: ‘I don’t want to waste time cherishing
grudges against the Salon ... In my opinion one should
paint as well as possible, and that is all’.¹⁰ Indeed, while
Renoir contributed to several of the eight Impres-
sionist shows, he also continued to enter works in the
Salon,¹¹ with varying degrees of critical success in
both arenas. His confidence in his creations exhibited
similar peaks and troughs. Foremost among his con-
cerns was a feeling that his artistic training had been
insufficient, and that his approach to art was conse-
quently unsettled. ‘I am suffering from the illness of
experimentation’, Renoir lamented to his dealer Paul
Durand-Ruel in 1881. It was in large part this desire
to deepen his knowledge of his historical precur-
sors that inspired Renoir’s many excursions over the
following years, and a similarly adventurous spirit
infused his painting.

The years 1881 and 1882 saw Renoir travel to
Algeria, Italy and the south of France. It was a period
of constant and determined evolution for the artist,



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Odalisque* 1870 National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

during which he drew inspiration not only from these unfamiliar places, but also from the legacies of other artists who had responded to them previously. Even before he arrived in Algeria, the Orientalist fantasies of Eugène Delacroix had exerted profound influence on Renoir. One of his first paintings to be accepted to the Salon was *Odalisque*, 1870 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, above), a work manifestly inspired by Delacroix's *Women of Algiers*, 1834 (Louvre, Paris). Renoir had not yet visited North Africa at the time, and the eponymous subject was in fact French woman Lise Tréot (Renoir's principal model between 1866 and 1872), surrounded by textiles and decorative arts that were probably European products inspired by Islamic designs.¹² As Colin Bailey has observed, Renoir's mode of Orientalism was already, by this time, somewhat old-fashioned; most of his fellow Impressionists were no longer looking to North Africa, but to Japan.¹³ Yet the work of Delacroix and his contemporaries still exerted sufficient influence on Renoir to inspire his pilgrimage to places he had sought previously to evoke imaginatively.

Renoir's *Algerian girl*, 1881 (opposite), painted on his first trip to Algeria, bears many of the marks of Delacroix's Orientalism, but moderates the sensuality, bringing attention instead to the sitter's face and her decorative environment. In a manner typical of many European artists who sought to capture the 'exoticism' of North Africa around this time, Renoir's creations bore little relationship to the place itself or

its inhabitants, reflecting instead the pervasive tropes of colonial fantasy. The model is unknown; however, during this time Renoir often employed French nationals living in Algeria as models, dressing them in local costume and darkening their hair on his canvas. Such alterations should perhaps come as little surprise from a painter who once asserted, 'it is the artist who makes the model'.¹⁴ Renoir's light, varied brushstrokes inject a sense of airiness, and the jewelbox palette was a common motif of all his Algerian subjects – an indication not only of exoticism, but also of the artist's enthusiasm for ornament in all its forms. 'I like beautiful materials, rich brocades, diamonds flashing in the light', he declared. 'On the other hand, I would just as soon paint glass trinkets and cotton goods costing two sous a yard'.¹⁵

Upon his return to France, Renoir painted at Chatou, west of Paris, where he continued to develop his vibrant, high-keyed palette and the range of touches with which it was applied. In *The Seine at Chatou*, 1881 (pp. 116–17), the brightly coloured landscape is rendered with carefully differentiated brushwork, from the long, feathery strokes of the waving grasses to small, thick touches for the flowering trees. The work also seems to exhibit the influence of Michel Eugène Chevreul's 1855 colour theory in its predominance of complementary yellow/greens and lilacs. Chevreul's central thesis – that neighbouring colours influenced one another's appearance – had a profound impact on Impressionism (and later Post-impressionism) more widely.¹⁶



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Algerian girl* 1881

In October 1881, Renoir departed on an extended trip to Italy, where he felt himself and his art transformed by encounters with masterpieces by Titian in Florence and Raphael in Rome. He brought all of the deftness of Impressionist technique to his glittering *Grand Canal, Venice*, 1881 (pp. 120–1). The composition is divided into water and sky, the former composed of short horizontal dashes of colour, the latter of looser, multidirectional strokes of blue and white, and between these the vertical bank of pastels that make up the stone facades of buildings. Renoir’s Venetian pictures generated some hostility from critics when first exhibited, with one decrying the artist’s efforts as ‘the most outrageous series of ferocious daubs that any slanderer of Venice could possibly imagine’.¹⁷ In traditionally painted Venetian scenes, such as the *vedute* of Canaletto, the city’s famous landmarks and topography were rendered in fine detail. By contrast, Renoir’s radical vision dissolved these recognisable markers of venerable antiquity into a vibrant experiment in colour and light.¹⁸

In January the following year, Renoir visited Cézanne in L’Estaque, a village on the French coast to the west of Marseille. The region was favoured by artists for its strong light and dramatic geological features, which would become key ingredients in Post-impressionist painting in the years that followed. Cézanne’s influence is legible in Renoir’s *Rocky crags at L’Estaque*, 1882 (p. 118), in which the artist’s preference for softness is moderated by the more striking geometry of the cliff. The two artists worked in harmony during this period: Cézanne, painting the same view, moving toward the increasingly radical abstraction of his Post-impressionist style; and Renoir maintaining his idealised vision of nature, while experimenting with the stronger compositional possibilities of the ancient rock formations.

Integral to Renoir’s treatment of both landscape and the human figure was a fascination with nature, often idealising and somewhat at odds with the more cynical urbanism of contemporaries such as Édouard Manet and Degas. ‘An artist, under pain of oblivion, must have confidence in himself, and listen only to his real master: Nature’ he had declared.¹⁹ Yet Renoir was often troubled by his perceived artistic shortcomings

in the face of natural splendour. In December 1883, he travelled with Monet along the Mediterranean coast from Marseille to Genoa, where Renoir painted *Landscape on the coast, near Menton* (p. 119). Overcome by the beauty of the scene, he wrote to his patron Paul Berard, ‘alas our poor palette can’t match up to it’.²⁰ Yet with characteristically sensuous brushstrokes and luminous colour, Renoir set out to capture the landscape nonetheless, creating an evocative and tactile vision of a windswept grove on bluffs overlooking the sea. Renoir considered his visits to the south of France to be particularly productive – he was, he declared, ‘in the process of learning a lot’, not least because he found the climate particularly favourable:

I have perpetual sunshine and I can scrape off and begin again as much as I like. This is the only way to learn, and in Paris one is obliged to be satisfied with little ... [I] am staying in the sun ... while warming myself and observing a great deal, I shall, I believe, have acquired the simplicity and grandeur of the ancient painters.²¹

While Renoir’s commitment to the Impressionist privileging of colour and light persisted over the years that followed, his travels in Italy had also introduced him to new (or rather, old) ideas which were somewhat at odds with other aspects of the movement. Foremost among these were the tenets of Classicism. Where Impressionism more broadly prioritised notions of ephemerality, Renoir became increasingly preoccupied with the lucidity and discipline of line drawing and the purity of form. Upon his return to Paris, the artist resumed his practice of copying from the Old Masters at the Louvre. Later, he purportedly recounted, ‘I discovered, about 1883, that the only thing worthwhile for a painter to study is the museums’.²² These shifts did not lead the artist to abandon Impressionism altogether; rather, Renoir continued to apply his luminous palette and expressive range of touches to a new style of painting which also emphasised form, line and volume.

His monumental figure paintings from around this time saw this hybrid approach applied theatrically and on a grand scale. *Dance at Bougival*, 1883 (p. 113),



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *The great bathers* (*Les Grandes Baigneuses*) 1884–87 Philadelphia Museum of Art

depicts a pair of happy dancers in the village of Bougival, near Paris, a popular place of recreation where many of Renoir’s friends and associates also painted. Durand-Ruel subsequently selected the work for exhibition in *Paintings, Drawings and Pastels by Members of ‘La société des impressionnistes’*, at Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell, London in 1883.²³ It was enthusiastically received, particularly for its perceived capacity to elevate its subject without promoting any particular artistic agenda:

The scene depicted is brought to one’s very door. No artistic convention intervenes between the scene and the representation of it, provided that the artistic conventions are not in one’s own eyes when one arrives to look at it.²⁴

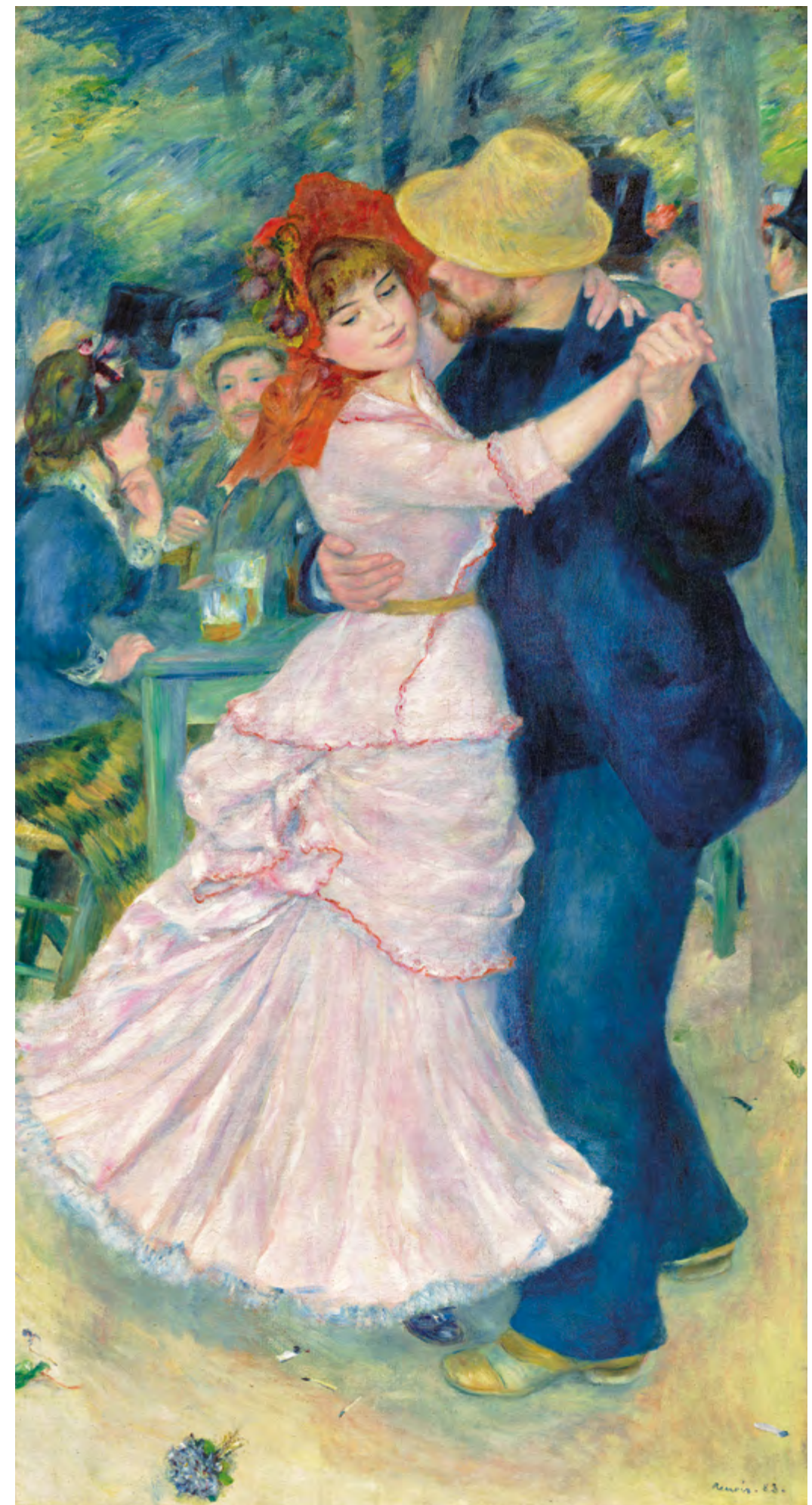
In the summer of the same year, Renoir spent several weeks sketching on the island of Guernsey in the English Channel, then a fashionable holiday destination for Parisians. The subject of *Children at the seashore, Guernsey*, c. 1883 (p. 112), is among Renoir’s favourites – a group of rosy-cheeked children on a sunny beach, with bathers cavorting in the luminous water. The sense of relaxation and informality inherent in the scene is mirrored in the artist’s long, flowing brushstrokes and the unfinished sections of canvas

at the right and upper edges. The bathers themselves are so loosely defined as to verge on abstraction. Yet in spite of these radical elements, in its manner of execution, the work undermined one of Impressionism’s central tenets – that of painting *en plein air*. For all its apparent spontaneity, *Children at the seashore, Guernsey* was not painted on a beach, but rather in Renoir’s Paris studio, a practice that the artist defended on the grounds that it was in the ‘false light’ of a room that the work would ultimately be seen.²⁵ From the perspective of many of Renoir’s contemporaries, however, the decision to produce an outdoor scene indoors from a series of sketches and studies was a regressive one, a reversion to the confining discipline of the Academy, which undermined the sense of impulsiveness that had guided the Impressionists’ earlier endeavours.

It was in Renoir’s figure painting – his most favoured genre – that the difficulties inherent in uniting the historic and Impressionist impulses became most apparent. *The great bathers* (Philadelphia Museum of Art, above), a large-scale, classically inspired scene of bathers rendered with sculptural precision on which the artist laboured from 1884 to 1887, was to prove a point of particular consternation. Here, Renoir sought to reconcile modern forms of painting with the traditions of the Old Masters, in particular Raphael, Titian,



ABOVE: Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Children at the seashore, Guernsey* c. 1883
 OPPOSITE: Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Dance at Bougival* 1883





Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Girls picking flowers in a meadow* c. 1890

Rubens, and also Ingres, whom he viewed as the most important nineteenth-century inheritor of the old wisdom and technique. In attempting to merge these artistic antecedents with Impressionist style, Renoir alienated many of his contemporaries. It was this work that would provoke Pissarro to lament:

Renoir, lacking a gift for drawing, lacking the beautiful colors that he instinctively felt before, becomes incoherent ... I do not understand what he is trying to do; it's very good not to want to stand still, but he chose to concentrate only on line; his figures detach themselves from one another without regard for color; the result is something unintelligible.²⁶

Recounting the work's reception to Ambroise Vollard, Renoir declared:

I got roundly trounced for it, I can tell you. This time everybody, Huysmans in the lead, agreed that I was a

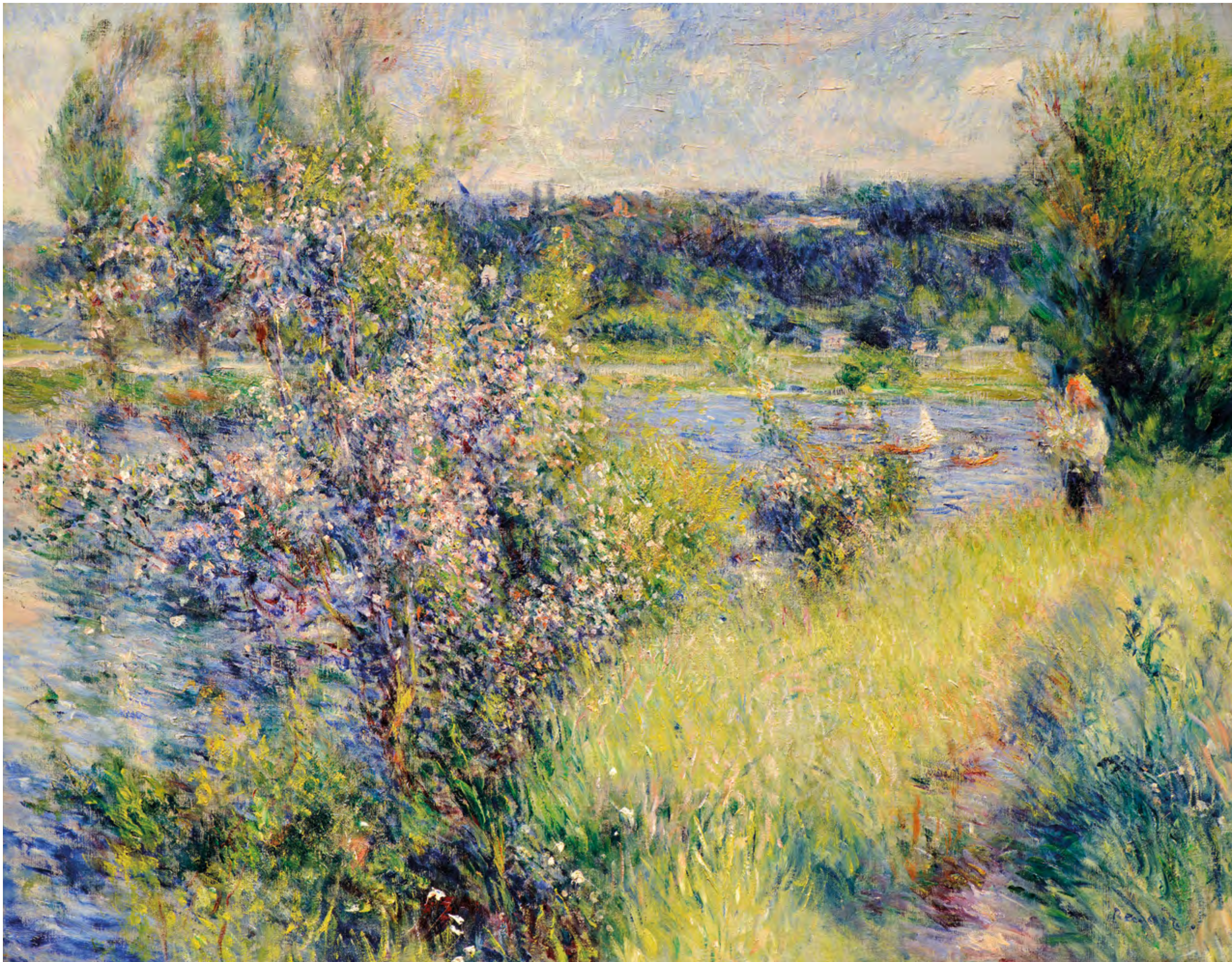
lost soul; some even said I was lazy. And God knows how I laboured over it!²⁷

Dispirited by the criticism, Renoir never again devoted such continued effort to a single work. In 1889, he declined to show his work in a major exhibition of French art, explaining, 'I think that everything I have done is bad and it would cause me a great deal of pain to see it exhibited'.²⁸

In the years that followed, Renoir devoted himself predominantly to picturesque, sensuous depictions of women and children enjoying the pleasures of nature, and relied mostly upon family, friends and household staff as models. He spent the summer of 1890 at the country house of Berthe Morisot and her husband, Eugène Manet, where their daughter, Julie, posed for him, along with her cousin, Jeannie Gobilard. The result was *Girls picking flowers in a meadow*, c. 1890 (above), a work which evokes the fanciful air of shepherdesses in a Rococo pastoral – influenced,

undoubtedly, by the creations of Boucher and Watteau that Renoir had encountered as a porcelain painter thirty years before. Such exuberantly pretty works were received with mixed enthusiasm by Renoir's contemporaries. Mauclair extolled the degree to which Renoir's scenes of modern life retained 'the imprint of the lyric spirit and of sweetness'.²⁹ Degas, for his part, disliked the soft texture of Renoir's painterly touch, declaring: 'He paints with balls of wool'.³⁰ Renoir himself was unapologetic about the softness of his subjects and his treatment of them: 'For me ... a painting must be agreeable, joyful and pretty – yes, pretty! There are enough depressing things in life for us to fabricate still more.'³¹

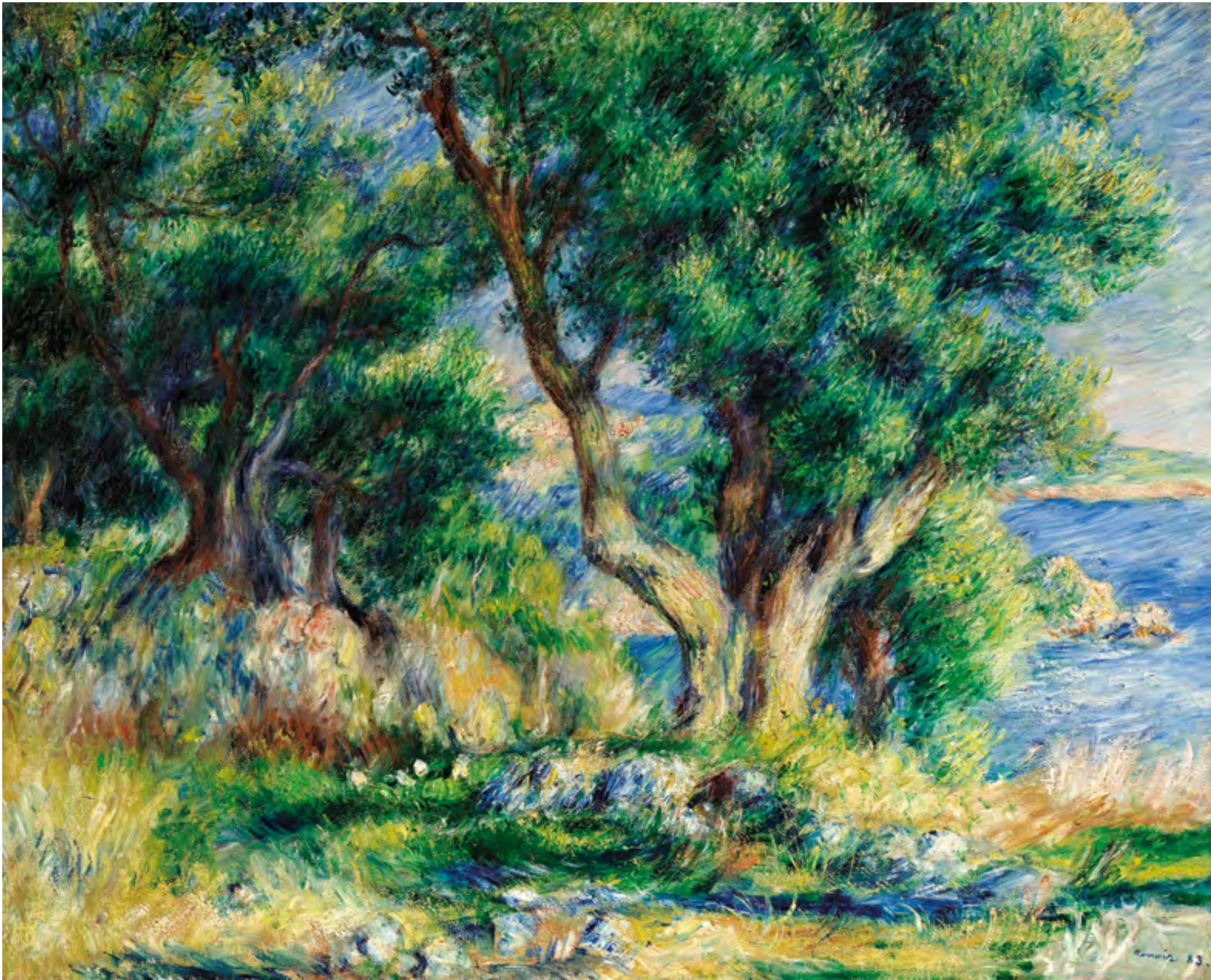
It was around this time that Renoir began to experience serious symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis. As the incidents worsened, he sought out the warmer climates of southern France, where his symptoms were less debilitating. From around 1899, he began visiting the village of Cagnes-sur-Mer on the Mediterranean coast, and in 1907 he purchased the estate 'Les Collettes', where he settled permanently. Although progressive deformities in his hands and ankylosis of his shoulders and elbows necessitated changes in his technique, Renoir continued to work until the end of his life. According to his son, Jean, 'For him the important thing was not to find a cure – he was not a bit interested in his own health – but to continue painting'. Jean recounted his father's numerous adaptive techniques to negotiate the illness, including maintaining mobility and coordination by juggling small logs, which he shaped and sanded himself.³² Renoir's willingness to persevere in spite of his worsening physical condition was testament, in part perhaps, to his lifetime of artistic experimentation. As Mauclair proclaimed in one of the first published attempts to document Impressionism as a whole, Renoir was 'a fantastic, nervous improvisator ... more exposed to radical mistakes. But he is a profoundly sincere and conscientious artist.'³³ There is a peculiar poignancy in this. Renoir's enduring blend of curiosity and insecurity necessitated a continuing, self-enforced program of experimentation and evaluation, which effectively undermined heroic myths of genius, as surely as it reinforced the values of learning, homage and adaptation.



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *The Seine at Chatou* 1881



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Rocky crags at L'Estaque* 1882



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Landscape on the coast, near Menton* 1883



Pierre-Auguste Renoir *Grand Canal, Venice* 1881

7. TO BARBIZON AND BACK: PISSARRO AND IMPRESSIONISM

TED GOTT



IN 1882 PAUL GAUGUIN, THEN STILL AN emerging artist, presented his mentor Camille Pissarro with *The toilette*, 1882 (Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg, opposite left), a pear wood relief sculpture inscribed 'à mon ami Pissarro'.¹ According to Gauguin scholar Charles Stuckey, this was 'closely based on a painting by Corot that had been exhibited in 1881'.² Gauguin was, of course, aware of the great debt to Barbizon School painter Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot that Pissarro always avowed. In the late 1850s Pissarro had been a regular visitor to Corot's studio, and he declared himself a 'pupil of Corot' when first submitting works to the Paris Salon exhibitions. Corot's *Turn in the road*, c. 1868–70 (p. 127), is a perfect example of the manner in which, as art historian Gary Tinterow has noted, 'Corot, at the very end of his life, dabbled with the blond palette and motifs of modern life that had come to characterize the New Painting'.³ In his 1876 treatise *La Nouvelle Peinture*, Edmond Duranty had declared that 'the roots of the new painting lie also in the work of the great Corot'.⁴ And art historian Terence Maloon has analysed the manner in which 'Corot initiated Pissarro into a means of painting based on carefully differentiated, delicately harmonised intervals of tone', and consequently

Pissarro became the most direct conduit between Corot's method of plein-air painting and the method of the Impressionists. In principle, these were one and the same thing – a way of 'painting in masses' and seeking to record an instantaneous effect.⁵

Gauguin was a young stockbroker and ex-merchant marine and French naval officer whose interest in art first developed through family connections with the financier Gustave Arosa, who had an art collection that included works by Corot, Jean-François Millet and Pissarro. In 1873, Gauguin began to paint, with little formal instruction, and in 1874 his Danish wife Mette's sister married the Norwegian Impressionist painter Frits Thaulow, further cementing the family's artistic interests. A precocious young man, Gauguin ambitiously submitted a landscape painting to the 1876 Salon, where it was not only accepted but also



LEFT TO RIGHT:
Paul Gauguin *The toilette* 1882 Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg
Paul Gauguin *Emil Gauguin* (1874–1955), *the artist's son* c. 1877–78 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

elicited enthusiasm from the critic Charles Yriarte, who noted that 'M. Paul Gauguin, who I believe is showing for the first time, is very promising'.⁶ Gauguin had been a successful businessman prior to the collapse of France's stock market in 1882, and was equally precocious when it came to collecting contemporary art. He already owned two paintings and a painted fan by Pissarro (whom he had met through Arosa), and had agreed to lend these to the fourth Impressionist group exhibition in April 1879 when, with only a week to go before the show's opening, Pissarro and Edgar Degas asked Gauguin to exhibit something himself.⁷ Gauguin submitted a marble bust of his son Emil (*Emil Gauguin* [1874–1955], *the artist's son*, c. 1877–78, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, above right), though too late for it to be included in the exhibition catalogue. (In 1877–78 Gauguin's landlord, the sculptor Paul Bouillot, had instructed his tenant in the techniques of marble carving.⁸) Henceforth, Gauguin began socialising with all of the Impressionists at their regular haunt, the Café de la Nouvelle-Athènes in the Place Pigalle. Encouraged by their friendship and support, Gauguin contributed paintings and sculptures to the final four Impressionist group exhibitions in Paris, in 1880, 1881, 1882 and 1886. While he was still flush with money – from 1879 until 1883, when he lost his stockbroking job – Gauguin acquired paintings by his new friends Édouard Manet, Armand Guillaumin and Paul Cézanne, as well as exchanging works with Degas and Mary Cassatt.⁹

Meanwhile, in July 1879, Gauguin purchased another Pissarro painting. He would eventually own eleven canvases by Pissarro, as well as the painted fan exhibited in April of that year, in addition to a collection of Pissarro's etchings.¹⁰ There is no doubt that Gauguin started out as Pissarro's firm patron before his relationship with the older artist morphed into that of pupil and master. In the summer of 1879, Gauguin visited Pissarro in Pontoise for the first time, painting alongside him *en plein air*.¹¹ Their close friendship developed from this point onwards. Merete Bodelsen has documented how in contemporaneous correspondence, Gauguin's manner of addressing the older Impressionist changed from 'Mon cher Monsieur Pissarro' in the spring of 1879, to the more intimate 'Mon cher Pissarro' at the end of July.¹² Pissarro had lived in Pontoise, a sizeable rural town roughly thirty kilometres north-west of Paris, since 1866, and was familiar with the area's best painting locales. Not surprisingly, three views painted in Pontoise featured among the first paintings Gauguin exhibited with the Impressionists, at their fifth group exhibition in 1880.

Pissarro himself had first met Cézanne in 1861, when the latter, who was nine years younger, was still at art school. It was to be several years before a meaningful friendship developed between the two, cemented in part by their shared sense of being outsiders – Pissarro as an immigrant from the West Indies, and Cézanne a country lad from Aix-en-Provence, in

PREVIOUS: **Camille Pissarro** *Pontoise, the road to Gisors in winter* 1873 (detail)

the south of France, who was mocked at art school for his heavy Provençal accent. Despite occasional residencies in Paris and Louveciennes, Pontoise was to be Pissarro’s primary base for close to twenty years, and from the 1860s through to the early 1880s he painted some 300 views of the town’s centre and what he called his ‘coins’, or favourite corners of its less densely populated outskirts, creating what Pissarro historian Richard Brettell has called ‘probably the most sustained portrait of a place painted by any French landscape painter in the nineteenth century’.¹³ Many of these views balanced the different textures brought to a painting’s surface by palette knife or brush, at times looking back to the silvery sparkle of Corot’s Fontainebleau works, as in *Pontoise, the road to Gisors in winter*, 1873 (p. 128); or else saturating the composition with ‘taches’ of lush colour, which are used to great effect in *Sunlight on the road, Pontoise*, 1874 (p. 129), to capture shimmering water and dappled sunlight playing over earth and grass alike.¹⁴ Art historian Gülru Çakmak has analysed ‘the tension between three-dimensional illusion and the two-dimensional flatness of the surface’ in the latter painting, ‘which bears the marks of distinct brushstrokes that attract attention to the material qualities of the painting’.¹⁵

Debate around the competing claims of representation and compositional abstraction in landscape painting fascinated both Pissarro and Cézanne, who from late 1872 until mid 1874 moved to Auvers-sur-Oise, just under ninety minutes’ walk away from Pontoise, in order to work more closely with his elder friend and mentor. Cézanne lived in Pontoise itself from May to October 1881, and returned there again the following summer, painting out-of-doors alongside Pissarro. Cézanne’s *Turn in the road*, c. 1881 (p. 130), was painted during this time of direct dialogue between the two artists. Taking a subject that was dear to both Corot and Pissarro, Cézanne here made it distinctly his own. As Joachim Pissarro (Camille Pissarro’s great-grandson) has noted, in such depictions of seemingly ungainly pockets of the Pontoise landscape, both Cézanne and Pissarro

seem to be set on revealing, through their visual perception and their painting, the awkwardness of the

particular spot they decided to grapple with. Despite the ordinariness (to a local’s vantage point) of the landscape that surrounded them, there is almost nothing ordinary about the way they painted it: the *otherness* of the land they saw came through in every square inch of the paintings they produced there ... Cézanne and Pissarro decided to paint nature together as they retained and cultivated their mutual *otherness* toward each other.¹⁶

While aware that he himself was the mentor in this situation, Pissarro awarded the aesthetic prize to Cézanne at this time, writing to the influential art critic Joris-Karl Huysmans:

How is it that you have not said a word about Cézanne? There is not a single one of us who doesn’t regard him as one of the most astonishing and curious personalities of our era and he has had an enormous influence on modern art.¹⁷

The young Gauguin was fascinated by the creative discussions he witnessed between Pissarro and Cézanne at this time, writing somewhat facetiously to Pissarro in 1881:

Has Mr. Césanne [sic] found the exact *formula* for his work that is accepted by everyone? If he has found the recipe to compress the extravagant expression of all his feelings in a single method, please try to have him talk.¹⁸

While he was still working as a stockbroker in 1882, Gauguin frequently travelled to Pontoise on Sundays, to visit Pissarro and paint his own views of the town that offered these Impressionists so many ‘corners of creation’ that could be ‘viewed through a temperament’, to paraphrase critic Émile Zola’s famous definition of a work of art coined in 1866. His *Entrance to the Village of Osny*, 1882–83 (p. 131), a complex depiction of a hamlet some fifty minutes’ walk from Pontoise, was probably painted during one of these weekend visits. Its intricately balanced layers of observed landscape, cityscape and highly visible coloured brushstrokes woven together like coloured threads in a



Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot *Turn in the road* c. 1868–70



Camille Pissarro *Pontoise, the road to Gisors in winter* 1873



Camille Pissarro *Sunlight on the road, Pontoise* 1874

tapestry draw from the work of both his colleagues. *Entrance to the Village of Osny* remained with Pissarro after it was painted, although whether this was a gift from his pupil Gauguin or simply an oversight is open to debate.¹⁹ Pissarro himself had relocated with his family to Osny by late 1882. He lamented to Claude Monet in September 1882 that:

I am financially embarrassed. I am going to have to leave Pontoise, with great regret, being unable to find another house that is reasonably situated, and affordable. This is a big regret, since Pontoise suits me in every way.²⁰

Pissarro was to move again, in April 1884, to another nearby town, Éragny-sur-Epte, where he would mostly reside until his death in 1903.

It was Gauguin's indebtedness to Pissarro that was to be most remarked upon by contemporary critics, and not always in a flattering manner. One critic called him a bad student who took all the wrong lessons from Pissarro.²¹ Another dubbed him a 'funereal Impressionist', a follower of 'false prophets' like Monet,

Alfred Sisley and Pissarro – 'deceivers who abuse our credulity'. This critic, Gonzague-Privat, also attacked Gauguin's mentor in the same review of the seventh group Impressionism exhibition, in 1882, declaring that Pissarro's canvases 'look like he bought Millet's glasses at the [Barbizon School painter's] estate sale. What a pity that he couldn't have also acquired his eyes and his talent!'²²

Pissarro's art moved into an entirely new phase in October 1885, when he met the young painters Georges Seurat and Paul Signac, who were intent on abandoning the wet-on-wet application of harmonious tones favoured by Impressionism in favour of placing strong, opposing blocks of colour side by side. In November 1886, Pissarro informed his art dealer that 'It was M. Seurat, an artist of great value, who was the first to have the idea and to apply the scientific theory after thorough study'.²³ What this new technique, which came to be known as Divisionism or Neo-Impressionism, involved, was the utilisation of scientific theories of colour and optics, based on the writings of chemist Michel Eugène Chevreul, and the American physicist Ogden Rood, who explored the effect

that takes place when different colours are placed side by side in lines or dots, and then viewed at such a distance that the blending is more or less accomplished in the eye of the beholder ... the tints mix on the retina and produce new colours.²⁴

Pissarro adopted this new method of painting with gusto, creating, as his *Spring pasture*, 1889 (p. 136), demonstrates, works that entranced the eye with shimmering brushwork and a vivid new palette. The volte-face in his artistic practice after 1886 was so complete that Pissarro scholar Christopher Becker has pointed out that: 'If one compares Pissarro's Neo-Impressionist works from the 1880s with the earlier landscapes from the 1870s, one might conclude that he had turned his back on nature'.²⁵ And indeed, Pissarro worked less directly before nature in this period, applying Seurat's new colour theories to paintings completed principally in his studio.

Paul Signac, another follower of Seurat, was a keen sailor who owned more than thirty different boats during his lifetime.²⁶ He was drawn repeatedly to the French coast, where he applied the Neo-Impressionist

technique to capture startling stretches of iridescent water. By the end of the decade, when Signac painted his dazzlingly luminous *Port of Saint-Cast*, 1890 (p. 137), his art had taken on a political edge. In an article titled 'Impressionnistes et révolutionnaires', published by the anarchist journal *La Révolte* in 1891, Signac argued that the Neo-Impressionists' radical colour theories supported anarchy by struggling against convention and challenging the prevailing social order.²⁷

Pissarro's swift adoption of Neo-Impressionism's methods of Divisionist painting came at a considerable personal cost. His decision to invite his son Lucien, as well as Seurat and Signac, to exhibit Neo-Impressionist works with him in the eighth and last group Impressionist exhibition in 1886 led Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Sisley, Gustave Caillebotte and Monet to boycott the show and damaged Pissarro's friendship with Monet and Degas. It also led to the rupture of his friendship with Gauguin, who could not follow his old mentor down this new path, and whose vanity was doubtless stung by the prominent critic Félix Fénéon's summation that his contributions to the 1886 exhibition represented 'Impressionism as it



Paul Cézanne *Turn in the road* c. 1881



Paul Gauguin *Entrance to the village of Osny* 1882-83

was translated in previous exhibitions’, while Pissarro, Seurat and Signac were ‘innovators’.²⁸

‘Gauguin was wrong to rail against Seurat, Signac, – and consequently, against me’, Pissarro wrote to his son Lucien the following year:

There is now little possibility of our coming to an agreement. Besides, we have taken our stand, we shall exhibit alone, struggle alone, for I do not believe those gentlemen will adhere very firmly to the position of scientific impressionism.²⁹

‘Hang Pissarro’, Gauguin told Émile Bernard in September 1890, ‘when we are in Tahiti I shall defy Pissarro and his associates’. In March 1892 Gauguin wrote from Tahiti to his wife:

You tell me that I am wrong to remain far away from the artistic centre. No, I am right ... because I am never sidetracked by others, and do what is in me ... You see what has happened to Pissarro, owing to his always wanting to be in the vanguard, abreast of everything; he has lost his every atom of personality, and his whole art lacks unity. He has always followed the movement from Courbet and Millet up to these petty chemical persons who pile up little dots.³⁰

These cracks in the Impressionist fraternity were still in the future when Vincent van Gogh arrived in Paris in February 1886, his aesthetic still guided principally by seventeenth-century Dutch Old Masters and French landscape painters of the Barbizon School. His brother, Theo, an art dealer in Paris, had been urging him for some time to introduce more light and colour into his work, and throughout 1886 and 1887, painting *en plein air* in the outskirts of Paris, Van Gogh achieved this. A young Émile Bernard first met Van Gogh around October 1886, when he felt that the Dutch artist’s work was ‘still seen through a heavy, hazy fog of Northern Europe’.³¹ Painting out-of-doors with both Bernard and Signac now led Van Gogh to believe that he might himself become an Impressionist painter. Signac recalled how: ‘We painted on the river banks ... Van Gogh, shadowing me, shouted and gesticulated, brandishing his large, freshly painted

size 30 canvas: and he polychromed himself and passers-by’.³²

In late October 1887, Van Gogh told his sister Willemien: ‘When I painted landscape in Asnières this summer I saw more colour in it than before’.³³ Earlier that year Theo had written to another of their sisters, Lies, of how Vincent had finally embraced sunlight: ‘His paintings are becoming lighter and he is trying very hard to put more sunlight into them’.³⁴ Van Gogh scholar Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov has noted cogently, however, that

with Vincent the fundamental difference between himself and other Impressionists (including the Divisionist renegades) was his relative resistance to the classic Impressionist interest in atmospheric effect and a corresponding greater emphasis on the tactile surfaces of the objects depicted.³⁵

In Paris in 1886, Van Gogh undoubtedly visited the eighth group Impressionist exhibition, with its great room of the new and controversial Divisionist paintings, as well as the solo exhibition that Monet held with the dealer Georges Petit. Van Gogh wrote to his English artist friend Horace Mann Livens in September or October 1886: ‘In Antwerp I did not even know what the Impressionists were, now I have seen them and though not being one of the club, yet I have much admired certain Impressionist pictures’.³⁶ While not feeling at that stage that he had gained entry to their club, Van Gogh certainly went out of his way to be noticed by his new Impressionist mentors. Lucien Pissarro recalled a lively encounter between himself, his father Camille Pissarro and Van Gogh:

One day my father and I happened to meet him along the rue Lepic. He was returning from Asnières carrying some canvases based upon motifs found there. He was wearing clothes of blue, the garment of a zinc-worker. He insisted upon showing his studies to my father, arranging them side by side along a wall in the street, to the amazement of those passing by.³⁷

In February 1888 Van Gogh moved to the south of France where in a fast burn – plagued by mental



Camille Pissarro *Morning sunlight on the snow, Éragny-sur-Epte* 1895

health issues and a series of quarrels with Gauguin, whom he had mistakenly thought to be a kindred soul – he created the great suite of brightly coloured and thickly painted canvases with which he is today synonymous. Van Gogh told Gauguin that his aim in these works was ‘a suggestive coloration of poetical ideas’.³⁸ After a period in a mental asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, Van Gogh returned north in May 1890, moving to the village of Auvers-sur-Oise, where he famously made more than seventy paintings in as many days, before his untimely death in July. There is a sense in which Van Gogh’s *Houses at Auvers*, 1890 (opposite), is a clear nod to the many views of Pontoise, Osny and Auvers painted previously by Pissarro, Cézanne and Gauguin, works with which Van Gogh became familiar after his move to Paris at the start of 1886. The painting’s chosen motif of a rural lane undulating past a thatched cottage towards a cluster of dwellings embedded in lush foliage – what Van Gogh called ‘houses in the greenery’ – speaks volumes in this regard.³⁹ However, Van Gogh was drawn to Auvers in his final days by earlier artistic yearnings. A special attraction was the fact that the Barbizon School painter Charles François Daubigny had made this village his home from 1860 until his death in 1878. Daubigny had regularly received Monet, Pissarro and Cézanne as guests in Auvers, and now, posthumously, his celebrated garden was to become a retreat for Van Gogh. In May 1890 he wrote:

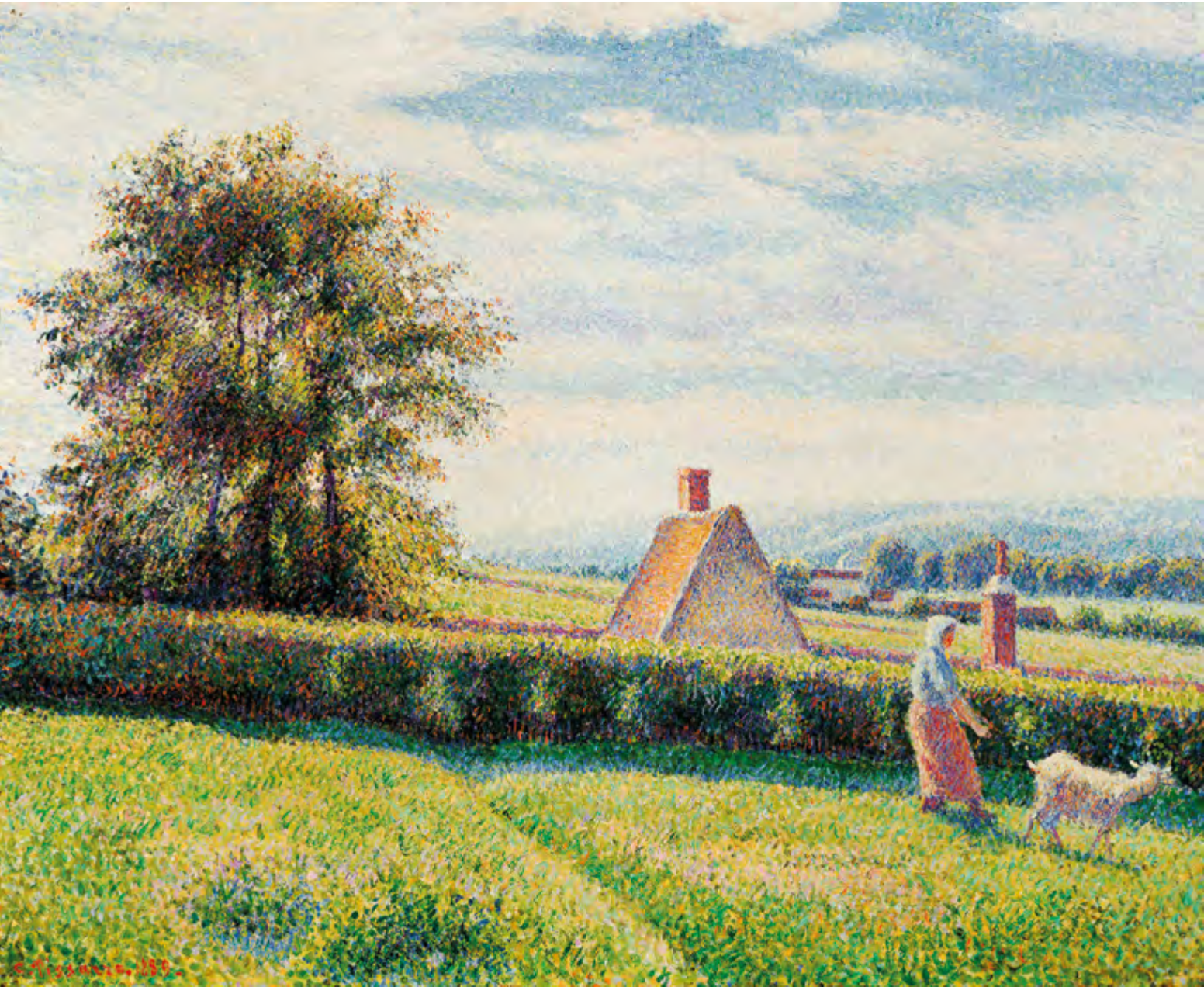
Here we’re far enough from Paris for it to be the real countryside but nevertheless, how changed since Daubigny. But not changed in an unpleasant way, there are many villas and various modern and middle-class dwellings, very jolly, sunny and covered with flowers ... no factories, but beautiful greenery in abundance and in good order.⁴⁰

In Van Gogh’s final days, his thoughts thus returned to his beloved Barbizon School masters.

Throughout this story Pissarro stands out as central to the emergence and later development of Impressionism – as a link back to the Barbizon School master Corot, sharing his personal memories of Corot’s instructions about plein-air painting with the younger Impressionist artists; as a mentor to both Cézanne and the stockbroker aspiring to be an artist, Gauguin; and as a mature artist willing, in his fifties, to embrace the new scientific theories of colour and optics proposed in the mid 1880s by Seurat.



Vincent van Gogh *Houses at Auvers* 1890



Camille Pissarro *Spring pasture* 1889



Paul Signac *Port of Saint-Cast* 1890



Paul Signac *View of the Seine at Herblay* 1889

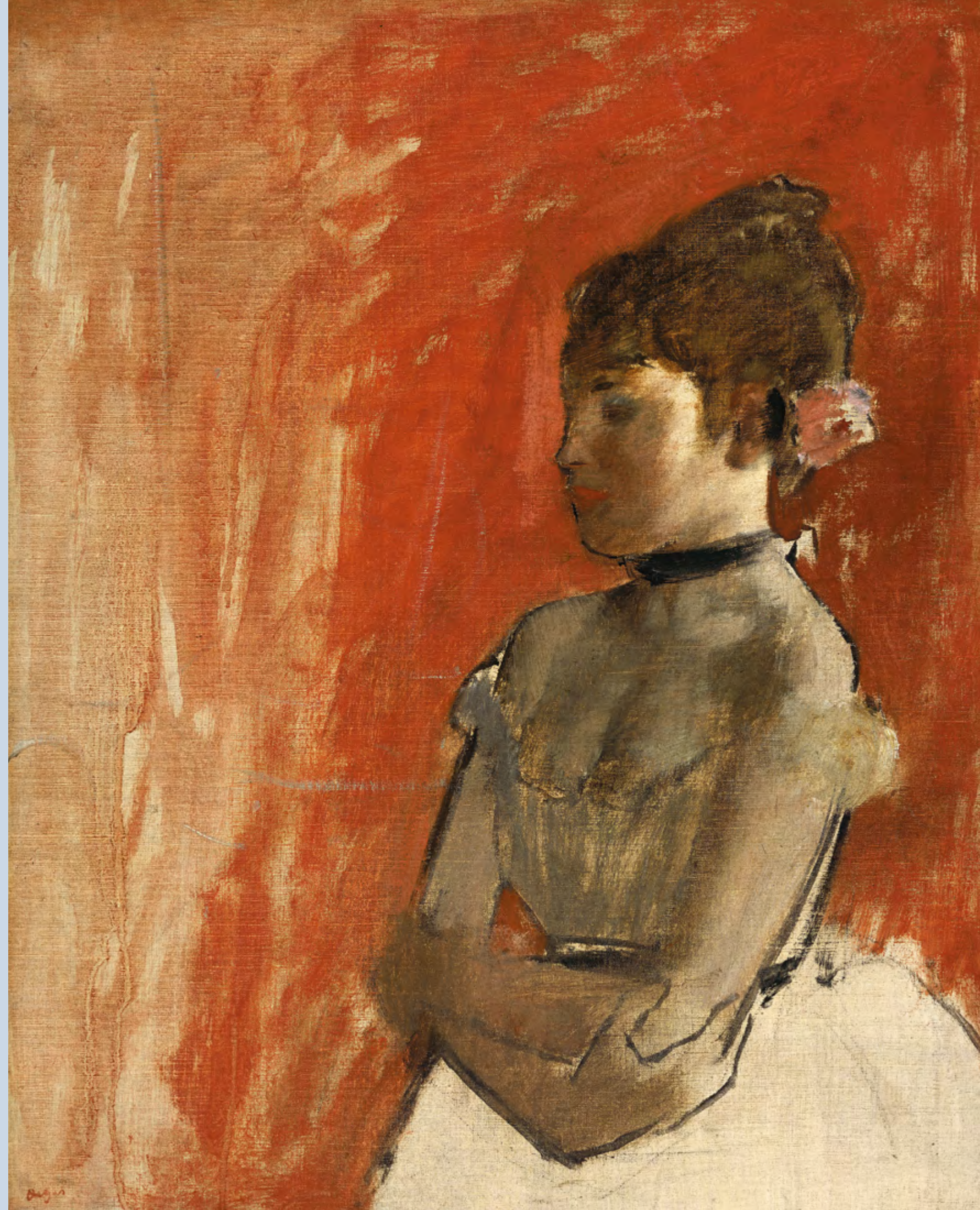
OPPOSITE: Camille Pissarro *Two peasant women in a meadow (Le Pré)* 1893
OVERLEAF: Camille Pissarro *Sunlight on the road, Pontoise* 1874 (detail)





8. SEEING AND BEING SEEN: IMPRESSIONISTS AND THE CITY

MIRANDA WALLACE



ALTHOUGH FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM IS seemingly dominated by landscapes and rural scenes, inventive visions of modern urban life played a triggering role in the development of the movement. They also provide essential perspectives of the Impressionist world view. Many painters of the 1860s and 1870s were inspired to capture the city and its inhabitants in images that reflected the radical vision of a new generation of artists. Their ‘new painting’, as literary critic and novelist Edmond Duranty described the work of Edgar Degas and his contemporaries in 1876, represented the world as it was, without artifice or mythification. These artists explicitly rejected the teachings of the École des Beaux-Arts, which had instructed generations of artists to adhere to a hierarchy of subjects – with historical subject matter at its apex – and adapt their vision to the Neoclassical aesthetic. The primary concern of this new band of painters was to ‘be of one’s time’¹ and to render the experience of modern life; whether the subject was rural or metropolitan was secondary. In 1863, Jules-Antoine Castagnary explained the scope of a ‘school of naturalism’, arguing:

The naturalist school reestablished the broken connections between man and nature. In a double effort – on country life, which it already interprets with such rustic power, and on city life, which still holds in reserve this [school’s] greatest triumphs – it strives to celebrate all the forms of the visible world.²

Just over a decade later, the first exhibition of the Société anonyme coopérative d’artistes peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs, etc. demonstrated the continuation of this double effort, with works that reflected both rural and urban milieux.

Édouard Manet never participated in the so-called ‘Impressionist exhibitions’ held between 1874 and 1886.³ He continued to enter his paintings into the official Salon, with intermittent success, until his death in 1883. On the occasions that his works were rejected, he found ways to exhibit them independently. Edgar Degas, on the other hand, not only participated but was also instrumental in organising these informal exhibitions. However, neither artist ever identified with the term Impressionism, nor did they privilege



Édouard Manet *The races* 1865–72

plein air painting; theirs was a primarily studio-based practice.

Degas understood art to result from a process of filtration and interpretation – *Homo additus naturae*, he incanted – ‘nature seen through a temperament’.⁴ He often returned to work on a canvas, sometimes years after beginning it. He declared:

no art was ever less spontaneous than mine. What I do is the result of reflection and study of the great masters; of inspiration, spontaneity, temperament ... I know nothing.⁵

Degas preferred the epithet ‘realist’, envisaging the Impressionist exhibitions as occasions for progressive but diverse artists to exhibit together. To balance exhibitors towards his own realist inclinations, he sought the involvement of like-minded artists, including Manet. Incensed by Manet’s refusal, Degas wrote to James Tissot:

Manet seems determined to keep aloof, he may well regret it ... The realist movement no longer needs to fight with the others. It already is, it exists, it must show itself as something distinct, there must be a *salon of realists*. Manet does not understand that. I definitely think he is more vain than intelligent.⁶

Despite such occasional contretemps, Degas and Manet were united in their focus on urban subjects and their refusal to bring the classicising eye of the academic painter to bear on the truths of everyday life – those aspects ‘captivating and repulsive at the same time, eccentric, and new’, as Stéphane Mallarmé put it.⁷ Whether they identified as realist, naturalist, impressionist or simply ‘independent’, it is clear that for these like-minded artists, the city provided a wealth of subject matter. As the locus of rapid modernisation, Paris was proof of constant change.

Born in Paris in 1832 and 1834, respectively, Manet and Degas witnessed the transformation of the

PREVIOUS: Edgar Degas *Ballet dancer with arms crossed* c. 1872 (detail)



Édouard Manet *Victorine Meurent* c. 1862

city under Baron Haussmann, whom Napoléon III placed in charge of the city's modernisation during the Second Empire (1852–70). Haussmann designed 'the biggest urban renewal project the world has ever seen'.⁸ Vast swathes of Paris were razed and new civic infrastructure installed to improve sanitation, and standardised apartment buildings were built on an industrial scale along the grand boulevards that reconfigured the city. A burgeoning urban middle class flourished in Paris's transformed metropolitan centre, encouraged by new opportunities for commerce and trade, while upwards of 350,000 displaced urban poor migrated to the city's fringes. Manet and Degas not only lived through the seventeen years of building works to achieve this change, but also witnessed further chaos and destruction during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 (in which both men volunteered) and subsequent violent suppression of the Paris Commune (1871). The streets of this tumultuous and transforming Paris inspired these artists, just as writers Émile Zola, Joris-Karl Huysmans, the Goncourt brothers and others turned Paris's laundresses, prostitutes, butchers, bakers and street vendors into literary characters.

The street singer was a character familiar in the streets of Paris at mid-century, one of the 'floating existences ... which drift about in the underworld of a great city'.⁹ They frequently appeared in the popular press, such as Honoré Daumier's *Types parisiens*, first published in the 1840s. Manet's *Street singer*, 1862 (opposite), is drawn from historical archetypes, but also directly reflects the artist's context. During an afternoon stroll near his Batignolles studio, Manet and his friend Antonin Proust encountered a woman holding a guitar leaving a 'louche cabaret'.¹⁰ Struck by her appearance, Manet enlisted his favourite model, Victorine Meurent (whose portrait is also in this exhibition, above), to recreate the scene.¹¹

In Manet's imposing rendition, the singer is caught on the canvas hovering at the entrance to a bar or cafe, clutching a guitar and some cherries held in a twist of yellow paper. We might expect a street performer to look more dishevelled or disreputable than the one we see here, given the often-impooverished conditions in which such *types parisiens* lived. Here she is fashionably dressed, wearing a wide-sleeved mantle or *paletot* trimmed in blue-black



Édouard Manet *Street singer* c. 1862



Édouard Manet *Music lesson* 1870

cord, as featured in fashion plates of early 1862.¹² In the gloomy interior glimpsed behind the singer's figure, vague shapes intimate seated figures, a streak of white paint becomes the long white apron of a waiter, and hats hang on pegs along the rear wall. There is a strongly theatrical aspect to the painting, declarative of the performance within the painter's studio; indeed, contemporary commentators perceived the work to harbour a rebellious act in its very brushstrokes. *Street Singer*'s areas of roughly brushed colour suggest a spontaneity of process, while the somewhat harsh illumination of the figure's face led to consternation among some conservative critics. In the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Paul Mantz wrote:

[I]n an abnormality we find deeply disturbing, the eyebrows lose their horizontal position and slide vertically down the nose, like two commas of shadow; there is nothing there except the crude conflict of the chalk whites with the black tones. The effect is pallid, hard, sinister.¹³

In a text written in 1867, Émile Zola recognised in *Street Singer* similar qualities to those Mantz decried, although his response to them was considerably more positive:

The whole work is a soft, blond gray, and it seemed to me that it analyses life with extreme simplicity, and exactitude. A picture like this, over and above



Edgar Degas *Racehorses at Longchamp* 1871, possibly reworked in 1874

the subject matter, is enhanced by its very austerity; one feels the keen search for truth, the *conscientious* effort of a man who would, above all, tell frankly what he sees.¹⁴

Both critics recognised *Street Singer* as embodying the abandonment of conventional rules of painting in order to pursue a more truthful vision of modern life. Ironically, in this pursuit Manet looked to the historic example of that great master of Spanish painting, 'the painter of painters' Diego Velázquez.¹⁵ Indeed, Manet's interest in Spanish painting was itself a reflection of the contemporary trend in French society for all things Spanish. In *Music lesson*, 1870 (opposite), a couple are seated in a dark interior with a richly

patterned Moorish rug at their feet. The guitar teacher was modelled by the poet, painter and noted hispanophile Zacharie Astruc, while the unidentified woman's black lace gown and hair ornament evoke traditional Spanish dress. These paintings demonstrate Manet's synthesis of historical references with his close observations of modern life.

Degas and Manet first met in the Spanish Galleries of the Louvre in 1861, and both artists saw merit in copying from Classical and Renaissance masters, even as they sought to capture the world around them. They did not regard the two efforts as mutually exclusive. 'Ah Giotto,' Degas wrote in his notebook, 'don't stop me from seeing Paris, and you, Paris, let me see Giotto'.¹⁶ Both artists were equally attracted to



LEFT TO RIGHT:
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres *Madame Moitessier* 1851 National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres *Comtesse d'Haussonville* 1845 The Frick Collection, New York

museums and to sites of modern urban spectacle: the opera, theatre, cabaret and the racetrack. Like many upper middle-class Parisians, they frequently went to the races, attending Longchamp racecourse in the Bois de Boulogne together on at least one occasion.

Horseracing may have been a bourgeois pastime for many, but it also provided Degas and Manet with an opportunity to explore the visual spectacle and multiple temporalities that defined the experience of modernity. In Manet's lithograph *The races*, 1865–72 (p. 147), horses gallop directly towards the viewer, intense clusters of squiggles indicating a throng of spectators on the right.¹⁷ Some figures rise above this crowd, training their field glasses on the charging horses; we sense the tension and excitement and anticipate the thunder of hooves passing close by.

Like Manet, Degas copied the horses of Théodore Géricault and Eugène Delacroix in the Louvre, but found more inspiration studying real horses at the Normandy property of his friend Paul Valpinçon. Valpinçon's family is shown seated in the carriage in the foreground of Degas' *At the races in the countryside*, 1869 (pp. 160–1). Despite the context, it is a calm scene – the carriage faces away from the action of the track, far in the background.¹⁸ In his slightly later *Race-horses at Longchamp*, 1871 (p. 151), no race is evident at

all; instead, we see mounted jockeys assembling in their colourful racing silks.

A similar sense of stillness is felt in Degas' portraits and figure studies of the 1860s and early 1870s, including the double-portrait *Edmondo and Thérèse Morbilli*, 1865 (opposite), and *Portrait of a man*, c. 1865–70 (p. 162). The former painting is one of a series of portraits Degas painted of his sister Thérèse, both before and after her 1863 marriage to her Neapolitan cousin. The sombre quality of this particular portrait, and in particular Thérèse's somewhat distraught expression, has been linked to the miscarriage which it is believed had recently befallen the couple.¹⁹ The portrait also reveals Degas' close study of the works of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. Certain features, including Thérèse's hairstyle, parted in the middle and pulled back to the nape of her neck; her expression, caught somewhere between astonishment and vacancy; and the hand she raises to her cheek, are reminiscent of some of Ingres's greatest portraits, such as *Comtesse d'Haussonville*, 1845 (The Frick Collection, New York, above right) and *Madame Moitessier*, 1851 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, above left). However, unlike in Ingres' works, in which contextual details, such as a discarded lace handkerchief or damask wallpaper, are rendered with reverential care, Degas'



Edgar Degas *Edmondo and Thérèse Morbilli* c. 1865



Mary Stevenson Cassatt *Ellen Mary in a white coat* c. 1896

background appears sketchy and provisional. Further, aspects of Thérèse's attire, such as the gold bracelet, are only perfunctorily represented, while the black lace on her cuff and shoulder disintegrates in a blur of brush marks. Prominent in the foreground, Edmondo literally overshadows his wife, but his clothing is painted with no greater degree of detail. His face, however, has a remarkable singularity.²⁰ The end result is a perfect demonstration of the skills with which critic Félix Fénéon credited Degas:

An art of realism, it does not proceed from direct vision: – no sooner does a being know itself observed than its native spontaneity no longer functions. Therefore Degas does not copy from nature: he accumulates a host of sketches of a single subject, whence he derives the irrefragable veracity he bestows on his work; never have pictures so little suggested the painful image of the 'model' who 'poses'.²¹

Degas completed a great number of sketches at the opera and theatre – those urban playgrounds that inspired his most acclaimed works. *Ballet dancer with arms crossed*, c. 1872 (p. 165), demonstrates his method of sketching contours and then building mass and form with colour and tone. The outline of the dancer's body is loosely inscribed with black paint, while patches of charcoal and ochre give substance to the shadowed musculature of her shoulders and décolletage. The background is an uneven scumbling of orange-red paint over unprimed canvas; the area of the skirt is left bare, creating an equivalence between the canvas itself and the material of the dancer's skirt. Found in Degas' studio after his death in 1917, the painting is evidently unfinished, yet captures the artist's most distinctive painterly traits. Partial focus, selective intensity of vision, unconventional perspective and figures caught unposed or in movement – these are some of the aspects that tether Degas' images to a specific instant in time, giving them their sense of realism.

Degas sometimes attended the opera, theatre, museum or racetrack with the American painter, horsewoman and keen observer of fashion Mary Cassatt. The standing figure in Degas' *Visit to a museum*, c. 1879–90 (p. 163), has been identified as



Mary Stevenson Cassatt *In the loge* 1878 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Cassatt, and the seated figure is perhaps her sister Lydia. Despite being an outsider by virtue of her nationality, Philadelphia-born Cassatt became an insider among the French Impressionists, and exhibited with the group in 1879, 1880, 1881 and 1886. She claimed that her first sighting of Degas' work – pastels displayed in a dealer's window in 1875 – 'was a turning point in my artistic life'.²² When she met Degas in 1877, it was the beginning of a friendship that lasted forty years. Cassatt's most celebrated works, such as *In the loge*, 1878 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, above), reveal her interest in the spectatorial back-and-forth – the seeing and being seen – that animated modern city life. Although Paris attracted Cassatt in her younger days, by the 1890s she progressively spent more time in the French countryside. *Ellen Mary in a white coat*, 1896 (opposite), depicts her two-year-old niece, dressed in a stiff white coat with fur trim and matching bonnet secured with a preposterously large white bow. She appears to be waiting patiently for an excursion. Her feet are barely sketched at all – a mere outline indicates where they 'should' be. All focus is on her face, which is an exquisite depiction of infant solemnity, and on her fashionable attire. Cassatt had a gift for painting likenesses and was often commissioned to paint portraits. Even once she achieved financial independence, she continued painting figures, but often using members

of her family as models. In this way – approaching her works as ‘pictures’ rather than portraits per se – Cassatt created her own vision of the people, places and moments particular to her.

Like Cassatt, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec took much inspiration from Degas’ new vision of Paris. Although he was only a child when the first Impressionist exhibitions were held, by 1882 Toulouse-Lautrec was an art student in Paris, training in the atelier of Léon Bonnat and simultaneously absorbing the lessons of the avant-garde painters of Montmartre. Lautrec met Carmen Gaudin, a professional artist’s model with distinctive red hair, in 1884 and painted her in many roles, including prostitute and laundress. In *Carmen Gaudin in the artist’s studio*, 1888 (p. 164), we meet her wary and direct gaze. Behind her, the studio is crowded with unframed canvases. The lessons of Lautrec’s classical training are evident in the naturalistic modelling of Gaudin’s clothing and face, and in the academic nude study glimpsed behind her. But Lautrec’s light palette of rosy browns and fresh greens reveals his adoption of the Impressionists’ experimentation with contrasting colours, while the gestural hatching of the brush suggests he was also learning from Degas’ example. Gaudin is unlike the caricatural depictions of cabaret and circus performers that dominate Lautrec’s works from c. 1890, belonging more to the ‘impressionist realism’ of Degas and Manet.

Born in Paris, Gustave Caillebotte was a vital and energetic member of the Impressionists who not only participated in but also financed many of their group exhibitions from 1876. Caillebotte’s most original paintings capture urban space, understood both physically and psychologically. The monumental painting *Man at his bath* (opposite), is one of only two painted nudes in Caillebotte’s oeuvre.²³ In this work, a man of youthful middle age has recently stepped out of a zinc bathtub and vigorously dries his pale, muscular body. It was painted in 1884, when Caillebotte and his brother were living in an apartment on the Boulevard Haussmann. It seems likely that the space depicted is a Parisian apartment; we might imagine noise rising from the street below, ‘the rumbling of cabs’, or ‘the hubbub of passersby’ coming through ‘the light deadened by window hangings, filtered by muslin curtains’.²⁴

A sense of anonymity surrounds the image: it depicts a ritual of utilitarian hygiene, not one of sensual comfort or luxury. Caillebotte’s *Man at his bath* seems oblivious to any possibility of being seen; nonetheless, he is exposed to our gaze. We might compare the figure to Degas’ female bathers (two examples of which Caillebotte owned). In *Nude woman standing, drying herself* (p. 159), and the related *After the bath III*, both 1891–92 (p. 158), we see a woman bending sideways, a towel at her side and her long dark hair tossed forwards over her head.²⁵ Likening the woman *au toilette* to ‘a cat licking herself’, Degas postulated:

The nude has always been represented in poses which presuppose an audience, but these women of mine are honest, simple folk, unconcerned by any other interests than those involved in their physical condition. It is as if you looked through a keyhole.²⁶

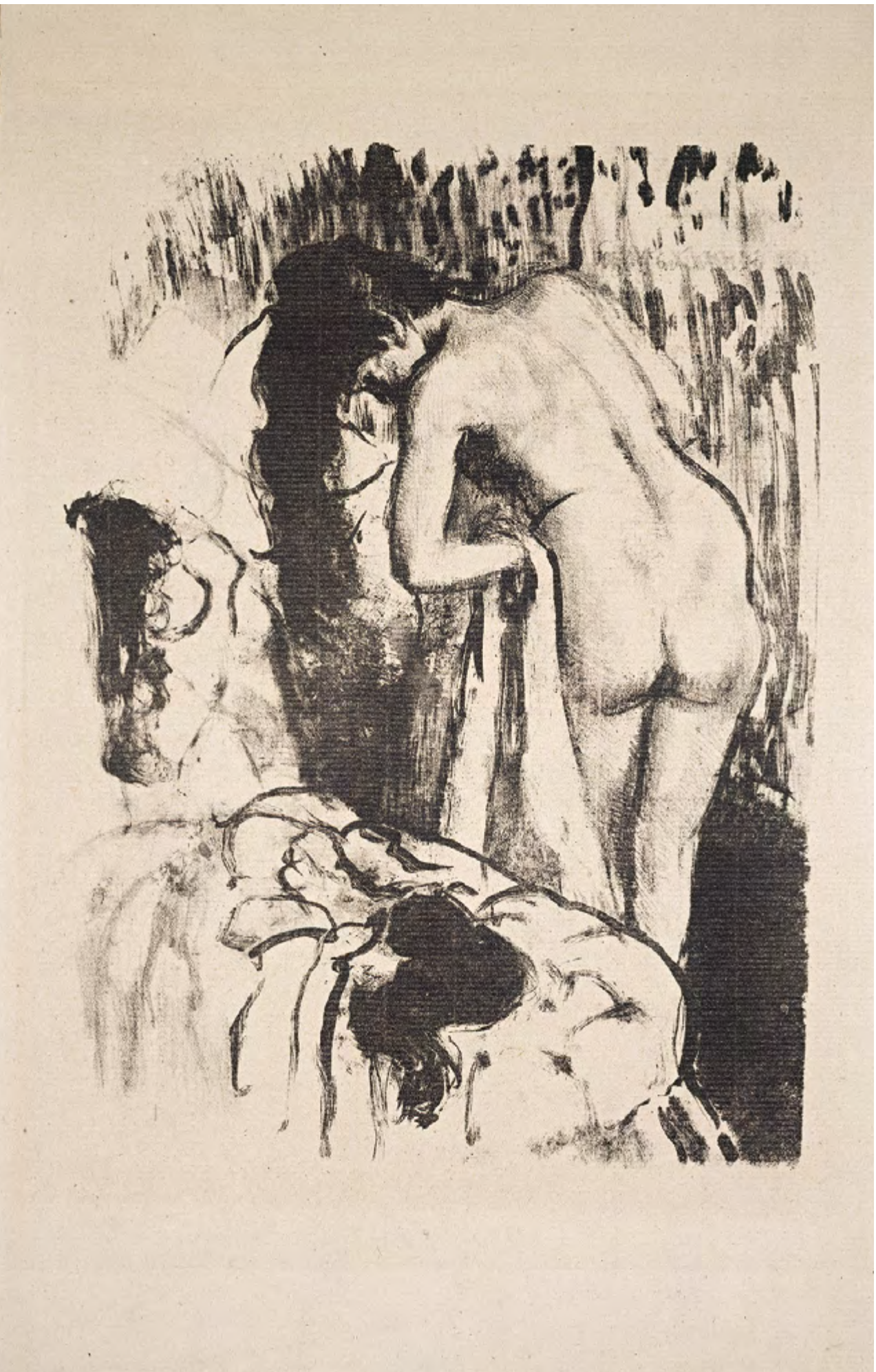
An unequal exchange of gazes goes with the territory of the urban Impressionist. The cityscape of late nineteenth-century Paris inspired many independently minded artists to seek new means for expressing their experience of its grand boulevards, unexpected perspectives and new social spaces. Degas, Manet, Cassatt, Caillebotte and, continuing their tradition, Toulouse-Lautrec, best captured this great city’s fleeting moments of appearance, attesting to its ability to transform and change.



Gustave Caillebotte *Man at his bath* 1884



ABOVE: Edgar Degas *After the bath III* 1891–92
 OPPOSITE: Edgar Degas *Nude woman standing, drying herself* 1891–92





Edgar Degas *At the races in the countryside* 1869



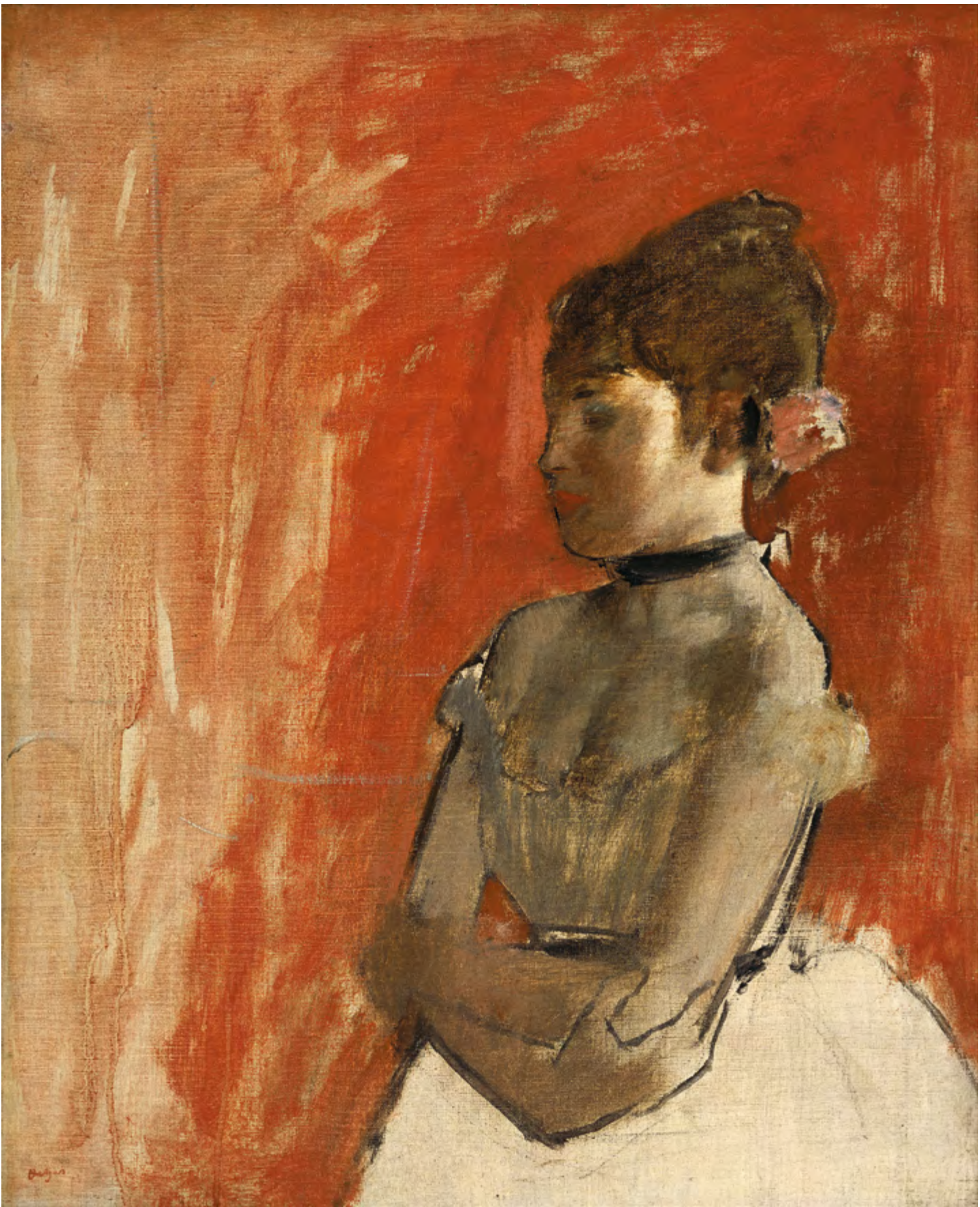
Edgar Degas *Portrait of a man* c. 1865–70



Edgar Degas *Visit to a museum* c. 1879–90



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *Carmen Gaudin in the artist's studio* 1888



ABOVE: Edgar Degas *Ballet dancer with arms crossed* c. 1872
OVERLEAF: Edgar Degas *Racehorses at Longchamp* 1871, possibly reworked in 1874 (detail)



9. IMPRESSIONIST PRINTMAKING: LE JOUR ET LA NUIT

CATHY LEAHY



Degas ... is no longer a friend, a man, an artist. He's a zinc or copper plate blackened with printer's ink and plate and man are flattened together by his printing press whose mechanism has swallowed him completely!¹

WITH THESE WORDS PENNED IN 1876, the engraver Marcellin Desboutin described his friend Edgar Degas' 'craze' for prints, which several years later would infect a small group of Degas' fellow artists and lead to a brilliant flowering of Impressionist printmaking. By May 1879, at the close of the fourth Impressionist exhibition, discussions were already underway between Degas, Félix Bracquemond, Mary Cassatt, Camille Pissarro and others about publishing a new journal of original etchings, to be titled *Le Jour et la nuit (Day and night)*. Intense activity continued in late 1879–80, with Degas leading the charge, encouraging his friends, sharing technical advice and even printing some of their plates. Details of the project remain uncertain, and for reasons not fully known the journal itself was never realised, yet the project inspired Cassatt, Pissarro and Degas to make a group of inventive etchings that are some of the most remarkable prints of the late nineteenth century. By combining different techniques and working their plates through multiple states, the artists created a new pictorial language for the print medium that was as complex and subtle as that used in their Impressionist painting, and equally responsive to conveying their new vision of the world.

On 16 May 1879 the novelist Ludovic Halévy noted in his diary that he had visited Degas and found him together with Cassatt, both of whom were 'most excited. Each one has, from the exhibition, 440 francs profit. They are thinking of starting a journal.'² Degas had met Cassatt by 1877 and invited her to show with the Impressionists, which she did for the first time in April–May 1879. By October that year Cassatt's father observed that his daughter 'is just now very much occupied in "eaux-fortes"'.³ Working in close collaboration with Degas and Pissarro, Cassatt experimented with printmaking techniques, such as soft-ground and aquatint, used in combination with various tools to achieve complex painterly effects. Degas sought advice



Edgar Degas *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Etruscan Gallery* 1879–80, 7th of 9 states

on these techniques from the experienced printmaker Bracquemond, whom he chided in (probably) late 1879: 'The [aquatint] grains are progressing satisfactorily, even without you (who should by rights be teaching us instead of leaving us to find our own way)'.⁴ Degas also shared information with Pissarro who lived outside Paris, in the village of Pontoise, one letter from early 1880 providing detailed instructions on the preparation of liquid aquatint:

This is the method. Take a very smooth plate (it is essential, you understand). Degrease it thoroughly with whitening. Previously you will have prepared a solution of resin in very concentrated alcohol. This liquid, poured after the manner of photographers when they pour collodian [sic] onto their glass plates (take care, as they do, to drain the plate well by inclining it) this liquid then evaporates and leaves the plate covered with a coating, more or less thick, of small particles of resin. In allowing it to bite you obtain a

network of lines, deeper or less deep, according as to whether you allowed it to bite more or less. To obtain equal hues this is necessary; to get less regular effects you can obtain them with a stump or with your finger or any other pressure on the paper which covers the soft ground.⁵

Understanding the aquatint process was key to the group's efforts to render pictorial tonal effects, such as shadows and reflections of light, in their etchings. The artists approached printmaking as painters, unconcerned by tradition and willing to combine media in unorthodox ways and use unconventional means to achieve the 'less regular effects' they desired. They worked their plates through multiple states (or stages of development), refining and varying effects and bringing numerous etchings to completion over the autumn and winter months of 1879–80. Degas printed some of these plates on his own press, and the discovery of 100 prints by Cassatt, including working proofs, and

PREVIOUS: Edgar Degas *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Etruscan Gallery* 1879–80, 2nd of 9 states (detail)



Edgar Degas *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Etruscan Gallery* 1879–80, 2nd of 9 states

thirty by Pissarro in Degas' studio after his death, underscores the collaborative nature of this enterprise.⁶ Despite all this activity, however, *Le Jour et la nuit* never appeared. While the group's inexperience in publishing and the poor economic climate may have been contributing factors, Cassatt's mother laid the blame squarely with Degas, who was known for his perfectionism and inability to complete work, writing to her son on 8 April 1880:

Degas who is the leader undertook to get up a journal of etchings and got them all to work for it so that Mary had no time for painting and as usual with Degas when the time arrived to appear, he wasn't ready—so that 'Le jour et la nuit' (the name of the publication) which might have been a great success has not yet appeared—Degas never is ready for anything—This time he has thrown away an excellent chance for all of them—⁷

Apart from the prints themselves and the correspondence between the artists, an anonymous article published in *Le Gaulois* on 24 January 1880 provides further details about *Le Jour et la nuit*.⁸ According

to this, the first issue was set to appear on 1 February 1880 and the journal would subsequently be issued irregularly and priced according to the number of prints it contained. It would consist solely of prints, accompanied by a brief note on the artists who, in addition to Degas, Pissarro and Cassatt, were listed as including Gustave Caillebotte, Jean-François Raffaëlli, Jean-Louis Forain, Braquemond and Henri Rouart. While Braquemond was involved in early discussions, and Caillebotte had initially agreed to fund the venture, of these other artists only Raffaëlli produced a print that can be definitively associated with the journal.⁹ His drypoint for the first issue was printed in an edition of fifty by the professional printer Salmon, as were single prints by Cassatt, Degas and Pissarro, all of which are included in this exhibition and discussed below.

Questions still remain about the planned format of the publication, although Douglas Druick and Peter Zeghers have argued cogently that two separate editions were probably intended: the first, a limited edition of original etchings for collectors and subscribers; and the second, a larger edition with photomechanical reproductions of these prints for an audience interested in prints and contemporary painting.¹⁰ Degas' letter to Pissarro in early 1880 supports this conclusion: 'With our deliveries of proofs *avant le lettre* we shall cover our expenses. That is what several collectors of engravings have told me.'¹¹ Degas' considerable interest in the new photomechanical processes of image reproduction in these years is also cited by Druick and Zeghers as evidence for this approach. By the late 1870s there was considerable public interest in prints, with exhibitions dedicated to 'black-and-white' (monochrome illustrations, prints and drawings), and illustrated periodicals promoting the art forms.¹² The etching revival had been in full swing in France since the 1860s, with many of Degas' peers, including Henri Fantin-Latour, Alphonse Legros, James Tissot, Édouard Manet and Desboutin, producing and selling original etchings. With its title that played upon 'black-and-white', *Le Jour et la nuit* was no doubt planned to take advantage of this new fashion for prints, allowing the artists to promote their art and hopefully profit from their new enterprise.¹³

The journal's title also evoked the play of light and subtleties of shadow that characterised the Impressionists' paintings – effects these artists now also sought to express in their prints. The etching *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: the Etruscan gallery*, 1879–80 (p. 171), which Degas completed and editioned for the journal, is a masterly exploration of the gloomy half-light of one of the Louvre's antiquities galleries. The print shows Cassatt and her sister Lydia studying an Etruscan sarcophagus in a large vitrine on which are cast complex reflections of light from windows opposite. This background setting was only added to the plate in the third state; the first two show the figures of the Cassatt sisters, which Degas had traced from an earlier pastel, against a blank background (opposite).¹⁴ The gallery's dusky light is evoked through the all-over application of two layers of aquatint dusted over softground, which Degas worked back into with his fingers, cloths and other tools. He worked the plate through six further states (to a total of nine), burnishing back areas of aquatint and adding myriad touches of drypoint and further aquatint to fine-tune the tonal register of the print. The tonal subtlety and play of light, shadows and reflections that is so remarkable in this etching typifies Degas' interest in the 1870s in exploring the effects of lighting in settings as diverse as the cafe-concert, brothel and museum.

The (at the time) quite new phenomenon of artificial light and its impact upon contemporary entertainments was also an interest shared by Mary Cassatt. She explored the theme in a major group of paintings, pastels and prints between 1879–82, in which she depicted her self-assured female subjects in brilliantly illuminated theatre boxes. The painting she had exhibited to much acclaim in the fourth Impressionist exhibition, *Woman in a pearl necklace in a loge*, 1879 (p. 178), which shows her sister in the compressed, mirrored space of the box, backlit by the dazzling theatre chandelier, served as the model for her etching for *Le Jour et la nuit*. Cassatt worked *In the Opera box no. 3*, 1879–80 (pp. 174–7), through seven states, superimposing layers of aquatint tone over softground to create the hazy atmosphere of the auditorium. She then used stop-out varnish in later states to define the balconies, and scraped back into the aquatint with burnishers



Edgar Degas *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Paintings Gallery* 1879–80, intermediate state between 15th and 16th states (of 20)



Mary Stevenson Cassatt *In the opera box (no. 3)* c. 1880, 3rd of 7 states



Mary Stevenson Cassatt *In the opera box (no. 3)* c. 1880, 4th of 7 states



Mary Stevenson Cassatt *In the opera box (no. 3)* c. 1880, 5th of 7 states



Mary Stevenson Cassatt *In the opera box (no. 3)* c. 1880, 7th of 7 states



LEFT TO RIGHT:
Mary Stevenson Cassatt *Woman with a pearl necklace in a loge* 1879 Philadelphia Museum of Art
Camille Pissarro *Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise* 1879 The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City

and brushes to create the glittering play of light across Lydia’s shoulders, hair and fan and the extraordinary up-lighting on her face. It is interesting to speculate about whether Degas and Cassatt intentionally paired their etched explorations of shadowy and brightly lit interiors in a further play on the journal’s title. Whether or not this was the case, Cassatt’s etching is a tour de force, with the seven states of the plate revealing how hard she worked to resolve the image. Its sparkling lighting effects, which almost obliterate the face of Lydia, and its complex spatial organisation with sweeping theatre balcony, answer the earlier call of critic Edmond Duranty to conceive expressive new environments, gestures and physiognomies with which to characterise the modern individual.¹⁵

Deliberately awkward perspectives and cropped elements were also an important feature of Degas’ art of this period and are evident in a second etching of Cassatt at the Louvre. While not intended for the first issue of *Le Jour et la nuit*, this print was made during the same period of intense experimentation and is one of Degas’ most complex and radical works. Rather than the almost square format of the Etruscan gallery print, *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The paintings*

gallery, 1879–80 (p. 173), has a narrow vertical format influenced by Japanese pillar prints, which were widely admired in France at the time. The two figures from the first etching (p. 172) reappear here but are reversed and spatially compressed into one silhouette by Degas’ positioning of Cassatt immediately behind her sister. This, and the varied patterned surfaces of the marble door jamb and wooden floors of the painting gallery, highlight the work’s consciously Japoniste nature. Degas worked the plate through at least twenty states, endlessly tinkering with details, altering and amending the etching’s textural, spatial and tonal qualities. His radical decision to widen the door jamb in the seventh state, so that it abruptly crops the seated figure, intensifies the print’s sense of immediacy, of presenting a casually observed glimpse of an everyday scene. The print was never editioned or sold, yet an early cataloguer of Degas’ prints knew of forty-four working proofs, including one extensively coloured with pastel.¹⁶ This major etching reveals the potential the print medium afforded Degas to transfer, rework, experiment with and vary an image ad infinitum, which the endlessly inventive and curious artist explored to the full.

In contrast to Degas and Cassatt, Pissarro, the only landscapist of the group, based his etching for the journal on his heavily textured painting *Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise*, 1879 (opposite). Pissarro retained the painting’s composition without alteration, and instead concentrated on translating its broken brushwork, unified surface texture and dappled light into the print medium. He used a smorgasbord of intaglio processes, manipulating them in such a way that his etching is the most painterly of all those made by the group. Pissarro used a brush and liftground aquatint solution to paint in the stippled undergrowth and tracery of trees over a fine, mid-grey aquatint base (p. 180). In the later states he developed the forms of background houses using the burnisher, introducing shimmering light, subtle shadows and softened contrasts by using much scraping and additional light aquatint (p. 181). The resulting luminous tones and flickering play of light across the plate re-create in black and white the colouristic and painterly effects of Pissarro’s paintings.

This translation of painterly innovations into graphic form is also seen in the artists’ use of different states of the plate to show the different moods of a subject – in much the same way the Impressionists’ painted series using a single motif. The first state of Pissarro’s print, for example, appears as a winter scene, the trees’ bare limbs ghost-like against misty veils of aquatint (p. 180). In the final state, however, the flickering articulation of luxuriant undergrowth and foliage gives an impression of the dappled light and shade of a high summer’s day (p. 182). The artists also included multiple states of their prints in their exhibitions. Pissarro exhibited four of the six states of *Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise* in the fifth Impressionist exhibition in April 1880, presenting the works on a yellow backing sheet in a single purple frame. In the same exhibition, Cassatt included the first and fifth states of *In the Opera box no. 3* together with eight other etchings; and the catalogue listed ‘Essais et états de planche’ (trials and states of plates) as part of Degas’ contribution. While this exhibition marked the only public appearance of *Le Jour et la nuit*, these works remain some of the most exceptional and experimental prints of the period.



Camille Pissarro *Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise* 1879, 1st of 6 states



Camille Pissarro *Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise* 1879, 5th of 6 states



Camille Pissarro *Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise* 1879, 6th of 6 states



Camille Pissarro *Landscape panorama (Paysage en long)* 1879, 1st of 3 states



Camille Pissarro *Landscape panorama (Paysage en long)* 1879, 3rd of 3 states

10. IMMEDIACY AND INFINITY: MONET IN SITU

KATIE HANSON

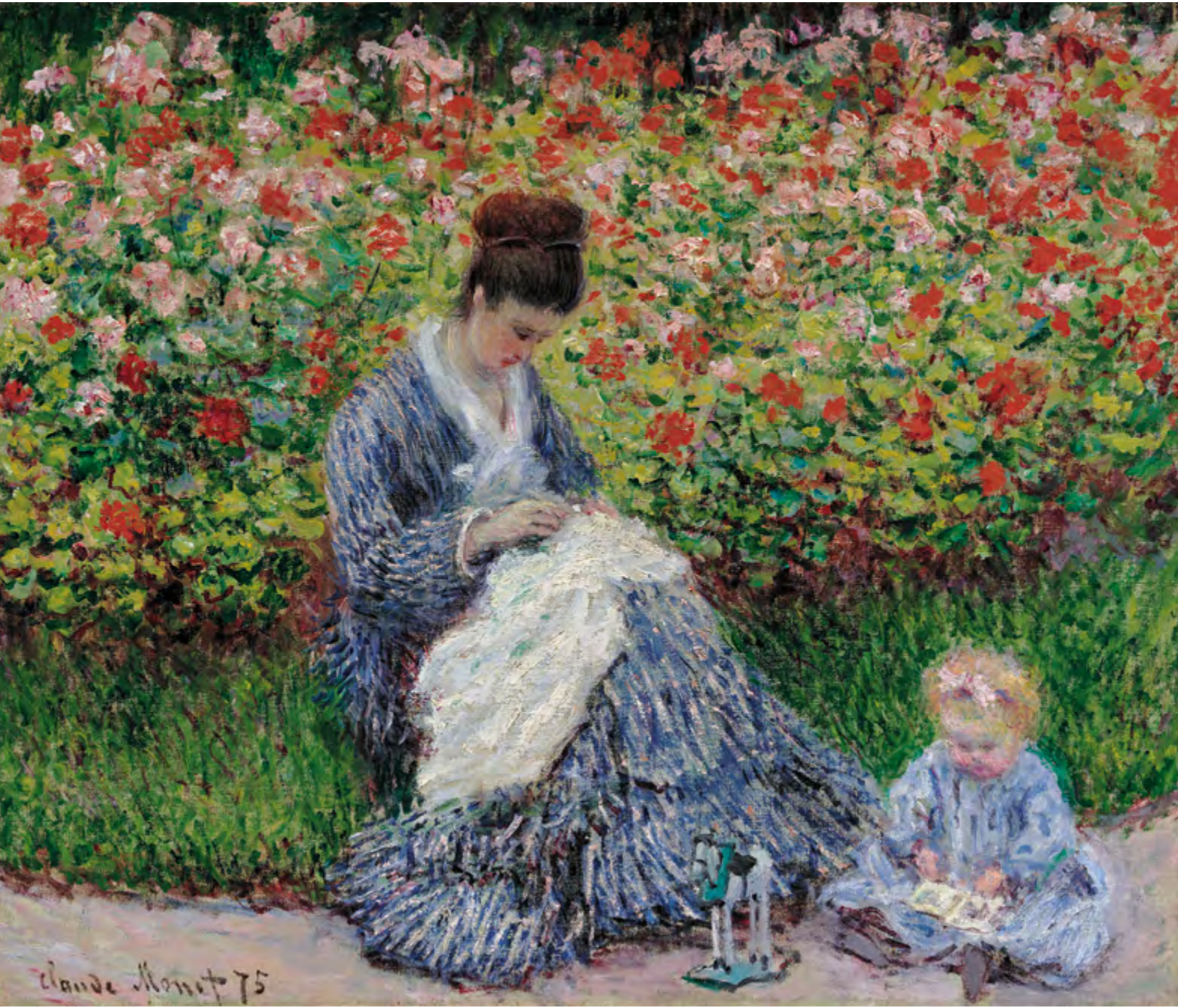


IN 1909, WHEN MONET EXHIBITED FORTY-eight of his *Water lilies*, including the MFA's 1905 canvas (p. 207), he told journalist Roger Marx:

I set up my easel in front of this body of water that adds a pleasant freshness to my garden. Its circumference is less than 200 meters. Looking at it, you thought of infinity; you were able to discern in it, as in a microcosm, the presence of the elements and the instability of a universe that changes constantly under our very eyes.¹

Monet's paintings are specific, very much about his having been there and experienced the light, the atmosphere – the *'enveloppe'*, as he called it – of a particular place. But they are also suggestive: able to evoke in the viewer resonances with her or his own experiences of gardens, fields, coasts or watery surfaces, beyond a location perhaps specified in the work's title. Looking at groups of works from four places Monet worked – representing both home (Argenteuil and Giverny) and coastal getaways (Normandy and Mediterranean coastlines) – reveals the immediacy of Monet's painterly practice, his specificity of place, in balance with the suggestion of something more universal that he acknowledged such work could convey.

Monet's surroundings were dear to him. 'All the money I earn goes into my garden,' he confessed in 1898.² His gardens were an abiding commitment and a regular motif in his paintings. Decades earlier, the yard at Argenteuil featured in myriad compositions, including *Camille Monet and a child in the artist's garden in Argenteuil*, 1875 (opposite). It was such a staple of his art that the Argenteuil garden has been mapped by scholars to define the specific layout of the flowerbeds, and placement of the figures within that very particular place.³ But, in many instances, including in the MFA's 1875 canvas, the view is truncated and refuses such specificity of locale for the painting's viewer. Monet wrote rather little about Argenteuil, but did describe it in 1876 as a place 'where I have been able to live modestly and work so well'.⁴ The floral profusion behind Camille hints at a somewhat less modest lifestyle than the painter claimed.

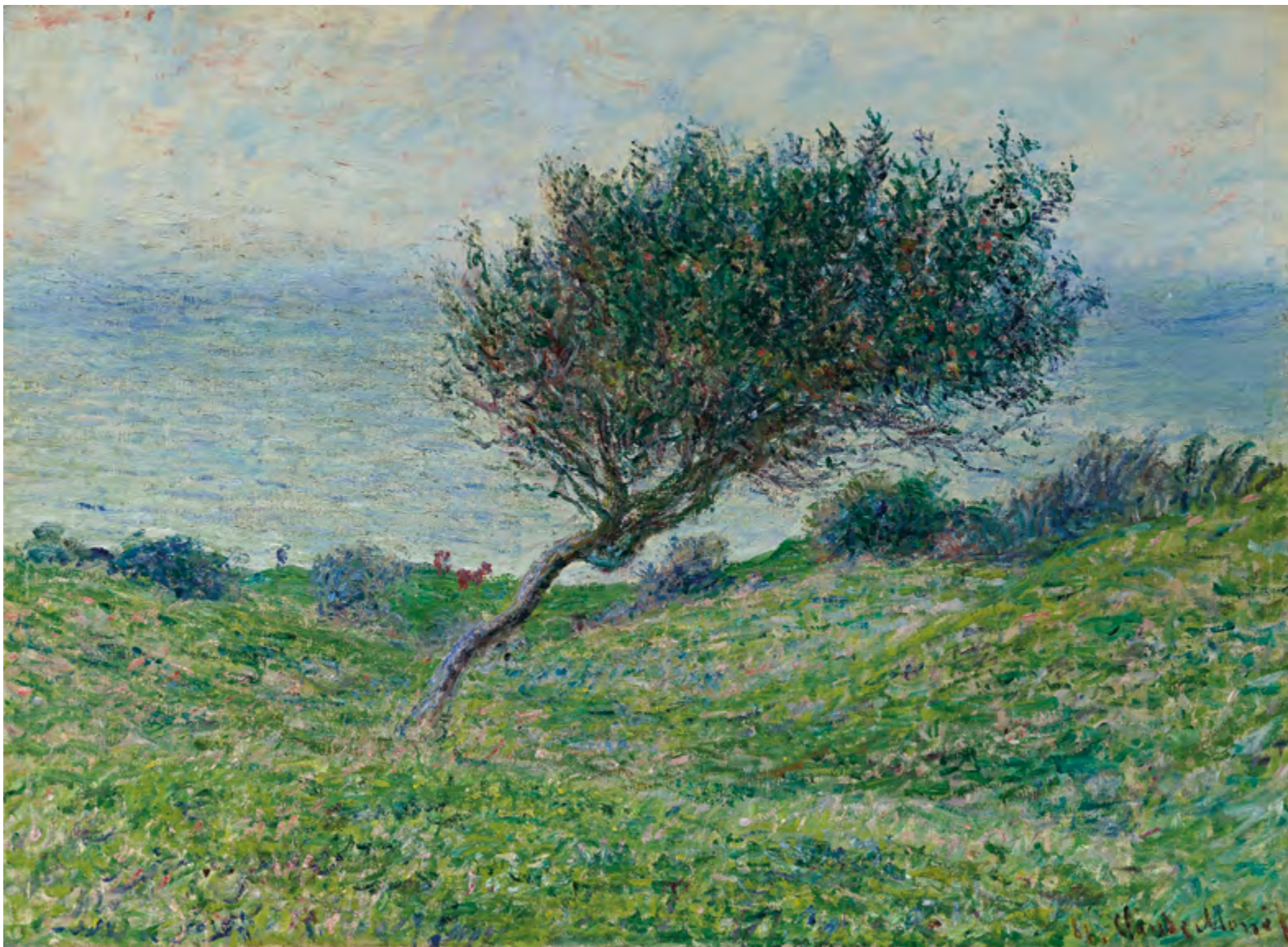


Claude Monet *Camille Monet and a child in the artist's garden in Argenteuil* 1875

Winter's impact on Argenteuil also fascinated Monet and has likewise been situated within meteorological records to pinpoint the harshest weather, the greatest snowfall, to make real and specific and temporal his portrayal of snow. The rustic lane receding toward a cluster of buildings, the church's steeple nestled among them (p. 196) and the suburban boulevard adjacent to the new railway connecting to the capital (p. 197): Monet focused on both aspects of Argenteuil in winter, and in both cases figures clad in black huddle beneath umbrellas to protect themselves from the falling snow. Their dark garb and winter's white cloak mask distinctive features of people and setting, lending both an element of anonymity. These snowy townscapes have a generalising effect – calling attention to

the quotidian beauty of mundane surroundings. They are both specific, in showing a particular roadway, and generally relatable.

Seeking lower rent and greater rusticity, Monet moved from suburban Argenteuil to Vétheuil, and briefly Poissy, before settling in Giverny in 1883, where he would live until his death in 1926. He had mixed emotions about the place at first, writing, 'I am in raptures, Giverny is a splendid region for me',⁵ but also: 'I think I did something stupid by setting up so far away. I'm desperate about it.'⁶ Soon he had set up his boatshed, planted his garden and undertook exploring his surroundings. 'The region is superb', he assured his dealer Paul Durand-Ruel; 'it always takes a certain amount of time to familiarize oneself with a



Claude Monet *Seacoast at Trouville* 1881

new area'.⁷ Swiss artist Pierre Georges Jeannot visited and described Monet's habit: 'He would stop before the most dissimilar scenes, admiring each and making me aware of how splendid and unexpected nature is'.⁸ Monet did indeed find unusual features of the landscape, like the hollow bursting with poppies (p. 202), but also sustained variety in a neighbouring field, unremarkable in its flat topography, verdant vegetation and boundary lined with trees – all common features of rural fields in France (pp. 195, 203).

Despite an avowed distaste for city life, Monet insisted on his origins: 'I'm a Parisian. They've always had me born in Le Havre. I was born in Paris.'⁹ It was not, however, Paris that drew him back for motifs time and again, but rather the Normandy coast near Le Havre where he spent his childhood:

I felt the need to enlarge my field of observation and refresh my vision before new sights, to detach myself momentarily from the region where I lived,

and to undertake excursions for weeks at a time to Normandy, Brittany, and elsewhere. It was a period of relaxation and rejuvenation for me. I left without a preconceived itinerary, without a program outlined in advance. I would stop wherever I found nature inviting. Inspiring motifs could be chanced upon.¹⁰

While he sometimes painted distinctive geological formations along the coast, more often Monet's compositions focus on unassuming features, such as the country road turning amidst grassy hillocks (opposite), or the wisp of a tree pulled by the wind (above). Even the seemingly distinctive fisherman's cottage (pp. 198–9) is a recurring motif – across the coastline and across Monet's oeuvre from 1867 to 1897.

'The countryside is very beautiful, and I am very sorry I did not come here earlier', Monet wrote from Pourville. 'One could not be any closer to the sea than I am, on the shingle itself, and the waves beat at the



Claude Monet *Road at La Cavée, Pourville* 1882

foot of the house.'¹¹ Two months later, in April 1882, he confessed:

I have stayed so long on certain canvases that I no longer know what to think of them, and become decidedly more and more difficult; nothing satisfies me, and then nature is changing greatly in this moment.¹²

He admired the scenery and was fraught with doubt; he sought to portray the beauty of nature, in all its changeability, a process that unfolded over time. Capturing the seemingly momentary was, of course, an act of duration.

When Monet first exhibited these works in 1883, critic (and friend) Gustave Geffroy noted his achievement, describing the MFA's Pourville canvas (above) as

a painting composed of three straight lines, two leafy, grassy slopes whose bases intersect with the sea in the background – or in *Station of a Customs Officer* [similar

to *Fisherman's cottage on the cliffs at Varengeville*, 1882, pp. 198–9], where the huge cliff is foreshortened and the sea is seen from above; these are effects that have never before been attempted. Everywhere one will admire the color blended with light in the countryside of Normandy, prairies with dense grasses; in the summits of cliffs dried by the wind and burnt by the sun.¹³

Another proclaimed:

Everywhere this warm and vibrant character has harmonized with the booming sounds, the evasive lines, the moving effects of the prairies, the waves, and the skies. 'He paints from afar,' one of his colleagues said to me, describing in a striking way his technique, which in fact does not consist in hunching over an easel tracing the contours of objects with a paintbrush, but rather in laying down the touch that must evoke the idea of the hue rather than the memory of the details.¹⁴

Monet’s achievement was in his innovation and in the evocation, not the details, of the coast and of coastal sensations.

On painting trips, he often noted that it took weeks for him to truly see the place and conceive of it on canvas. ‘You need to live in a place for quite a while in order to paint it, you need to have worked laboriously to render it confidently’,¹⁵ Monet wrote from an extended working sojourn to the Mediterranean coast in 1884, and complained that his was ‘a dog’s life’¹⁶ with so much walking in pursuit of understanding the landscape (p. 200). And it was solitary work:

All these folks here (the painters) are idiots who had indicated (with their stupid point of view) the least good locations, and voilà this morning, listening only to my instinct, I discovered superb things.¹⁷

We can imagine Monet’s incredulity, during his later stay on the French Riviera that lasted from January to May 1888, when faced with the fort at Antibes (pp. 192–3):

Would you believe there is a new law regarding espionage which prohibits anyone from making the least sketch, from up close or far, of a fortified city, and that is the case with Antibes, which I rightly want to paint from many aspects ... It seems that recently a French painter was arrested for this and had to spend the night at the police station.¹⁸

Monet was certain a friend could help him obtain authorisation; nevertheless, he never painted the fort closer than from this vantage.

In addition to the historic fortress – the touristic view so prominently associated with coastal views of Antibes – Monet turned his attention across the bay (p. 201), to snowcapped peaks rising dramatically from the water, using loose, swift brushstrokes to suggest the effect of the mistral, a strong northerly wind that sweeps through the south of France in spring. For Monet, there was something magical about the atmosphere there: ‘What I will bring back from here will be pure, gentle sweetness: some white, some pink, and

some blue, and all this surrounded by the fairylike air’.¹⁹ He repeatedly describes it as ‘*féerique*’ (literally, ‘fairylike’ or ‘otherworldly’), reinforcing the enchanting and magical qualities to be experienced in material and specific surroundings. ‘Surrounded by this dazzling light, one’s palette seems quite impoverished; art would like tons of gold and diamonds’, he explained.²⁰ Even in his compositions featuring the fort at Antibes, the enchanting air and radiant palette results in something glittering, the atmosphere taking the edge off the specificity of the architecture. ‘I joust and fight with the sun. And what sun there is here! You have to paint here with gold and gemstones. It’s amazing’, Monet exclaimed to sculptor Auguste Rodin.²¹ His awe faced with such marvellous light is mirrored by our own sense of wonder when faced with his works. Although he sometimes focused on distinctive features of the coastline, whether on the Riviera or in Normandy, many seaside canvases are more general in their coastal appeal.

Returning to Giverny, Monet shared: ‘I am still working a lot, my situation and my affairs are more satisfactory, but painting always gnaws at me, never being content and always wanting to do better’.²² His focus became closer and closer – not the field as a scene as before (pp. 195, 203), but the grainstack as a motif (pp. 204–5). Monet shared his frustrations with Geffroy as he worked on the series:

I’m in a black mood and am profoundly disgusted with painting. It really is a continual torture! ... You’ve no idea what appalling weather, the atmosphere and the general ambiance, it’s enough to make you mad with rage.²³

As summer turned to autumn, Monet’s ambition was clear, but his concerns remained:

This time of the year the sun sets so fast that it’s impossible to keep up with it ... I’m getting so slow at my work it makes me despair, but the further I get, the more I see that a lot of work has to be done in order to render what I’m looking for: ‘instantaneity,’ the ‘envelope’ above all, the same light spread over everything, and more than ever I’m disgusted by easy things that



Claude Monet *Antibes seen from the Plateau Notre-Dame* 1888

come in one go. Anyway, I’m increasingly obsessed by the need to render what I experience.²⁴

The recipient of these missives, Geffroy, would pen the introduction of the catalogue for the series’s exhibition in 1891. From what he had learned from the painter and what he saw in the works, Geffroy concluded:

The grouping together of fifteen canvases of haystacks, each representing the same subject, with a rendition of the same landscape, is an extraordinarily victorious artistic demonstration. For his part, Claude Monet has been able to substantiate the continuous appearance in new aspects, of immutable objects, the uninterrupted flood of changing and interrelated sensations, apparent in the face of a

changeless spectacle. He substantiates the possibility of summing up the poetry of the universe within a circumscribed space.²⁵

The proximate and particular evokes the broad and expansive.

While working on his grainstack series, Monet bought his home in Giverny and, in 1893, he also purchased land across a small road and railway tracks from his house to make something ‘for the pleasure of the eye and also for motifs to paint’.²⁶ Within months, the pond and bridge were completed, but it wasn’t until 1899 that he began painting this motif in earnest (p. 206); he awaited the growth and development of the garden around the structure based on bridges in the *ukiyo-e* prints he collected and admired. ‘If you absolutely must find an affiliation for me, select the Japanese of olden



Claude Monet *Antibes, afternoon effect* 1888

times', he opined. 'I sanction the implications of their aesthetic that evokes a presence by means of a shadow and the whole by means of a fragment.'²⁷ The glimpse of a portion of the bridge within his garden suggested a world beyond the limits of the canvas, beyond the confines of the garden in Giverny.

This aspect of Monet's oeuvre is perhaps most evident in the later works, where the spreading water of the surface of the lily pond expands to cover the entire canvas (p. 207). As Monet said of the lilies:

I painted a lot of nymphaea, each time modifying my point of view, renewing the motif with the seasons, and according to the effects of light caused by these changes. The effect changes incessantly, not only from one season to the next, but minute by minute, because the lilies are not the spectacle; they are only the accompaniment.²⁸

Each canvas evokes specific conditions of light and weather, as Monet described, but there is a tension between this specificity and something less fixed, as he put it: 'The indeterminate and the vague are modes of expression that have a reason for existing and have their own characteristics; through them sensations become lasting'.²⁹ The tension between definite and vague, specific and general, aids in creating something enduring.

Even in Monet's lifetime, these particular motifs and locations were associated with him and his fame, and had become destinations – challenging the perception of them as anything but deeply particular to Monet and specific to his Giverny. Already in 1901, Arsène Alexandre asserted in *Le Figaro* – in an article accompanied by photographs of Monet near the pond and its bridge – that, after experiencing Monet's home, 'I have learned that you cannot claim to know a man until you have seen his garden'.³⁰ Similarly, a photograph of grainstacks in the neighbouring field accompanied an article recounting a visit to the painter nearly fifteen years after his series depicting those stacks had been exhibited³¹ – so closely had their forms become associated with Monet, his artistic achievement and his Giverny.

As much as the motifs and places are tied to Monet, and the paintings deeply rooted in his experience of place and time, viewers have long recognised something larger at play in his works as well. As Philippe Burty said in 1883, seeing a Monet painting evokes 'the vague desire for a long voyage to unknown lands, and all in all, a wordless conversation with an intelligent and beloved being'.³² The immediate and the infinite, specific and vague, beloved and solitary: these tensions resonate in Monet's landscapes and their appeal, far beyond their original place and time.



Claude Monet *Meadow at Giverny* 1886



Claude Monet *Snow at Argenteuil* c. 1874



Claude Monet *Boulevard Saint-Denis, Argenteuil, in winter* 1875





Claude Monet *Cap Martin, near Menton* 1884



Claude Monet *Cap d'Antibes, mistral* 1888



Claude Monet *Poppy field in a hollow near Giverny* 1885



Claude Monet *Meadow with haystacks near Giverny* 1885



Claude Monet *Grainstack (snow effect)* 1891



Claude Monet *The water lily pond* 1900



ABOVE: Claude Monet *Water lilies* 1905
OVERLEAF: Claude Monet *Meadow with poplars* c. 1875 (detail)



1. INTRODUCTION:
VISION AND VOICE
Katie Hanson (pp. 2–17)

- Georges Rivière, ‘L’Exposition impressionniste’, *L’Impressioniste*, 6 April 1877, p. 5, reprinted and trans. in Charles Stuckey (ed.), *Claude Monet: A Retrospective*, Park Lane, New York, 1986, p. 61.
- Théodore Duret, *Les Peintres impressionnistes: Claude Monet, Sisley, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Berthe Morisot*, Librairie Parisienne, Paris, 1878, p. 27.
- Duc de Trévise, ‘Pilgrimage to Giverny’, *La Revue de l’art ancien et moderne*, 1927, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 337; another account gives the reason as cost-effectiveness, reporting that Monet stated: ‘In the beginning I had no money, and models are very expensive. So I turned to painting models that cost nothing, and I have stayed with them with a passion’ (Maurice Kahn, ‘Claude Monet’s garden’, *Le Temps*, 7 June 1904, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 243). Presumably, Monet meant that he turned to nature as his model, but friends and family who had served as no-cost human models were also available and appeared only very infrequently, making costliness a less compelling explanation for his eschewal of figural subjects.
- Claude Monet, letter to Frédéric Bazille, Dec. 1868, in Daniel Wildenstein, *Claude Monet. Biographie et catalogue raisonné*, 5 vols, La Bibliothèque des Arts, Lausanne & Paris, 1974–91, vol. 1, pp. 425–6, letter 44.
- Monet, letter to Paul Durand-Ruel, 12 Jan. 1884, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 232, letter 388: ‘As much as it was agreeable to do the trip as a tourist with Renoir, it would be a nuisance for me to do a working trip together. I have always worked better in solitude, and from my own impressions, so keep this secret, until I tell you otherwise. Renoir, knowing that I am about to leave, would not double be eager to come with me, which would be just as harmful for each of us. No doubt you will agree with me.’
- Emma Bullet, ‘Macmonnies, the sculptor, working hard as a painter’, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 8 Sep. 1901, p. 14.
- For an overview of these concepts in earlier art, see Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1980.
- Pierre-Auguste Renoir quoted in Barbara Ehrlich White, *Renoir: An Intimate Biography*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2017, p. 26.
- Edmond Renoir, ‘Cinquième Exposition de “La Vie moderne” – P.A. Renoir’, *La Vie Moderne*, 19 June 1879, reprinted in Lionello Venturi, *Archives de l’impressionnisme*, vol. 2, Durand-Ruel, Paris & New York, 1939, pp. 336–7.
- Émile Taboureaux, ‘Claude Monet’, *La Vie moderne*, 12 June 1880, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 92.
- Monet quoted by Kahn, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 241.
- This series, edited by Richard Kendall, first appeared in the late 1980s with grand coffee

table hardcovers, published by Macdonald Orbis, for Degas, Monet and Cézanne; in the early 1990s *Gauguin, by Himself*, edited by Belinda Thomson, was released, followed in 2001 by *Manet, by Himself*, edited by Juliet Wilson-Bareau. Diminutive paperback editions followed each volume and have been reissued by other publishers, attesting to their popular appeal.

- Monet, letter to Paul Alexis, 7 May 1873, in Wildenstein, vol. 1, p. 428, letter 65.
- Paul Alexis as translated by Paul Tucker, ‘1874 the first exhibition’, in Charles S. Moffett et al., *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874–1886*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco / National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 1986, p. 104.
- Monet, letter to Pissarro, 5 Dec. 1873, in Wildenstein, vol. 1, p. 429, letter 74.
- Renoir quoted by Ambroise Vollard, *Renoir: An Intimate Record*, A. A. Knopf, New York, 1934, pp. 47, 66.
- ibid. pp. 62–3.
- Pierre-Auguste Renoir quoted in Jean Renoir, *Renoir: My Father*, trans. Randolph & Dorothy Weaver, New York Review Books, New York, 2001, p. 69.
- For more on technical innovations and artistic practices, see *Impressionism: Art in the Making*, National Gallery, London, 1991.
- Stéphane Mallarmé, ‘The Impressionists and Édouard Manet,’ *The Art Monthly Review*, vol. 1, no. 9, 30 Sep. 1876, reprinted in Moffett et al., 1986, p. 32.
- Charles François Daubigny, 30 Sep. 1872, quoted in Lynne Ambrosini, ‘Leader of the school of the Impression: Daubigny and his legacy,’ in Michael Clarke et al., *Inspiring Impressionism: Daubigny, Monet, Van Gogh*, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, 2015, p. 28.
- Monet, letter to Boudin, 3 June 1859, in Wildenstein, vol. 1, p. 419, letter 2, trans. in Fronia E. Wissman, ‘The generation gap’, in *The Rise of Landscape Painting in France: Corot to Monet*, The Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, NH, 1991, p. 71.
- Renoir quoted in Pierre Miquel & Rolande Miquel, *Narcisse Diaz de la Peña, catalogue raisonné de l’œuvre peint, vol. 1*, ACR Édition internationale, Paris, 2006, p. 128.
- Pierre-Auguste Renoir quoted in Jean Renoir, p. 66.
- Eugène Boudin quoted in Gustave Cahen, *Eugène Boudin, sa vie et son oeuvre*, H. Floury, Paris, 1900, p. 181, trans. in John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, Secker & Warburg, London, 1973, p. 38.
- Monet, letter to Gustave Geffroy, 8 May 1920, in Wildenstein, vol. 4, p. 405, letter 2348.
- Monet, letter to Boudin, 3 June 1859, in Wildenstein, vol. 1, p. 419, letter 2; Duret reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 67.
- Montjoyeux (Jules Poignant), ‘Chroniques parisiennes. Les Indépendants’, *Le Gaulois*, 18 April 1879, reprinted in Ruth Berson (ed.), *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874–1886*:

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- Gustave Courbet, letter to Léon Isabey, Saintes, April 1863, quoted in MacDonald et al., p. 33.
- Berthe Morisot quoted in Philippe Huisman, *Morisot Enchantment*, French & European Publications, New York, 1963, p. 5.
- Paul Cézanne quoted by Joachim Gasquet, *Cézanne, Bernheim-Jeune, Paris*, 1926, p. 202; English edition, Gasquet, *Cézanne: A Memoir with Conversations*, trans. Christopher Pemberton, Thames & Hudson, London, 1991, p. 220.
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- ibid.
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- Camille Pissarro, letter to Lucien Pissarro, 14 May 1887, in John Rewald (ed.), *Camille Pissarro: Letters to His Son Lucien*, MFA Publications, Boston, 2002, p. 108.
- Paul Cézanne quoted in Rewald, ‘Introduction’, *Camille Pissarro: Letters to His Son Lucien*, p. 14.
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- Pissarro quoted in Christopher Becker et al., *Camille Pissarro*, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stuttgart, 1999, p. 103.
- Pissarro, letter to Lucien Pissarro, 6 Sep. 1888, in Rewald, *Camille Pissarro: Letters to His Son Lucien*, pp. 131–2.
- Pissarro, letter to Lucien Pissarro, 22 Nov. 1895, in Rewald, *Camille Pissarro: Letters to His Son Lucien*, p. 276.
- Edgar Degas, letter to Albert Bartholomé, 5 Aug. 1887, in Marcel Guérin (ed.), *Degas: Letters*, trans. Marguerite Kay, Bruno Cassirer, Oxford, 1947, p. 70.
- Antonin Proust quoted in Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1988, p. 35.

47. Edgar Degas quoted in Jane Munro, *Degas: A Passion for Perfection*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2017, p. 138.

48. Edmond Duranty, *La nouvelle peinture*, 1876, Paris, reprinted and trans. in Moffett et al., 1986, pp. 43–4.

49. Degas quoted in Ambroise Vollard, *Degas: An Intimate Portrait* (1927), Dover, New York, 1986, p. 48.

50. *ibid.*

51. Katherine Cassatt, letter to Alexander Cassatt, 9 April 1880, quoted in Nancy Mowll Mathews (ed.), *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, Abbeville Press, New York, 1984, p. 151.

52. Degas, letter to Pissarro, 1880, in Guérin, 1947, p. 57. Rue de la Huchette refers to the location of H. Godard, planisher of copper and steel for printmaking.

53. Monet, letter to unknown, 25 March 1884, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 232, letter 460.

54. Monet quoted in *Claude Monet 1840–1926*, Réunion des musées nationaux & Musée d’Orsay, Paris, 2010, p. 29.

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56. Taboureaux reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 91.

2. THE BARBIZON SCHOOL
Ted Gott (pp. 18–39)

1. Frédéric Henriet, *Le Paysagiste aux champs*, 1876, quoted in Steven Adams, *The Barbizon School and the Origins of Impressionism*, Phaidon Press, London, 1994, p. 7.

2. For a full account of Fontainebleau and its significance for French artists in the nineteenth century, see Kimberly Jones et al., *In the Forest of Fontainebleau: Painters and Photographers from Corot to Monet*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 2008.

3. Michael Pantazzi, ‘The greatest landscape painter of our time’, in Gary Tinterow, Michael Pantazzi & Vincent Pomerade, *Corot*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1996, p. 148.

4. Gary Tinterow, ‘Le Père Corot: the very poet of landscape’, in Tinterow, Pantazzi & Pomerade, p. 262.

5. Georges Lafenestre, ‘Paul Huet et le paysage français’, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, ser. 6, vol. 3, no. 4, 15 June 1911, p. 840. For the influence of the English landscape tradition on Huet’s art, see Philippe Burty, *Maîtres et Petits-Maîtres*, G. Charpentier, Paris, 1877, pp. 181–5.

6. Philippe Burty, *Paul Huet. Notice biographique et critique*, Jules Claye, Paris, 1869, pp. 3, 9.

7. Paul Huet, autobiographical notes written for Théophile Silvestre, reprinted in René Paul Huet, *Paul Huet (1803–1869). D’après ses notes, sa correspondance, ses contemporains*, Librairie Renouard, H. Laurens, Paris, 1911, p. 6.

8. Paul Huet, letter to M. Sollier, 18 Aug. 1850, quoted in René Paul Huet, p. 168. Huet’s first Fontainebleau compositions were shown at the Salon of 1850. Burty, *Paul Huet*, p. 93.

9. Auguste Jal, *Salon de 1831. Ébauches critiques*, A.-J. Dénain, Paris, 1831, pp. 219–20.

10. Paul Huet, quoted in René Paul Huet, p. 73.

11. Lafenestre, p. 859.

12. Alfred Sensier, *Souvenirs sur Th. Rousseau*, Léon Techener & Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1872, p. 11.

13. *ibid.* pp. 13–14.

14. Émile Michel, ‘Théodore Rousseau et les peintres De Barbison’, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, ser. 5, vol. 27, no. 1, 1 May 1905, p. 167. Sensier, p. 120.

15. Scott Allan, “‘A method matters little’: Rousseau’s working procedures as a painter”, in Scott Allan & Édouard Kopp, *Unruly Nature: The Landscapes of Théodore Rousseau*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2016, p. 25. Michel, p. 152.

16. Sensier, p. 118.

17. Robert Herbert, *Barbizon Revisited*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1962, p. 29.

18. Eugène Fromentin, *Les Maîtres d’autrefois. Belgique–Hollande*, E. Plon et Cie, Paris, 1876, p. 276. Rousseau’s pupil Ludovic Letrône recalled how, when he was tasked with copying a seventeenth-century Dutch landscape by Jan van Goyen that Rousseau himself owned, his master also advised him that ‘it would be better to paint in Montmartre or at Barbizon – which shouldn’t stop you also going to the Louvre to see what the Old Masters learned from nature’. Philippe Burty, ‘Théodore Rousseau’, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. 24, no. 142, 1 April 1868, p. 317. According to Herbert, ‘Rousseau and Millet jointly bought a van Goyen which they divided by the wisdom of Solomon, cutting it in two’. Herbert, p. 18.

19. Rousseau quoted in Sensier, p. 52.

20. Simon Kelly, “‘The biggest landscape of the biggest modern landscape painter”: Théodore Rousseau’s *Le Givre*’, *The Journal of the Walters Art Museum*, vol. 70/71, 2012/13, p. 71.

21. Rousseau quoted in Sensier, p. 165; see also Michel, p. 167.

22. Greg M. Thomas, ‘From ecological vision to environmental immersion: Théodore Rousseau to Claude Monet’, in Steven F. Eisenman (ed.), *From Corot to Monet: The Ecology of Impressionism*, Skira, Milan, 2010, p. 49.

23. *ibid.* See also Kimberly Jones, ‘Landscapes, legends, souvenirs, fantasies: the Forest of Fontainebleau in the nineteenth century’ in Jones et al., pp. 20–3.

24. Rousseau quoted in Sensier, p. 15.

25. *ibid.* p. 6.

26. Philippe Burty, *Maîtres et Petits-Maîtres*, G. Charpentier, Paris, 1877, p. 361.

27. *ibid.* pp. 364, 365.

28. Charles Baudelaire, ‘Salon de 1845’ in *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Baudelaire. II. Curiosités esthétiques*, Michel Lévy Frères, Paris, 1868, p. 43.

29. Pierre Miquel & Rolande Miquel, *Narcisse Diaz de La Peña (1807–1876). Vol. I. Monographie*, ACR Édition internationale, Paris, 2006, p. 51.

30. David Croal Thomson, *The Barbizon School of Painters*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1902, p. 176.

31. Sensier, pp. 96–7. Croal Thomson, pp. 178–80.

32. Sensier, p. 97.

33. Jules Claretie, ‘Notice biographique’, in *Exposition des oeuvres de N. Diaz de La Peña à l’École nationale des Beaux-Arts*, Jules Claye, Paris, 1877, p. 18.

34. Théophile Thoré, *Le Salon de 1846*, Alliance des Arts, Paris, 1846, p. 114.

35. *ibid.* p. 109.

36. Jean-Baptiste-Georges Gassies, quoted in Miquel & Miquel, p. 184.

37. Jules Claretie, *Peintres et sculpteurs contemporains*, Charpentier et Cie, Paris, 1873, p. 34.

38. Renoir quoted in Ambroise Vollard, *Auguste Renoir (1841–1919)*, G. Crès et Cie, Paris, 1920, pp. 26, 29–30.

39. Miquel & Miquel, pp. 128, 168.

40. Rousseau encouraged his contacts among collectors and art dealers to acquire Millet’s work, and even pretended to be an American collector on one occasion so he could buy a painting from Millet and thus help him financially without embarrassing his friend. Michel, p. 182. Sensier, p. 179. Alfred Sensier, *La Vie et l’oeuvre de J.-F. Millet*, A. Quantin, Paris, 1881, pp. 113–14.

41. Jean-François Millet, letter to Théodore Rousseau, 13 June 1867, quoted in Sensier, *La Vie et l’oeuvre de J.-F. Millet*, p. 305.

42. Robert Herbert, *Jean-François Millet*, Éditions des Musées nationaux, Paris, 1975, p. 167.

43. Adams, p. 14.

44. Jean-François Millet, letter to Théophile Silvestre, 20 April 1868, quoted in Alexandra R. Murphy et al., *Jean-François Millet*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1984, p. 161.

45. Helga Aurisch, ‘The Impressionists at Fontainebleau’, in Jones et al., pp. 173, 179.

46. Renoir quoted in Ambroise Vollard, *La Vie et l’oeuvre de Pierre-Auguste Renoir*, Ambroise Vollard, Paris, 1919, p. 26. Camille Pissarro, quoted in Katherine Rothkopf, ‘Camille Pissarro: from Barbizon student to Impressionist innovator’, in Katherine Rothkopf et al., *Pissarro: Creating the Impressionist Landscape*, Baltimore Museum of Art, 2006, p. 45.

3. BOUDIN, MENTOR TO MONET
Julia Welch (pp. 40–65)

1. Claude Monet quoted in Gustave Cahen, *Eugène Boudin, Sa vie et son oeuvre*, H. Floury, Paris, 1900, p. 125.

2. Claude Monet, letter to Gustave Geffroy, 8 May 1920, in Daniel Wildenstein, *Claude Monet. Biographie et catalogue raisonné*, 5 vols, La Bibliothèque des Arts, Lausanne & Paris, 1974–91, vol. 4, p. 405, letter 2348.

3. See François Thiébaud-Sisson, ‘Claude Monet, an interview’, *Le Temps*, 27 Nov. 1900; G. Jean-Aubry, ‘Eugène Boudin et Claude Monet’, *Havre-Eclair*, 1 Aug. 1911; Cahen; and G. Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, Les Éditions Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, 1922.

4. Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 35.

5. Varying accounts of the date of Monet and Boudin’s introduction place it between 1856

and 1858, but they certainly were in contact by the spring of 1858. See Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet or the Triumph of Impressionism*, Wildenstein Institute & Taschen, Cologne, 1996, p. 18.

6. Monet quoted in Jean-Aubry, ‘Eugène Boudin et Claude Monet’, cited in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 36.

7. Boudin, diary entry 25 Jan. 1859, cited in Laurent Manoeuvre, ‘Eugène Boudin’s beach scenes at the Salon during the 1860s’, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 161, no. 1394, May 2019, p. 376.

8. Monet, letter to Boudin, 3 June 1859, in Cahen, p. 26.

9. Monet, letter to Boudin, 20 Feb. 1860, in Cahen, p. 18 (see Jean-Aubry 1922, p. 44, n3 re: corrected date)

10. Boudin, letter to Ferdinand Martin, 6 Sep. 1864, original in Bibliothèque Doucet, Paris, cited in Vivien Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, John Murray, London, in association with Glasgow Museums, 1992, p. 64.

11. Boudin, letter to Ferdinand Martin, 12 Feb. 1865, in Isolde Pludermacher (ed.), *Eugène Boudin: lettres à Ferdinand Martin (1861–1870)*, Société des amis du musée Eugène Boudin, Trouville-sur-Mer, 2011, p. 91, cited and trans. in Manoeuvre, p. 380.

12. Hamilton, p. 64.

13. Boudin, letter to his brother Louis Boudin, 20 Dec. 1865, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 62, trans. in Manoeuvre, p. 381.

14. For a list of sales and income from these years, see Gilbert de Knyff, *Eugène Boudin raconté par lui-même, sa vie, son atelier, son oeuvre*, Editions Mayer, Paris, 1976, pp. 110–13.

15. Boudin, letter to Ferdinand Martin, 3 Sep. 1868, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 70, trans. in Robert Goldwater & Marco Treves (eds), *Artists on Art from the XIV to the XX Century*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1945, pp. 300–2.

16. Jules-Antoine Castagnary, *Salons (1857–1870)*, vol. 1, Charpentier et Fasquelle, Paris, 1892, p. 375, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 181; trans. in Hamilton, p. 59.

17. Boudin, letter to Ferdinand Martin, 28 Aug. 1867, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 65; trans. in Peter C. Sutton, *Boudin Impressionist Marine Paintings*, Peabody Museum, Salem, MA, 1991, p. 22.

18. Boudin, letter to his brother Louis Boudin, 29 Nov. 1865, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 62.

19. Boudin quoted in Cahen, p. 181, trans. in John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, Secker & Warburg, London, 1973, p. 38.

20. Anne-Marie Bergeret-Gourbin et al., *Eugène Boudin, L’atelier de la lumière*, Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, Paris, 2016, p. 229.

21. John House, ‘Boudin’s modernity’, in Hamilton, p. 22.

22. Gustave Geffroy, ‘Eugène Boudin’, *Justice*, 15 Feb. 1883, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, pp. 184–7.

23. Philippe Burty, ‘Les paysages d’Eugène Boudin,’ *La République française*, 3 Feb. 1883, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 182.

24. Boudin, letter to Louis Braquaval, 26 July 1894, in Laurent Manoeuvre, *Eugène Boudin, dessins*, Anthese, Paris, 1991, pp. 209–10, as cited and trans. in Hamilton, p. 60.

25. Camille Maclair, *L’impressionnisme, son histoire, son esthétique, ses maîtres*, Librairie de l’art ancien et moderne, Paris, 1904, in Frédéric Chaleil, *Eugène Boudin par ses contemporains*, Les editions de Paris Max Chaleil, Paris, 2013, p. 34.

26. Boudin, letter to Alfred Stevens, 1891, in Cahen, p. 122; trans. in Hamilton, p. 13.

27. Monet quoted in Jean-Aubry, ‘Eugène Boudin et Claude Monet’, cited in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, p. 36.

28. Boudin, letter to Monet, 28 July 1892, in Jean-Aubry, *Boudin d’après des documents inédits*, pp. 103–4.

4. WATERY SURFACES:
MASTERY AND INNOVATION
Julia Welch (pp. 66–83)

1. Théodore Duret, *Les Peintres impressionnistes: Claude Monet, Sisley, C. Pissarro, Renoir, Bertbe Morisot, Librairie Parisienne*, Paris, 1878, p. 19.

2. Claude Monet quoted in François Thiébaud-Sisson, ‘Claude Monet, an interview’, *Le Temps*, 27 Nov. 1900, republished as ‘Claude Monet: the artist as a young man’, *Art News Annual*, 1957, part II, in Linda Nochlin, *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, 1874–1904 – Sources and Documents*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1966, p. 41.

3. Claude Monet quoted in Gustave Cahen, *Eugène Boudin, Sa Vie et son oeuvre*, H. Floury, Paris, 1900, p. 41, trans. in Vivien Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, John Murray, London, in association with Glasgow Museums, 1992, p. 42.

4. George T. M. Shackelford et al., *Monet, Renoir and the Impressionist Landscape*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2000, p. 60.

5. Claude Monet, letter to Eugène Boudin, 3 June 1859, in Cahen, p. 26.

6. Théophile Gautier, *Abécédaire du Salon de 1861*, Librairie de la Société des gens des lettres, Paris, 1861, p. 79, trans. in Lucy MacClintock, *From Neoclassicism to Impressionism: French Art from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1989, n. p.

7. Alfred Sisley, letter to Adolphe Tavernier, in Robert Goldwater & Marco Treves (eds), *Artists on Art from the XIV to the XX Century*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1945, p. 309.

8. Sisley, letter to Tavernier, 19 Jan. 1892, cited in Ann Dumas, ‘Alfred Sisley: the true impressionist’, in *Alfred Sisley: Poète de l’impressionnisme*, Musée des beaux-arts, Lyon, 2002, p. 329. The Loing River is a tributary of the Seine River, meeting it in the town of Saint-Mammès, near Moret-sur-Loing (currently known as Moret-Loing-et-Orvanne).

9. Sisley, letter to Tavernier, in Goldwater & Treves, p. 309.

10. Sisley, letter to Tavernier, 24 Jan. 1892, quoted in MaryAnne Stevens, *Alfred Sisley: Impressionist Master*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2017, p. 154.

11. Camille Pissarro, letter to Lucien Pissarro, [March] 1894, in John Rewald (ed.), *Camille Pissarro: Letters to His Son Lucien*, MFA Publications, Boston, 2002, pp. 58–9.

12. Lamia Guillaume (ed.), *Frits Thaulow: Paysagiste par nature*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen & Editions Snoeck, Gand, 2016, p. 162.

13. Thaulow married Ingeborg Gad on 14 October 1874 (they divorced in 1886); Gauguin married Ingeborg’s sister, Mette Gad, on 22 November 1873.

14. Guillaume, p. 169. Monet travelled to Norway from late January through early April 1895.

15. Frits Thaulow, ‘La Peinture’, in *La Revue Universelle, recueil documentaire universel et illustré; publié sous la direction de M. Georges Moreau*, Paris, 1901, p. 1165.

16. Robert de la Sizeranne, ‘L’Eau dans le paysage et les Salons de 1903’, in *Revue des deux Mondes*, May 1903, p. 677.

17. Claude Monet, letter to Gustave Geffroy, 7 Dec. 1908, in Richard Kendall (ed.), *Monet by Himself: Paintings, Drawings, Pastels, Letters*, Time Warner, London, 2004, p. 143.

18. The exhibition, titled *Claude Monet: Venice*, took place from 28 May to 15 June 1912 at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in Paris.

19. Octave Mirbeau, in *Claude Monet: Venice*, Bernheim-Jeune et Cie, Paris, 1912, trans. in Paul Hayes Tucker et al., *Monet in the 20th Century*, Royal Academy of Arts, London; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; published in association with Yale University Press, New Haven, 1998, p. 57.

20. Paul Signac, letter to Claude Monet, 31 May 1912, in Gustave Geffroy, *Claude Monet, Sa Vie, son oeuvre*, Crès, Paris, 1924, pp. 248–9, trans. in Katharine Lochnan, *Turner, Whistler, Monet*, Tate Publishing, London, 2004, p. 207.

5. BEYOND CONVENTION:
IMPRESSIONIST STILL LIFE
Meg Slater (pp. 84–103)

1. Charles Sterling, *Still Life Painting: From Antiquity to the Twentieth Century*, Harper & Row, New York, 1980, p. 93.

2. *ibid.* p. 127.

3. John W. McCoubrey, ‘The revival of Chardin in French still-life painting, 1850–1870’, *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 4, no. 1, March 1964, p. 40.

4. *ibid.* p. 42.

5. *ibid.* p. 44.

6. Edmond de Goncourt quoted in Henri Loyrette, ‘Still life’, in Gary Tinterow & Henri Loyrette (eds), *Origins of Impressionism*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1994, p. 171.

7. Eliza E. Rathbone, ‘Manet: the significance of things’, in Eliza E. Rathbone & George T. M. Shackelford (eds), *Impressionist Still Life*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 2001, p. 12.

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8. Édouard Manet quoted in Richard Cork, *Annus Mirabilis?: Art in the Year 2000*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2003, p. 298.
 9. Manet quoted in Margaretta M. Salinger, ‘Windows open to nature’, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, vol. 27, no. 1, 1968, p. 2.
 10. *Manet*, Avenue de l’Alma, Paris, (temporary pavilion), 1867, cat. no. 41.
 11. Henri Fantin-Latour quoted in Jeannene M. Prybylski, ‘The makings of modern still life in the 1860s’, in Rathbone & Shackelford, p. 32.
 12. Fantin-Latour, letter to London dealer Edwin Edwards, 19 July 1871, in Heather MacDonald & Mitchel Merling, *Working Among Flowers: Floral Still-Life Painting in Nineteenth-Century France*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2014, p. 37.
 13. Gustave Courbet, letter to Léon Isabey, April 1863, in MacDonald & Merling, p. 33.
 14. Jeannene M. Prybylski, ‘Courbet, the commune, and the meanings of still life in 1871’, *Art Journal*, vol. 55, no. 2, 1996, p. 28.
 15. Rathbone & Shackelford, p. 86.
 16. *ibid.*
 17. Salinger, p. 14.
 18. *ibid.* p. 21.
 19. Jeanette M. Smith, ‘Forest of Fontainebleau, autumn: Narcisse Virgile Diaz de La Peña’, *JAMA*, vol. 312, no. 13, 2014, p. 1281.
 20. Pierre-Auguste Renoir quoted in Gloria Lynn Groom & Douglas W. Druick, *The Age of Impressionism at the Art Institute of Chicago*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 2008, p. 83.
 21. Rathbone & Shackelford, p. 78.
 22. *ibid.* pp. 106, 108.
 23. Richard Kendall, ‘Women artists and Impressionism’, in Laurence Madeline (ed.), *Women Artists in Paris: 1850–1900*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2017, p. 48.
 24. *ibid.*
 25. Francis E. Hyslop, ‘Berthe Morisot and Mary Cassatt’, *College Art Journal*, vol. 13, no. 3, 1954, p. 180.
 26. Paul de Charry quoted in Kathleen Adler & Tamar Garb, *Berthe Morisot*, Phaidon, New York, 1987, p. 42.
 27. Joris-Karl Huysmans quoted in Anne Distel et al., *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1995, p. 244.
 28. John McCoubrey, ‘Cézanne’s difference’, in Rathbone & Shackelford, p. 34.
 29. Sterling, p. 104.
 30. James Voorhies, ‘Paul Cézanne (1839–1906)’, Oct. 2004, *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pceez/hd_pceez.htm>, accessed 24 July 2020.
 31. *ibid.*
 32. *ibid.*
 33. Paul Cézanne quoted in McCoubrey, p. 34.
 34. Cézanne quoted in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, ‘Cézanne’s doubt’, in Galen A. Johnson & Michael B. Smith (eds), *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting*, Northwestern University Press, Illinois, 1993, p. 68.
 35. Paul Gauguin, letter to Émile Schuffenecker, June 1888, quoted in Françoise Cachin, *Cézanne*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, 1996, p. 28.
 6. ‘A FANTASTIC, NERVOUS IMPROVISATOR’: RENOIR AND EXPERIMENTATION
Angela Hesson (pp. 104–21)
 1. Renoir’s essay was published by Henri Mottez as the preface to a new 1911 edition of Cennini, translated by his father, the painter Victor Mottez. In writing it, Renoir also received advice from Maurice Denis, who visited him at his home in Cagnes-sur-Mer.
 2. According to an interview between Renoir and Ambroise Vollard, the artist first encountered Cennini’s treatise in 1883 (see Ambroise Vollard, ‘Renoir’s dry manner’ [1925], reproduced in Nicholas Wadley, *Renoir: A Retrospective*, Bay Books, Sydney & London, 1987, p. 163); however, more recent critical examination suggests that a later date is likely. See Robert L. Herbert, *Nature’s Workshop: Renoir’s Writings on the Decorative Arts*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2000, pp. 41–62. The preface has been widely read as the expression of a more pervasive anti-modernist approach to art which infused the latter stages of Renoir’s career. Certainly, Renoir’s continued examination of both academic art and modern industry led to the conclusion that these forces, when combined, undermined the traditional values of art.
 3. Camille Maclair quoted in Giovanni Mazzaferro, ‘Il Libro dell’Arte di Cennino Cennini (1821–1950): un esempio di diffusione della cultura italiana nel mondo’, in *Zibaldone: Estudios italianos de la Torre del Virrey*, no. 1, 2015 (English translation: ‘The “Book of the Art” by Cennino Cennini [1821–1950]: an example of dissemination of Italian culture in the world, part two’, 5 March 2015, *Cross Cultural Studies in Art History*, <http://letteraturaartistica.blogspot.com/2015/03/cennino-cennini-av.html>, accessed 13 Nov. 2020).
 4. Camille Pissarro quoted in Wadley, p. 32.
 5. Renoir subsequently graduated to painting religious scenes on ecclesiastical textiles. He also painted decorative window blinds which were used in place of stained-glass windows in churches in Latin America. According to Julius Meier-Graefe, Renoir received 30 francs per blind. See Julius Meier-Graefe, *Auguste Renoir*, Paris, 1912, unpaginated.
 6. Walter Sickert, ‘French art of the nineteenth century’, *The Burlington Magazine*, June 1922, quoted in Wadley, p. 301.
 7. Renoir quoted in Ann Dumas, *Renoir Revisited*, Hammer Galleries, 2010, unpaginated.
 8. Henri Fantin-Latour quoted in Theodore Reff, ‘Copyists in the Louvre’, *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 46, no. 4, Dec. 1964, pp. 552–9.
 9. See Sophie Monneret, *Renoir*, Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1990, p. 52.
 10. Renoir, letter to Paul Durand-Ruel, Algiers, March 1881, in Linda Nochlin, *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, 1874–1904: Sources and Documents*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1966, p. 52. Original French found in Jean Renoir, *Pierre-Auguste Renoir, mon père*, Gaillmard, Paris, 1999, p. 386.
 11. In 1878, Renoir rejected the Impressionist exhibition in favour of the official Paris Salon.
 12. He painted several other Algerian-themed works in the same year, including *Madame Clementine Valensi Stora (L’Algerienne)* (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco) in a Paris studio.
 13. See Colin B. Bailey, *Renoir’s Portraits: Impressions of an Age*, National Gallery of Canada, 1997, p. 108. For a thorough account of North African imagery in Renoir’s work, see Roger Benjamin, ‘Renoir and Impressionist Orientalism’, in *Orientalist Aesthetics: Art, Colonialism, and French North Africa, 1880–1930*, University of California Press, 2003, pp. 33–55; Werner Schnell, ‘Renoir’s Versuch, über den Orient in den Salon zu kommen’, in Klaus Geuthlein & Franz Matsche (eds), *Begegnungen: Festschrift für Peter Anselm Riedl zum 60. Geburtstag*, Werner, Worm, 1993, pp. 216–23.
 14. Pierre-Auguste Renoir quoted in Jean Renoir, *Renoir: My Father*, trans. Rudolph & Dorothy Weaver, Little, Brown and Co., Boston & Toronto, 1962, p. 102.
 15. The artist went on to declare that his preference was strictly for ornament applied to others: ‘I would have had a horror of wearing such things myself. I am grateful to those who do wear them, provided they allow me to paint them’; quoted in Jean Renoir, p. 102.
 16. For more on the influence of Chevreul’s *Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colours, and Their Application to the Arts* on the Impressionists (as well as their digressions from his teachings) see Meyer Schapiro, ‘Impressionism and science’, in *Impressionism: Reflections and Perceptions*, George Braziller Inc., New York, 1997, pp. 216–29. See also Georges Rocque, *Chevreul’s Colour Theory and its Consequences for Artists*, The Colour Group, Great Britain, 2011.
 17. Paul Leroi, ‘Salon de 1882’, *L’Art*, no. 29, 1882, p. 98, reprinted in Ruth Berson (ed.), *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874–1886: Documentation*, vol. 1, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco / University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1996, p. 401, trans. in John House, ‘The public face of Renoir as landscapist’, in Colin Bailey et al., *Renoir Landscapes 1865–1883*, National Gallery, London, 2007, p. 15.
 18. ‘Grand Canal, Venice, 1881’, *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/31792>, accessed 13 Nov. 2020.
 19. Pierre-Auguste Renoir, quoted in Jean Renoir, pp. 240–5.
 20. Renoir quoted in John House, *Impressions of France: Monet, Renoir, and their Rivals*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1995, p. 274.
 21. Renoir, letter to Mme Charpentier, undated [late Jan. or early Feb. 1882], cited in Barbara
 - Ehrlich White, *Renoir: An Intimate Biography*, New York, Thames & Hudson, 2017, p. 119.
 22. Pierre-Auguste Renoir quoted in Vollard, in Wadley, p. 163.
 23. The work is related to two other compositions: *City dance* and *Country dance* (Musée d’Orsay, Paris).
 24. ‘Notes on art and archeology’, *The Academy*, vol. 29, no. 574, 5 May 1883, p. 318, quoted in Colin B. Bailey, *Renoir’s Portraits: Impressions of an Age*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 1997, p. 198.
 25. Renoir quoted in Wadley, 1987, p. 353.
 26. Pissarro, letter to Lucien Pissarro, 14 May 1887, quoted in John Rewald, *Camille Pissarro: Letters to His Son Lucien*, MFA Publications, Boston, 2002, p. 108.
 27. Renoir quoted in Vollard, cited in Wadley, p. 164.
 28. Renoir quoted in Wadley, p. 35.
 29. Camille Maclair, ‘Auguste Renoir and his work’, in Maclair, *The French Impressionists (1860–1900)*, trans. P. G. Konady, Project Gutenberg eBook, 2004, available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14056/14056-h/14056-h.htm#2H_4_0010>, accessed 28 Jan 2021.
 30. Degas quoted in Ambroise Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, Dover Publications, 2012, unpaginated.
 31. Renoir quoted in Albert André, *Renoir*, 1919, in Wadley, p. 263. See also Faber Birren, *History of Color in Painting: With New Principles of Color Expression*, Reinhold Publishing Corporation, New York, 1965, pp. 284–5.
 32. Jean Renoir quoted in Wadley, p. 219.
 33. Maclair in Maclair.
 7. TO BARBIZON AND BACK: PISSARRO AND IMPRESSIONISM
Ted Gott (pp. 122–43)
 1. Christopher Gray, *Sculpture and Ceramics of Paul Gauguin*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1963, cat. no. 7, pp. 118–9.
 2. Charles Stuckey, ‘The Impressionist years’, in Richard Brettell et al., *The Art of Paul Gauguin*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC / Art Institute of Chicago, 1988, p. 14. Elsewhere it has been noted that this sculpture ‘referred partly to early Renaissance sculpture and partly to the poetical and Arcadian paintings of Corot that the artist knew in the Arosa collection’. See Anne-Birgitte Fonsmark, ‘The sculpture mania (1882)’, in Richard Brettell & Anne-Birgitte Fonsmark, *Gauguin and Impressionism*, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth & Yale University Press, New Haven, 2005

31. Émile Bernard, ‘Vincent van Gogh’, *Les Hommes d’aujourd’hui*, vol. 8, no. 390, 1891, p. 2.
32. Paul Signac, quoted in Gustave Coquiott, *Vincent van Gogh*, Ollendorf, Paris, 1923, p. 140. A size 30 canvas was pre-stretched canvas made in a standard size sold by art suppliers in Paris at this time, measuring 92 x 73 cm (portrait format) or 92 x 77.2 cm (landscape format).
33. Vincent van Gogh, letter to Willemien van Gogh, Paris, late Oct. 1887; available online at Leo Jansen, Hans Luijten & Nienke Bakker (eds), *Vincent van Gogh – The Letters*, version: January 2020. Amsterdam & The Hague: Van Gogh Museum & Huygens ING., <http://www.vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/lets74/letter.html>, accessed 30 Oct. 2020.
34. Theo van Gogh, letter to Elizabeth (Lies) van Gogh, 15 May 1887, cited in Ronald Pickvance, *Van Gogh*, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny, Switzerland, 2000, p. 143.
35. Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, *Vincent van Gogh: His Paris Period, 1886–1888*, Editions Victorine, Utrecht & The Hague, 1976, pp. 169–70.
36. Vincent van Gogh, letter to Horace Mann Livens, Paris, Sep. or Oct. 1886, <http://www.vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/lets69/letter.html>, accessed 30 Oct. 2020.
37. Lucien Pissarro, letter to Dr Paul Gachet, 27 May 1928, in Paul Gachet, *Lettres impressionistes au Dr Gachet et à Murer*, Bernard Grasset, Paris, 1957, pp. 54–6; cited in Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, *Van Gogh in Perspective*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1974, p. 35. I am grateful to Elizabeth Cross and Hendrik Kolenberg for their assistance in locating this reference.
38. Vincent van Gogh, correspondence with Paul Gauguin 1888, quoted in Evert van Uitert, ‘Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin in competition: Vincent’s original contribution’, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1980, p. 81.
39. Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh & Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Auvers-sur-Oise, 10 June 1890, <http://www.vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let881/letter.html>, accessed 30 Oct. 2020.
40. Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh & Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Auvers-sur-Oise, 25 May 1890, <http://www.vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let875/letter.html>, accessed 30 Oct. 2020.
8. SEEING AND BEING SEEN: IMPRESSIONISTS AND THE CITY
Miranda Wallace (pp. 144–67)
1. ‘Il faut être de son temps!’ (One must be of one’s time!’), is recorded as an expression of Honoré Daumier’s, frequently quoted by Manet. Linda Nochlin, *Realism*, Series: Style and Civilization, London, Penguin, 1971, p. 103.
2. Jules Castagnary, 1863: *The Triumph of Naturalism* [‘Salon de 1863’, originally published in *Le Nord*, 1863, then reprinted in *Salons (1857–1870)*, Bibliothèque Charpentier, Paris, 1892, vol. I, pp. 102–6], in Linda Nochlin, *Realism and Tradition in Art 1848–1900: Sources and Documents*, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1966, p. 66.
3. Charles Moffett provides an account of Manet’s role as perceived leader of the ‘intransigeants’, despite not exhibiting with them, in ‘Manet and Impressionism’, in Françoise Cachin et al., *Manet 1832–1883*, Galeries nationale du Grand Palais, Paris / Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1983, p. 29ff.
4. Paul Valéry recalled that Degas often quoted this expression from Zola, who borrowed it from Francis Bacon. See Paul Valéry, *Degas, Manet, Morisot*, Series: Collected Works, vol. 12, trans. David Paul, Pantheon Books, New York, 1960, p. 83.
5. Edgar Degas, quoted in George Moore, Walter Sickert & Anna Gruetzner Robins, *The Painter of Modern Life: Memories of Degas*, Lives of the Artists, Pallas Athene, London, 2011, p. 49.
6. Edgar Degas, letter to James Tissot, ‘Friday 1874’, quoted in Cachin et al., p. 29.
7. Stéphane Mallarmé, ‘The Impressionists and Édouard Manet’, in Charles Moffett et al., *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874–1886*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco / National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 1986, p. 30.
8. Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris: An Architectural History*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1993, p. 83.
9. Charles Baudelaire, ‘The Salon of 1846’, in Jonathan Mayne (ed. & trans.), *Art in Paris, 1845–1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions*, Phaidon Press, London, 1965, p. 118.
10. Antonin Bartélemy (ed.), *Antonin Proust: Édouard Manet: Souvenirs*, Librairie Renouard and H. Laurens, Paris, 1913, p. 378.
11. Victorine Meurent posed for several paintings in 1862/63, the most famous being *Le Dejeuner sur l’herbe*, 1863 (Musée d’Orsay, Paris), which brought Manet enormous critical attention (mostly negative) when it was exhibited at the 1863 Salon des Refusés. Meurent continued to pose for Manet until the mid 1870s, and is easily recognised in *Olympia*, 1865 (Musée d’Orsay, Paris), *Mlle V ... in the costume of an Espada*, 1862, and *Young lady in 1866*, 1866 (both Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), and *The railroad*, 1873 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC).
12. See Therese Dolan, ‘Manet’s The Street Singer and the poets’, *Word & Image*, no. 34, no. 2, April 2018, pp. 88–110.
13. Paul Mantz, April 1863, quoted in Charles Moffett, in Cachin et al., pp. 106–8.
14. Émile Zola, 1867, quoted in Charles Moffett, in Cachin et al., p. 108.
15. See Gary Tinterow et al., *Manet/Velázquez: The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York / Yale University Press, New Haven, 2003. In particular, Juliet Wilson-Bareau’s ‘Manet and Spain’, p. 203ff. Manet referred to Velázquez as ‘the painter of painters’ in a letter to Fantin-Latour, 3 Sep. 1865, quoted by Gary Tinterow in Tinterow et al., p. 51.
16. Edgar Degas, Notebook 22, in Charles Harrison, Paul Wood & Jason Gaiger (eds), *Art in Theory 1815–1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Blackwells, Oxford, 1998, p. 566.
17. Manet’s visits led to a fascinating group of works, of which only a few survive. See Juliet Wilson-Bareau, Kathryn Krennitzer & Genevieve Westerby, ‘Manet, Cat. 12, The races at Longchamp: curatorial entry’, in *Manet Paintings and Works on Paper at the Art Institute of Chicago*, Art Institute of Chicago, <https://publications.artic.edu/manet/reader/manetart/section/140042/p-140042-o/p-140042-2>, accessed 1 Oct. 2020.
18. Its unusual cropping may have been influenced by Degas’ fascination with photography. See Malcolm Daniel (ed.), *Edgar Degas, Photographer*, Harry N. Abrams / Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1998.
19. See Henri Loyrette, ‘Chronology I: 1853–1873’, in Jean Sutherland Boggs et al., *Degas*, New York/Ottawa, Metropolitan Museum of Art / National Gallery of Canada, 1988, p. 55.
20. The MFA Collection also includes preparatory sketches for this portrait that reveal Degas’ intense study of his brother-in-law’s features and personality.
21. Félix Fénéon, cited in Henri Loyrette, *Degas: A New Vision*, Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, 2016, p. 152.
22. Mary Cassatt, letter to Colonel Paine, 28 Feb. 1915, in Nancy Mowll Mathews (ed.), *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, New York, Abbeville Press, 1984, p. 321.
23. The other is *Nude on a couch*, 1882 (Minneapolis Institute of Arts). For more on Caillebotte, see Anne Distel et al., *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, Art Institute of Chicago / Musée d’Orsay, Paris, 1995.
24. These quoted phrases are taken from Joris-Karl Huysmans’s discussion of another Caillebotte painting, *Interior, woman at the window*, 1880 (private collection), in *Modern Art* (1883), trans. Brendan King, Dedalus European Classics, Dedalus Ebooks, 2019. At the time he painted this work, Caillebotte and his brother were both living at 31, Boulevard Haussmann, in the 9th arrondissement of Paris.
25. For analysis of these works and the group from which they come, see Jean Sutherland Boggs, *Degas*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1996, p. 55ff.
26. Degas, speaking to George Moore in 1886, quoted in Moore, Sickert & Robins, p. 58.
9. IMPRESSIONIST PRINTMAKING: LE JOUR ET LA NUIT
Cathy Leahy (pp. 168–83)
1. Marcellin Desboutin, letter to Jules Claretie, 17 July 1876, quoted in Sue Welsh Reed & Barbara Stern Shapiro, *Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 1984, p. xxix.
2. Ludovic Halévy, diary entry for 16 May 1879, quoted in George T. M. Shackelford, ‘Pas de deux: Mary Cassatt and Edgar Degas’, in Judith A. Barter et al., *Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1999, pp. 118–9.
3. Robert Simpson Cassatt quoted in Barbara Stern Shapiro, ‘A printmaking encounter’, in Ann Dumas, Colta Ives, Susan Alyson Stein & Gary Tinterow, *The Private Collection of Edgar Degas*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1997, p. 235.
4. Letter from Degas to Félix Bracquemond, end 1879 or beginning 1880, in Marcel Guérin (ed.), *Degas Letters*, Bruno Cassirer, Oxford, 1947, p. 53.
5. Edgar Degas, letter to Camille Pissarro, 1880, in Guérin, p. 57.
6. See Shapiro, pp. 240–1.
7. Katherine Cassatt, letter to Alexander Cassatt, 8 April 1880, quoted in Shapiro, p. 235.
8. In 1985 Charles F. Stuckey published a previously unrecorded notice about the journal: Tout-Paris [pseud.], ‘La journée Parisienne: impressions d’un impressionniste’, *Le Gaulois*, 24 Jan. 1880, in Charles F. Stuckey, ‘Recent Degas publications’, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 127, no. 988, July 1985, p. 466. Reproduced in part in Jean Sutherland Boggs et al, *Degas*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York / National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 1988, p. 218.
9. ‘I spoke to Caillebotte about the journal. He is willing to guarantee for us. Come and talk it over with me. No time to lose ... Do find time to spend a day with me. There are a number of things to be fixed and arranged for our journal so that we can show our capitalists some definite program.’ Edgar Degas, letter to Félix Bracquemond, 13 May 1879, in Guérin, pp. 50–1. Bracquemond also designed a possible cover for *Le Jour et la nuit*, reproduced in Shapiro, p. 236. Jean-François Raffaëlli’s print was *Old rag-and-bone man*, 1879, drypoint, see Michel Melot, *The Impressionist Print*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1996, p. 152, plate 159.
10. See Douglas Druick & Peter Zegers, ‘Degas and the printed image 1856–1914’, in Reed & Shapiro, pp. xv–lxxii; especially p. xlv.
11. Edgar Degas, letter to Camille Pissarro, 1880, in Guérin, p. 59.
12. In July 1876 the Impressionists’ Parisian dealer Paul Durand-Ruel held a ‘black-and-white’ exhibition showing original and reproductive prints together with drawings. This was modelled on the highly successful *Black and White* exhibitions held at London’s Dudley Gallery from 1872, which had greatly contributed to making etchings, in particular, both fashionable and profitable. Illustrated journals also proliferated in this period; some, such as *Paris à l’eau-forte* (1873–76) illustrated with etchings; others, such as *La Vie moderne* (launched 1879), with reproductive gillotages. See the accounts given in Druick & Zegers, as well as in Michel Melot, *The Impressionist Print*, trans. Caroline Beamish, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1996.
13. The Impressionists’ charter of 1874 had listed the publication of their own journal as one of the group’s aims. The only such publication they had achieved was the short-lived *L’Impressionniste* published by Georges Rivière in 1877 (5 issues only).
14. Edgar Degas, *At the Louvre*, 1879, pastel, Lemoine 581, private collection.
15. In his 1876 treatise *La nouvelle peinture*, Edmond Duranty had written: ‘What we need are the special characteristics of the modern individual – in his clothing, in social situations, at home, or on the street’. Edmond Duranty, *The New Painting: Concerning the Group of Artists Exhibiting at the Durand-Ruel Galleries*, Paris, 1876, quoted in Shackelford, pp. 113–4.
16. State XII-XIIa of this print is the hand-coloured impression which is in the Art Institute of Chicago collection. Lloyds Delteil noted that he had seen forty-four impressions in his ‘Edgar Degas, Le Peintre-graveur illustré, IX, Paris’, privately printed, 1919. Sue Welsh Reed and Barbara Stern Shapiro examined thirty-two impressions in the preparation of their catalogue raisonné and identified two further variants. See Reed & Shapiro, cat. 52.
10. IMMEDIACY AND INFINITY: MONET IN SITU
Katie Hanson (pp. 184–209)
1. Claude Monet quoted in Roger Marx, ‘M. Claude Monet’s Water Lilies’, *Gazette des beaux-arts* (June 1909), reprinted and trans. in Charles Stuckey (ed.), *Claude Monet: A Retrospective*, Park Lane, New York, 1986, p. 266.
2. Maurice Guillemot, ‘Claude Monet’, *La Revue illustrée*, 15 March 1898, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 197.
3. Catherine Hug & Monika Leonhardt, ‘Claude Monet the gardener’, in Christoph Becker et al., *Monet’s Garden*, Hatje Cantz Publishers, Ostfildern-Ruiz, in association with Kunsthau Zürich, 2004, p. 120.
4. Claude Monet, letter to Dr Georges de Bellio, 25 July 1876, in Daniel Wildenstein, *Claude Monet. Biographie et catalogue raisonné*, 5 vols, La Bibliothèque des Arts, Lausanne & Paris, 1974–91, vol. 1, p. 431, letter 95.
5. Monet, letter to Théodore Duret, 20 May 1883, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 229, letter 354.
6. Monet, letter to Paul Durand-Ruel, 10 June 1883, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 229, letter 358.
7. Monet, letter to Paul Durand-Ruel, 3 July 1883, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 230, letter 362.
8. Pierre Georges Jeannot, ‘Notes on art: Claude Monet’, *La Cravache parisienne*, 23 June 1888, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 129.
9. André Arnyveld, ‘At home with the painter of light’, *Je sais tout*, 15 Jan. 1914, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 271; regarding Monet’s distaste for city life see, for example, Monet’s letter to Alice Hoschedé, 12 Feb. 1892, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 263, letter 1132: ‘it really doesn’t suit me living in towns’.
10. François Thiébault-Sisson, ‘About Claude Monet’, *Le Temps*, 8 Jan. 1927, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 346.
11. Monet, letter to Alice Hoschedé, 15 Feb. 1882, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 214, letter 242.
12. Monet, letter to Alice Hoschedé, 4 April 1882, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 217, letter 263bis.
13. Gustave Geffroy, ‘Claude Monet’, *La Justice*, 15 March 1883, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 97.
14. Philippe Burty, ‘The landscapes of Claude Monet’, *La République française*, 27 March 1883, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 100.
15. Monet, letter to unknown recipient, 25 March 1884, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 232, letter 460.
16. Monet, letter to Alice Hoschedé, 24 Jan. 1884, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 233, letter 392.
17. Monet, letter to Alice Hoschedé, 19 Jan. 1888, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 225, letter 810. Parentheticals per the original.
18. Monet, letter to Alice Hoschedé, 23 Jan. 1888, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 226, letter 814.
19. Monet, letter to Alice Hoschedé, 3 Feb. 1888, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 228, letter 827.
20. Monet, letter to unknown recipient, 25 March 1884, in Wildenstein, vol. 2, p. 232, letter 460.
21. Monet, letter to Auguste Rodin, 1 Feb. 1888, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 227, letter 825.
22. Monet, letter to unknown recipient, 1 Oct. 1888, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 239, letter 906.
23. Monet, letter to Gustave Geffroy, 21 July 1890, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 257, letter 1066.
24. Monet, letter to Gustave Geffroy, 7 Oct. 1890, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 258, letter 1076.
25. Geffroy’s catalogue essay was reprinted for wider circulation in his ‘Claude Monet Exhibition’, *L’Art dans les deux mondes*, 1891, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 162.
26. Monet, letter to the Prefect of the Eure, 17 July 1893, in Wildenstein, vol. 3, p. 275, letter 1219.
27. Monet in Marx, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 267.
28. Monet quoted in François Thiébault-Sisson, ‘Un nouveau musée parisien. Les Nymphéas de Claude Monet à l’Orangerie des Tuileries’, *Revue de l’art ancien et moderne*, vol. LII, 1927, pp. 44–5, in *Claude Monet 1840–1926*, Réunion des musées nationaux & Musée d’Orsay, Paris, 2010, p. 29.
29. Monet in Marx, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 267.
30. Arsène Alexandre, ‘Monet’s garden’, *Le Figaro*, 9 Aug. 1901, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, pp. 219–20.
31. Louis Vauxcelles, ‘An afternoon visit with Claude Monet’, *L’Art et les artistes*, Dec. 1905, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, pp. 245–9.
32. Philippe Burty, ‘The landscapes of Claude Monet’, *La République française*, 27 March 1883, reprinted and trans. in Stuckey, p. 101.



LIST OF WORKS

NOTE TO THE READER

This checklist is arranged alphabetically by artist, with works by the same artist ordered alphabetically by title. All measurements are in centimetres to the first decimal point, height x width.

All works are Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, unless otherwise noted.

Eugène Louis Boudin

French 1824–98

Deauville at low tide 1897

oil on canvas

55.0 x 95.0 cm

Bequest of Mary H. J. Parker (1981.719)

Fashionable figures on the beach 1865

oil on panel

35.5 x 57.5 cm

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Wilson (1974.565)

Figures on the beach 1893

oil on canvas

36.5 x 59.1 cm

Bequest of William A. Coolidge (1993.32)

Harbour at Honfleur 1865

oil on paper mounted on panel

20.3 x 26.7 cm

Anonymous gift (1971.425)

Harbour entrance 1873

oil on canvas

37.2 x 59.7 cm

The Henry C. and Martha B. Angell Collection (19.98)

Harbour scene c. 1888–95

oil on panel

23.2 x 32.4 cm

Gift of Mrs. Henry Bliss (67.906)

Juan-les-pins, the bay and the shore 1893

oil on canvas

54.6 x 90.2 cm

Gift of Eunice and Julian Cohen (1999.584)

Port of Le Havre c. 1886

oil on canvas

39.7 x 54.3 cm

Bequest of Miss Elizabeth Howard Bartol (RES.27.90)

Port scene c. 1880

oil on panel

15.5 x 21.2 cm

Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.521)

Ships at Le Havre 1887

oil on panel

34.9 x 26.4 cm

Gift of Miss Amelia Peabody (37.1212)

The inlet at Berck (Pas-de-Calais) 1882

oil on canvas

54.6 x 75.0 cm

Bequest of Mrs. Stephen S. FitzGerald (64.1905)

Trouville, jetties at low tide 1885

oil on panel

23.8 x 32.7 cm

Bequest of Forsyth Wickes—The Forsyth Wickes Collection (65.2638)

Venice, Santa Maria della Salute from San Giorgio 1895

oil on canvas

46.3 x 65.4 cm

Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (25.111)

Washerwomen near a bridge 1883

oil on panel

32.0 x 41.0 cm

Bequest of David P. Kimball in memory of his wife Clara Bertram Kimball (23.512)

Gustave Caillebotte

French 1848–94

Fruit displayed on a stand c. 1881–82

oil on canvas

76.5 x 100.6 cm

Fanny P. Mason Fund in memory of Alice

Thevin (1979.196)

Man at his bath 1884

oil on canvas

144.8 x 114.3 cm

Museum purchase with funds by exchange from an Anonymous gift, Bequest of William A. Coolidge, Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection, and from the Charles H. Bayley Picture and Painting Fund, Edward Jackson Holmes Fund, Fanny P. Mason Fund in memory of Alice Thevin, Arthur Gordon Tompkins Fund, Gift of Mrs. Samuel Parkman Oliver—Eliza R. Oliver Fund, Sophie F. Friedman Fund, Robert M. Rosenberg Family Fund, and funds donated in honour of George T. M. Shackelford, Chair, Art of Europe, and Arthur K. Solomon Curator of Modern Art, 1996–2011 (2011.231)

Mary Stevenson Cassatt

American 1844–1926

Ellen Mary in a white coat c. 1896

oil on canvas

81.3 x 60.3 cm

Gift of Charles, Hope, and Binney Hare in honour of Ellen Mary Cassatt (1982.630)

In the opera box (no. 3) c. 1880

soft-ground etching, etching and aquatint

3rd of 7 states

20.5 x 18.8 cm (plate)

31.1 x 22.3 cm (sheet)

Gift of Henri M. Petiet, confirmed by his estate (2001.688)

In the opera box (no. 3) c. 1880

soft-ground etching, etching and aquatint

4th of 7 states

20.8 x 18.6 cm (plate)

35.7 x 27.3 cm (sheet)

Gift of Henri M. Petiet, confirmed by his estate (2001.690)

In the opera box (no. 3) c. 1880

soft-ground etching, etching and aquatint

5th of 7 states

20.6 x 18.6 cm (plate)

35.8 x 27.5 cm (sheet)

Gift of Henri M. Petiet, confirmed by his estate (2001.691)

In the opera box (no. 3) c. 1880

soft-ground etching, etching and aquatint

7th of 7 states

20.5 × 18.5 cm (plate)

29.6 x 21.5 cm (sheet)

Gift of Henri M. Petiet, confirmed by his estate (2001.693)

Paul Cézanne

French 1839–1906

Fruit and a jug on a table c. 1890–94

oil on canvas

32.4 x 40.6 cm

Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.524)

The pond c. 1877–79

oil on canvas

47.0 x 56.2 cm

Tompkins Collection—Arthur Gordon

Tompkins Fund (48.244)

Turn in the road c. 1881

oil on canvas

60.6 x 73.3 cm

Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.525)

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot

French 1796–1875

Souvenir of a meadow at Brunoy c. 1855–65

oil on canvas

90.5 x 115.9 cm

Gift of Augustus Hemenway in memory of Louis and Amy Hemenway Cabot (16.1)

Turn in the road c. 1868–70

oil on canvas

62.5 x 48.0 cm

Gift of Robert Jordan from the collection of Eben D. Jordan (24.214)

Twilight 1845–60

oil on canvas

50.2 x 37.1 cm

Bequest of Mrs. Henry Lee Higginson, in memory of her husband (35.1163)

Gustave Courbet

French 1819–77

Hollyhocks in a copper bowl 1872

oil on canvas

60.0 x 48.9 cm

Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.530)

Charles François Daubigny

French 1817–78

Road through the forest c. 1865–70

oil on canvas

64.5 x 92.4 cm

Gift of Mrs. Samuel Dennis Warren (90.200)

Woman washing clothes at the edge of a river
c. 1860–70
oil on canvas
36.2 x 76.5 cm
Gift of Louisa W. and Marian R. Case (20.1864)

Edgar Degas
French 1834–1917
After the bath III 1891–92
lithograph
24.4 x 23.1 cm (image)
31.2 x 30.2 cm (sheet)
Schorr Collection
Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

At the races in the countryside 1869
oil on canvas
36.5 x 55.9 cm
1931 Purchase Fund (26.790)

Ballet dancer with arms crossed c. 1872
oil on canvas
61.3 x 50.5 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.534)

Edmondo and Thérèse Morbilli c. 1865
oil on canvas
116.5 x 88.3 cm
Gift of Robert Treat Paine, 2nd (31.33)

Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Etruscan Gallery
1879–80
soft-ground etching, drypoint, aquatint and etching
7th of 9 states
26.7 x 23.2 cm (plate)
42.0 x 31.0 (sheet)
Katherine E. Bullard Fund in memory of Francis Bullard, by exchange (1983.310)

Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Etruscan Gallery
1879–80
soft-ground etching and drypoint
2nd of 9 states
27.5 x 24.0 cm (plate)
43.0 × 30.6 cm (sheet)
Gift of the Carolyn C. Rowland Trust (2013.345)

Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Paintings Gallery 1879–80
etching, soft-ground etching, aquatint, and drypoint
intermediate state between 15th and 16th states (of 20)
31.4 x 13.5 cm (plate)
35.7 x 27.3 cm (sheet)
Gift of the Carolyn C. Rowland Trust (2013.346)

Nude woman standing, drying herself 1891–92
lithograph, transfer from monotype, crayon, tusche, and scraping
33.0 x 24.5 cm (image)
45.5 x 29.3 cm (sheet)
Katherine E. Bullard Fund in memory of Francis Bullard, by exchange (1983.313)

Portrait of a man c. 1865–70
oil on canvas
55.2 x 45.4 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.532)

Racehorses at Longchamp 1871,
possibly reworked in 1874
oil on canvas
34.0 x 41.9 cm
S. A. Denio Collection—Sylvanus Adams Denio Fund and General Income (03.1034)

Visit to a museum c. 1879–90
oil on canvas
91.8 x 68.0 cm
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John McAndrew (69.49)

Narcisse Virgile Díaz de La Peña
French 1807–76
Clearing in the forest c. 1855–70
oil on panel
18.4 x 23.5 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.537)

Flowers c. 1850–60
oil on canvas
40.0 x 25.1 cm
Bequest of Ellen F. Moseley (24.236)

Path through the forest near Fontainebleau
c. 1875–76
oil on panel
49.2 x 61.0 cm
The Henry C. and Martha B. Angell Collection (19.105)

Pool in the forest 1858
oil on canvas
56.2 x 75.3 cm
Bequest of Miss Elizabeth Howes (07.137)

Henri Fantin-Latour
French 1836–1904
Flowers and fruit on a table 1865
oil on canvas
60.0 x 73.3 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.540)

Plate of peaches 1862
oil on canvas
18.1 x 32.0 cm
M. Theresa B. Hopkins Fund (60.792)

Roses in a glass vase 1890
oil on canvas
42.5 x 37.8 cm
Bequest of Alice A. Hay (1987.291)

Roses in a vase 1872
oil on canvas
35.6 x 28.0 cm
Frederick Brown Fund (40.232)

Paul Gauguin
French 1848–1903
Entrance to the village of Osny 1882–83
oil on canvas
60.0 x 72.7 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.545)

Vincent van Gogh
Dutch (worked in France) 1853–90
Houses at Auvers 1890
oil on canvas
75.6 x 61.9 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.549)

Paul Huet
French 1803–69
Forêt de Compiègne c. 1830
oil on canvas
33.7 x 44.5 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (2002.124)

Johan Barthold Jongkind
Dutch 1819–91
Harbour by moonlight 1871
oil on canvas
34.0 x 46.0 cm
The Henry C. and Martha B. Angell Collection (19.95)

Harbour scene in Holland 1868
oil on canvas
41.9 x 55.9 cm
Gift of Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt (61.1242)

Édouard Manet
French 1832–83
Basket of fruit c. 1864
oil on canvas
37.8 x 44.4 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.576)

Music lesson 1870
oil on canvas
141.0 x 173.1 cm
Anonymous Centennial gift in memory of Charles Deering (69.1123)

Street singer c. 1862
oil on canvas
171.1 x 105.8 cm
Bequest of Sarah Choate Sears in memory of her husband, Joshua Montgomery Sears (66.304)

The races 1865–72
crayon lithograph on chine collé
40.3 x 51.7 cm
Gift of W. G. Russell Allen (23.1325)

Victorine Meurent c. 1862
oil on canvas
42.9 x 43.8 cm
Gift of Richard C. Paine in memory of his father, Robert Treat Paine 2nd (46.846)

Jean-François Millet
French 1814–75
End of the hamlet of Gruchy 1856
oil on canvas
46.4 x 55.9 cm
Gift of Quincy Adams Shaw through Quincy Adams Shaw, Jr., and Mrs. Marian Shaw Houghton (17.1501)

Millet’s family home at Gruchy 1854
oil on canvas
59.7 x 73.7 cm
Gift of the Reverend and Mrs. Frederick A. Frothingham (93.1461)

Shepherdess leaning on her staff c. 1852–53
oil on canvas
29.2 x 21.9 cm
Robert Dawson Evans Collection (17.3245)

Claude Monet
French 1840–1926
Antibes, afternoon effect 1888
oil on canvas
66.0 x 82.5 cm
Gift of Samuel Dacre Bush (27.1324)

Antibes seen from the Plateau Notre-Dame 1888
oil on canvas
65.7 x 81.3 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (39.672)

Boulevard Saint-Denis, Argenteuil, in winter 1875
oil on canvas
60.9 x 81.6 cm
Gift of Richard Saltonstall (1978.633)

Camille Monet and a child in the artist’s garden in Argenteuil 1875
oil on canvas
55.3 x 64.7 cm
Anonymous gift in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Webster (1976.833)

Cap d’Antibes, mistral 1888
oil on canvas
66.0 x 81.3 cm
Bequest of Dr. Arthur Tracy Cabot (42.542)

Cap Martin, near Menton 1884
oil on canvas
67.2 x 81.6 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (25.128)

Fisherman’s cottage on the cliffs at Varengeville 1882
oil on canvas
60.6 x 81.6 cm
Bequest of Anna Perkins Rogers (21.1331)

Grainstack (snow effect) 1891
oil on canvas
65.4 x 92.4 cm
Gift of Miss Aimée and Miss Rosamond Lamb in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Horatio Appleton Lamb (1970.253)

Grand Canal, Venice 1908
oil on canvas
73.7 x 92.4 cm
Bequest of Alexander Cochrane (19.171)

Meadow at Giverny 1886
oil on canvas
92.1 x 81.6 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (39.670)

Meadow with haystacks near Giverny 1885
oil on canvas
74.0 x 93.5 cm
Bequest of Dr. Arthur Tracy Cabot (42.541)

Meadow with poplars c. 1875
oil on canvas
54.6 x 65.4 cm
Bequest of David P. Kimball in memory of his wife Clara Bertram Kimball (23.505)

Poppy field in a hollow near Giverny 1885
oil on canvas
65.1 x 81.3 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (25.106)

Road at La Cavée, Pourville 1882
oil on canvas
60.3 x 81.6 cm
Bequest of Mrs. Susan Mason Loring (24.1755)

Seacoast at Trouville 1881
oil on canvas
60.7 x 81.3 cm
The John Pickering Lyman Collection—Gift of Miss Theodora Lyman (19.1314)

Snow at Argenteuil c. 1874
oil on canvas
54.6 x 73.7 cm
Bequest of Anna Perkins Rogers (21.1329)

The water lily pond 1900
oil on canvas
90.2 x 92.7 cm
Given in memory of Governor Alvan T. Fuller by the Fuller Foundation (61.959)

Water lilies 1905
oil on canvas
89.5 x 100.3 cm
Gift of Edward Jackson Holmes (39.804)

Woodgatherers at the edge of the forest c. 1863
oil on panel
59.7 x 90.2 cm
Henry H. and Zoe Oliver Sherman Fund (1974-325)

Berthe Morisot
French 1841–95
White flowers in a bowl 1885
oil on canvas
46.0 x 55.0 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.581)

Camille Pissarro
French (born in the Danish West Indies) 1830–1903
Landscape panorama (Paysage en long) 1879
aquatint, printed from a zinc plate
1st of 3 states
11.5 x 39.6 cm (plate)
29.6 x 44.0 cm (sheet)
Museum purchase in honour of Barbara Stern Shapiro with funds from the Katherine E. Bullard Fund in memory of Francis Bullard (2004.131)

Landscape panorama (Paysage en long) 1879
etching and aquatint
3rd of 3 states
11.5 x 39.6 cm (plate)
15.8 x 42.6 cm (sheet)
Ellen Frances Mason Fund (34.580)

Morning sunlight on the snow, Éragny-sur-Epte 1895
oil on canvas
82.3 x 61.6 cm
The John Pickering Lyman Collection—Gift of Miss Theodora Lyman (19.1321)

Pontoise, the road to Gisors in winter 1873
oil on canvas
59.7 x 73.7 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.587)

Spring pasture 1889
oil on canvas
60.0 x 73.7 cm
Deposited by the Trustees of the White Fund, Lawrence, Massachusetts
Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Sunlight on the road, Pontoise 1874
oil on canvas
52.4 x 81.6 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (25.114)

Two peasant women in a meadow (Le Pré) 1893
oil on canvas
93.0 x 73.2 cm
Deposited by the Trustees of the White Fund, Lawrence, Massachusetts
Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise 1879
soft-ground etching and aquatint on cream wove paper
1st of 6 states
21.6 x 26.7 cm (plate)
31.5 x 45.0 cm (sheet)
Lee M. Friedman Fund (1971.267)

Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise 1879
soft-ground etching and aquatint on beige laid paper
5th of 6 states
21.6 x 26.6 cm (plate)
30.0 x 42.5 cm (sheet)
Lee M. Friedman Fund (1971.268)

Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise 1879
soft-ground etching and aquatint on cream
Japanese paper
6th of 6 states
21.6 x 26.7 cm (plate)
27.0 x 35.6 cm (sheet)
Katherine E. Bullard Fund in memory of
Francis Bullard, Prints and Drawings Curator's
Discretionary Fund, Cornelius C. Vermeule III
and anonymous gifts (1973.176)

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
French 1841–1919
Algerian girl 1881
oil on canvas
50.8 x 40.6 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (39.677)

Children on the seashore, Guernsey c. 1883
oil on canvas
91.4 x 66.4 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.594)

Dance at Bougival 1883
oil on canvas
181.9 x 98.1 cm
Picture Fund (37.375)

Girls picking flowers in a meadow c. 1890
oil on canvas
65.1 x 81.0 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (39.675)

Grand Canal, Venice 1881
oil on canvas
54.0 x 65.1 cm
Bequest of Alexander Cochrane (19.173)

Landscape on the coast, near Menton 1883
oil on canvas
65.7 x 81.3 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.596)

Mixed flowers in an earthenware pot c. 1869
oil on paperboard mounted on canvas
64.8 x 54.3 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.592)

Rocky crags at L'Estaque 1882
oil on canvas
66.4 x 81.0 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (39.678)

The Seine at Chatou 1881
oil on canvas
73.3 x 92.4 cm
Gift of Arthur Brewster Emmons (19.771)

Woman with a parasol and small child on a sunlit hillside c. 1874–76
oil on canvas
47.0 x 56.2 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.593)

Théodore Rousseau
French 1812–67
Edge of the woods (Plain of Barbizon near Fontainebleau) c. 1850–60
oil on canvas
54.6 x 65.4 cm
Bequest of Mrs. David P. Kimball (23.399)

Pool in the forest early 1850s
oil on canvas
39.4 x 57.4 cm
Robert Dawson Evans Collection (17.3241)

Paul Signac
French 1863–1935
Port of Saint-Cast 1890
oil on canvas
66.0 x 82.5 cm
Gift of William A. Coolidge (1991.584)

View of the Seine at Herblay 1889
oil on canvas
33.3 x 46.4 cm
Gift of Mrs. Charles Sumner Bird (Julia
Appleton Bird) (1980.367)

Alfred Sisley
British (active in France) 1839–99
Grapes and walnuts on a table 1876
oil on canvas
38.1 x 55.2 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.601)

La Croix-Blanche at Saint-Mammès 1884
oil on canvas
65.4 x 92.4 cm
Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection (39.680)

The Loing at Saint-Mammès 1882
oil on canvas
49.8 x 64.9 cm
Bequest of William A. Coolidge (1993.44)

Waterworks at Marly c. 1876
oil on canvas
46.5 x 61.8 cm
Gift of Miss Olive Simes (45.662)

Frits Thaulow
Norwegian 1847–1906
Abbeville c. 1894
oil on canvas
73.5 x 92.5 cm
Deposited by the Trustees of the White Fund,
Lawrence, Massachusetts
Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

River view c. 1890–1900
oil on canvas
53.3 x 66.0 cm
Deposited by the Trustees of the White Fund,
Lawrence, Massachusetts
Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec
French 1864–1901
Carmen Gaudin in the artist's studio 1888
oil on canvas
55.9 x 46.7 cm
Bequest of John T. Spaulding (48.605)

Constant Troyon
French 1810–65
Sheep and shepherd in a landscape c. 1854
oil on canvas
34.9 x 45.1 cm
Bequest of Thomas Gold Appleton (84.276)

COMPARATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

Mary Stevenson Cassatt
American 1844–1926
In the loge 1878
oil on canvas
81.3 x 66.0 cm
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
The Hayden Collection—Charles Henry
Hayden Fund (10.35)

Woman with a pearl necklace in a loge 1879
oil on canvas
81.3 x 59.7 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Bequest of Charlotte Dorrance Wright, 1978
(1978-1-5)

Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin
French 1699–1779
Still Life with teapot, grapes, chestnuts, and a pear
17[64?]
oil on canvas
32.1 x 40.0 cm
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Gift of Martin Brimmer (83.177)

Paul Gauguin
French 1848–1903
Emil Gauguin (1874–1955), the artist's son
c. 1877–78
marble
43.0 x 23.2 x 20.0 cm
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Gift of the Joseph M. May Memorial
Association Inc., 1963 (63.113)

The toilette 1882
relief on pear wood
34.1 x 55.0 x 7.0 cm
Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de
Strasbourg
Purchase with the participation of FRAM
in 1996

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
French 1780–1867
Comtesse d'Haussonville 1845
oil on canvas
131.8 x 92.1 cm
The Frick Collection, New York
Purchased by The Frick Collection, 1927
(1927.1.81)

Madame Moitessier 1851
oil on canvas
147.0 x 100.0 cm
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC
Samuel H. Kress Collection (1946.7.18)

Claude Monet
French 1840–1926
Still life with flowers and fruit 1869
oil on canvas
100.3 x 81.3 cm
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles
(83.PA.215)

Camille Pissarro
French (born in the Danish West Indies)
1830–1903
Wooded landscape at the Hermitage, Pontoise 1879
oil on canvas
46.5 x 56.4 cm
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art,
Kansas City
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Nicholas S. Pickard
(F84-90)

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
French 1841–1919
Odalisque 1870
oil on canvas
69.2 x 122.6 cm
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Chester Dale Collection (1963.10.207)

The great bathers (Les Grandes Baigneuses)
1884–87
oil on canvas
117.8 x 170.8 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art
The Mr. and Mrs. Carroll S. Tyson, Jr.,
Collection, 1963 (1963-116-13)



Dr Ted Gott is Senior Curator of International Art at the NGV. He has curated and co-curated twenty-five exhibitions, including *Napoleon: Revolution to Empire* (2012), *Gustave Moreau and the Eternal Feminine* (2010), *Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire* (2009), *Modern Britain 1900–1960* (2007), *Kiss of the Beast: From Paris Salon to King Kong* (2005) and *The Impressionists: Masterpieces from the Musée d’Orsay* (2004). He has published widely on Australian, British and French art.

Dr Katie Hanson is Curator of Paintings, Art of Europe, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In 2020, she curated *Monet and Boston: Lasting Impression* and *Cézanne: In and Out of Time* for the Museum. Her other recent exhibitions in Boston have included *Klimt and Schiele: Drawn* (2018), *French Pastels: Treasures from the Vault* (2018) and *Pairing Picasso* (2016). Her touring exhibition *La Parisienne: Portraying Women in the Capital of Culture, 1715–1965* was shown at the Nagoya/Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Setagaya Art Museum, and the Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum from June 2017 to June 2018. Her publications include contributions to anthologies, exhibition catalogues and journals addressing artists from Jean-Honoré Fragonard to Henri Matisse and, in April 2020, a new book, *Monet: Paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*.

Dr Angela Hesson is Curator, Australian Painting, Sculpture and Decorative Arts (to 1980) at the National Gallery of Victoria. She has curated numerous exhibitions, including *Hans and Nora Heysen: Two Generations of Australian Art* (2019) and *Love: Art of Emotion 1400–1800* (2017). Prior to her appointment at the NGV, she was employed as a lecturer in Art History and Literature at The University of Melbourne and at La Trobe University, as a curator at The Johnston Collection, and as a freelance arts writer.

Cathy Leahy is Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings at the NGV. She has curated and co-curated numerous exhibitions including *Escher x nendo: Between Two Worlds* (2018); *Colony: Australia 1770–1861 / Frontier Wars* (2018); *John Wolseley – Heartlands and Headwaters* (2015), *William Blake* (2014) and *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse Death and Disaster* (2012). She has published extensively on the NGV’s Prints and Drawings collection.

Meg Slater is Assistant Curator, International Exhibition Projects at the NGV. Since 2017, she has worked on a number of the NGV’s major international exhibitions, including *Keith Haring* \ *Jean-Michel Basquiat: Crossing Lines* (2019), *Alexander Calder: Radical Inventor* (2019) and *MoMA at NGV: 130 Years of Modern and Contemporary Art* (2018). Slater holds a degree in Art History and Business from the University of Queensland and is currently undertaking a Master of Art Curatorship at The University of Melbourne.

Dr Miranda Wallace is Senior Curator, International Exhibition Projects at the NGV, where she contributes to the development and presentation of exhibitions developed in partnership with external curators and international museums. At the NGV, her projects have included *Keith Haring* \ *Jean-Michel Basquiat: Crossing Lines* (2019), *Alexander Calder: Radical Inventor* (2019), *MoMA at NGV: 130 Years of Modern and Contemporary Art* (2018) and *Viktor&Rolf: Fashion Artists* (2018). Her broad curatorial interests encompass histories of museums and their collections, twentieth-century art, photography, design, and architecture.

Julia Welch is Curatorial Research Fellow, Paintings, Art of Europe, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She joined the department in 2013 and has worked on a number of nineteenth and twentieth-century exhibitions, including *Monet and Boston: Lasting Impression* (2020), *French Pastels: Treasures from the Vault* (2018) and *Boston Loves Impressionism* (2014). She received her BA in Art History and French from Colby College, Maine and her MA in Art History from Tufts University, Massachusetts.

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