

A Selection of
French Impressionist
Paintings from the
Yale University
Art Gallery

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Susan D. Greenberg

Foreword by Robert L. Herbert

YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

For George Heard Hamilton

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Jock Reynolds

Henry J. Heinz II Director

Impressionist paintings constantly delight museum audiences. Renoir, Monet, Cézanne, and van Gogh are familiar to even the occasional museum visitor. Through generous bequests over the years, the Yale University Art Gallery has been privileged to exhibit masterworks by these and other great Impressionist painters, enabling Yale's students and professors to study their works. Susan Greenberg, who recently received her PH.D. from Yale in nineteenth-century French painting, has reviewed our broad collection of paintings to illuminate the core of the Impressionist collection at the Gallery. The publication of these selected works was made possible through the generous support of the Robert Lehman Foundation.

We owe particular thanks to John French, project manager; Janet Zullo, assistant project manager; and Alex Contreras, photographer, of the digitization department of the Gallery, who were responsible for generating new photography for the catalogue. Otto Bohlmann copyedited the text, and Katy Homans gave the catalogue its graceful design. The Gallery's associate director, Kathleen Derringer, and Joanna Weber, assistant curator of European and Contemporary Art, secured the grant from the Lehman Foundation. The publication was guided by Jennifer Gross, the Seymour H. Knox, Jr., Curator of European and Contemporary Art. The author also thanks Mimi Cole for her editorial suggestions. Jane Mayo Roos, associate professor of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European painting, sculpture, and theory at Hunter College in New York, generously provided constructive comments on the scholarly content of this publication.

The Gallery has benefited from the influence over time of many scholars. In the foreword, Robert L. Herbert, PH.D. 1957, and the former Robert Lehman Professor of the History of Art at Yale, offers the public and students of art history his thoughts on the works and on his many years of teaching from this collection. We are fortunate and thankful for his contribution to this publication.

George Heard Hamilton is another familiar name in the field of nineteenth- and twentieth-century art. Having received his B.A. from Yale in 1932 and his PH.D. in 1942, he taught art history here from 1943 to 1966. As a curator at the Yale University Art Gallery from 1930 to 1966, he oversaw the paintings collections, in particular the Edwin Austen Abbey Collection and the Collection Société Anonyme. In 1950, he supervised

the production of the Société Anonyme's first catalogue and contributed enormously to its scholarship. Hamilton has published widely on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art, specifically Delacroix, Manet, Monet, Duchamp, as well as Russian art and architecture. He was the director of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown from 1966 until his retirement in 1977, and is professor of art, emeritus, at Williams College. In recognition of his scholarship and his sustained interest in Yale's collections, we wish to dedicate this book to him.

Foreword

Robert L. Herbert

*Professor Emeritus of Humanities,
Mount Holyoke College*

In my thirty-four years of teaching modern art at Yale I never became immune to the joy of leaving the classroom and its slides to look at real objects in the University Art Gallery. In the lecture hall the students are largely passive listeners, but in small groups in the Gallery (I divided the class, first by myself, later with the help of teaching assistants) they became eager participants. At first they responded to my leading questions, then they usually opened up to ask their own. In these groups I nearly always had young studio artists, who were wonderfully quick at reading brushwork, color, and composition, whereas the typical Yale student would be making efforts to recall relevant written texts. Discussions thrived on the contrast between the two approaches, each side unwittingly teaching the other. It was particularly agreeable to see that in the company of professional, though young, artists, students found the pictures on the wall less remote. Sometimes I was able to hang back as a mere moderator, admiring the cross fire and learning from it.

I remember my earliest visits to the Gallery with students in the late 1950s, when there were few Impressionist works to accompany my lectures. Eager to get students to think of technique, I would put them in front of Seurat's tiny *Riverman* (cat. 16), from where we could look over to Sisley's *Seine at Bougival* (cat. 17). Seurat's wood panel, although classified as a "study," is done in patient small dabs, whereas Sisley's canvas is rather broadly brushed. Luminosity in the Seurat (there is no sky or distant view) comes from the vibrating contrast of colors, with greens and yellow-tans opposed to purples, but in the Sisley it comes from the way the light palette produces the luminous sky, the broad plane of the river, and the soft tones of the distant shore seen through the moist light. Usually students would ask what Seurat's man in the punt was fishing for, and I would reply that he was dredging up river-washed sand. This would in turn lead to a comparison with the casual pose of Sisley's well-dressed man, and on to the social issues of work versus leisure which have always concerned me. When such issues arise naturally from staring at original pictures, they seem more immediate than when they are embedded in historical lectures.

Because the Gallery's collections elsewhere are so rich, I would walk the students over to Homer and Eakins, although American art was not my mandate, or to Claude Lorrain's landscape, and even to portions of landscape seen in early Renaissance figure paintings. With Homer and Eakins there

were some parallels in subject, but of course the comparisons lent themselves to close looking at different ways of laying down paint, different supports (wood, canvas, copper), and finally the contrast between oil and tempera.

As the Gallery's display of Impressionist pictures grew, I was able to spend longer hours with my students there. Degas's *False Start* (cat. 4) entered the collections about twenty-five years after I first had students puzzle over his *Jockeys* (cat. 5). When the pictures are seen together, each enriches the other. In *False Start* Degas uses a foreshortened horse and a tiny racing official to control the rightward thrust of the excited horse. He separates these bodies dynamically in a substantial space in order to convey motion and excitement, rather like the way Goya places animals and men in his bullfight prints. In *Jockeys* there is no such space. Instead, the sense of milling about before a race is conveyed in the fragmented bodies of horses and jockeys; pictorial movement is induced rather than stated.

When other paintings were added to the collections, I was able to compare Monet's early *Boulevard Héloïse, Argenteuil* (cat. 10) with his *Port-Domois* (cat. 11), a later view of the sea at Belle-Isle. Both pictures give the sense of immediacy, but the earlier is rather thinly painted, while the later is thickly worked, lending itself to discussions of how the viewer's sense of witnessing "spontaneity" and "instinct" can be differently constructed. Furthermore, the agitated sea of Belle-Isle led students to comment on its romantic mood, in contrast to the apparent matter-of-fact view of the street at Argenteuil. This would bring up that familiar historical theme of city versus country, and then I would usually turn the discussion to Pissarro's rural pictures *The Pond at Ennery* (cat. 13) and *View of Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône* (cat. 14). The former is painted in rather flat slabs of pigment, whereas the latter is worked up in irregular small strokes that seem to express the nervousness of the middle-class women who are gazing out over the agricultural plain.

The ready accessibility of the Gallery's Impressionist pictures enhances the paintings and richly rewards the visitors who give them time. They can walk over to Bierstadt, Homer, Eakins, or to Hopper and Léger, and compare them with Cézanne, Monet, and Pissarro. Unless accompanied by a docent, visitors will be free of a teacher's shadow, but I am still the unrepentant pedagogue who is always looking for lessons. I hope that visitors, bathed in the light from these wonderful Impressionist paintings and aware that they are in a university environment, will become their own teachers.



Introduction

Susan D. Greenberg



FIGURE 1
Edouard Manet, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*
(*Luncheon on the Grass*), 1863. Paris,
Musée d'Orsay (photo: Erich
Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

1. For a detailed chronology of the Impressionist painters and their activities from 1859 to 1870, see Gary Tinterow and Henri Loyrette, *Origins of Impressionism* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 299–326. A lively chronological history of the group may be found in the classic study of Impressionism by John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946).

It is hard to imagine any paintings that have more appeal today than Impressionist works. Depicting the landscapes and pastimes of nineteenth-century France, these vibrant images seem to offer an escape from the disruptions and confusions of twenty-first-century life. The vivid color of Impressionist paintings, the loose brushwork, and the attention to the play of light present a view of the world in visually pleasing flux. Thus many museumgoers respond easily, enthusiastically, to the paintings, and the artists who produced them have achieved great eminence in the history of art: Camille Pissarro (1830–1903) and Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), who met in 1861 at the Académie Suisse, an open studio where artists worked from the model, and Claude Monet (1840–1926), Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919), and Alfred Sisley (1839–1899), who met in the painting studio of Charles Gleyre in 1862. The five artists came to know one another over the course of the 1860s, when they also formed personal and professional ties with Berthe Morisot (1841–1895) and Edgar Degas (1834–1917).¹

The inclusion in this catalogue of works by all of these painters throws into relief their singular approaches to making art, shaped by their varying backgrounds, artistic training, and temperaments. As an assemblage, the catalogue also recalls the shared aims of the Impressionists to modernize French painting, and to bring their pictorial experiments before the public as an exhibition society formed outside official institutions and organizations.

The early history of Impressionism is dominated by the figure of Edouard Manet (1832–1883), whose paintings directly addressed issues of innovation and public exhibition. Although Manet never officially exhibited with the Impressionist group, he served as their example and was the impetus for their experiment. Manet gained notoriety in Paris during the 1860s when he exhibited a series of controversial works, including *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (fig. 1) shown in 1863 at the Salon des Refusés, and the now-iconic *Olympia*, exhibited to critical debate at the Salon of 1865. Both works radically recast traditional genres—the Renaissance *fête champêtre*, or idyllic retreat in nature, and the nude—as strikingly modern subjects, which Manet rendered in daring, loose brushwork and bold tonal contrasts. The works demonstrated to the Parisian public Manet's determination to do battle with academic conventions, which were in ascendance at the Salon during the reign of Napoleon III (1852–1870).



FIGURE 2
Claude Monet, *Women in the Garden*,
1866–67. Paris, Musée d'Orsay (photo:
Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art
Resource, NY)

2. On the geography of Impressionism, see Richard R. Brettell et al., *A Day in the Country: Impressionism and the French Landscape* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1984).

3. For a study of Impressionism and its relation to modern leisure and entertainment, see Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988).

First held in 1667, the Salon was a government-sponsored art exhibition that by the mid-nineteenth century offered the most important display of contemporary art in Europe. A jury composed mainly of professors from the French Academy controlled access to the Salon, however, and rejected works rarely appeared before the public, as there were seldom comparable alternatives to the official exhibition. An exception was the Salon des Refusés of 1863, which did feature rejected works, though this experiment was not repeated later in the 1860s. During these years the artists who became known as the Impressionists had great problems at the Salon; Monet, for example, won acceptance and critical acclaim at the Salon of 1866 only to have his *Women in the Garden* rejected in 1867 (fig. 2).

The Impressionists also shared with Manet a fascination with modern-life subjects: the people, sites, and spaces of the world around them. When they began their careers at about mid-century, this world was undergoing rapid, unprecedented transformation, as fundamental social and economic changes in France transformed life both in the city and in the country. Industrial expansion and especially railway construction took off in the 1840s and changed permanently the face and experience of the countryside. Concurrent with the growth of the railways was a significant population boom in Paris, which led to the rebuilding of the city after 1850 and the emergence of the suburbs outside the capital. The transformation of Paris—called “Haussmannization” after Baron Georges Haussmann (1809–1891), prefect of the Seine, who spearheaded the massive project—centered on razing residential buildings, some dating from the Middle Ages, and constructing mainly luxury housing. Around the grand new apartment houses Haussmann carved out the *grands boulevards*, spacious, broad avenues lined with trees, sidewalks, benches, and gas lamps, along which emerged busy cafés, shops, and theaters.

The rebuilding of Paris in turn generated dislocation and movement, whether forced displacement, flight to the suburbs, or, for the working and middle classes seeking temporary refuge from the city, escape at weekends to places like Argenteuil and Asnières, where they could enjoy recreational activities like boating and swimming.² These great changes fueled the art of the Impressionists, who sought to capture on canvas the rapidity and fleetingness of modern experience.³

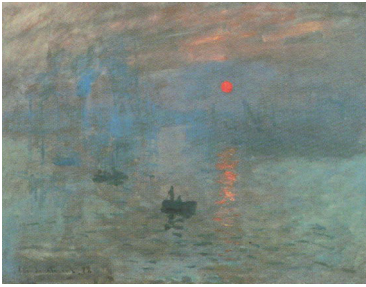


FIGURE 3
Claude Monet, *Impression, Sunrise*,
1872. Paris, Musée Marmottan (photo:
Giraudon/Art Resource, NY)

This new form of painting shaped the first Impressionist group exhibition, which opened for one month on 15 April 1874 and featured works by thirty painters, including Monet, Pissarro, Morisot, Sisley, Degas, Renoir, and Cézanne. The site of the exhibition was the former studio of the photographer Nadar (Félix Tournachon), located on the boulevard des Capucines in the heart of the Right Bank, not far from the glittering new Opéra designed by Charles Garnier, soon to be inaugurated in 1875. Featuring 165 works, the first Impressionist exhibition contrasted sharply with the official Salon of 1874, which opened two weeks later and featured thousands of objects. Its impact was immediate and extensive, prompting dozens of reviews and notices in the press.

It was in these reviews that the group first received the label *Impressionist*. Adapting the term from the title of a painting by Monet called *Impression, Sunrise* (fig. 3), critics used it to indicate the bright colors and looseness of brushwork that characterized a number of the works in the exhibition. In many cases, they applied the term *Impressionism* in a derogatory sense, to suggest that these artists were exhibiting sloppy, badly crafted, unfinished works, mere “impressions” of their subjects, rather than fully realized paintings.⁴ Most reviewers, steeped in tradition as they were, lacked the concepts and the critical language that could accommodate the pictorial innovations of Impressionist works. The paintings so loved today for those very innovations were considered disturbing and incomprehensible when they were first exhibited.

Despite the hostility of the press, there were altogether eight Impressionist exhibitions during the 1870s and early 1880s, the last of them in 1886. By the mid-1880s the works of the Impressionists had become familiar to their viewers, gaining support from the public and, more important, increased attention from the growing number of Parisian art dealers, especially Paul Durand-Ruel and Georges Petit. The Impressionists’ example in turn fueled the experimentation of a new generation of artists, the foremost being Georges Seurat (1859–1891), who exhibited his revolutionary *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grande Jatte* at the eighth and last exhibition, in 1886.

4. See Charles S. Moffet, ed., *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886* (The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986), for an examination of the critical response to the eight Impressionist exhibitions.



FIGURE 4
Camille Pissarro, *Seated Peasant Woman*, 1885. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, B.A. 1929 1983.7.13



FIGURE 5
Vincent van Gogh, *The Night Café*, 1888. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Bequest of Stephen Carlton Clark, B.A. 1903 1961.18.34

This catalogue features a selection of important French Impressionist paintings from the permanent collection at the Yale University Art Gallery. The earliest of these paintings, Manet's *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume* (cat. 8), dates from 1862 and was part of Manet's exhibition of fourteen works in March 1863 at the Galerie Martinet, several months prior to the Salon des Refusés. This work, which is central to Yale's collection, signals the importance of Manet's example to the Impressionists as an artistic innovator.

Most of the images in this catalogue are landscape paintings executed in the environs of Paris. Several works by Monet and Sisley feature suburban milieus, including Argenteuil, Bougival, and the seaside resort town of Trouville, while the paintings by Cézanne and Pissarro represent scenes from around Pissarro's home in Pontoise, in the villages of Auvers, Ennery, and Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône. Together, these landscape paintings give the appearance of conveying the direct experience of painting out-of-doors. Other aspects of Impressionism are apparent in the works in this catalogue by Degas and Morisot, whose paintings explore such subjects as racing, the ballet, and private domestic life.

A significant reworking of Impressionism occurred in the mid-1880s. Termed Neo-Impressionism by the critics, the new approach is evident in the works of Seurat. Among its many innovations, Seurat's painting signaled a renewed emphasis on the figure, which the original members of the group, including Pissarro, Renoir, and Cézanne, had begun to reconsider in the 1880s as their art shifted its aims and goals (fig. 4). Van Gogh had a brief period, during a two-year stay in Paris, when his work was strongly influenced by Neo-Impressionism, which he quickly absorbed and transformed into his own idiosyncratic manner before moving to Arles in 1888.

The late 1880s also saw the emergence of the international movement known as Symbolism, which was in many respects a reaction against the naturalism of Impressionist works. The Symbolists, less fascinated with modern life, tended to retreat inward and place greatest emphasis on the subjective depiction of a scene, through the use of intense color with strong contrasts, abstract patterns, and non-naturalistic space. Though this movement lies beyond the scope of the present catalogue, some mention should be made of important Symbolist works in Yale's collection. Notable

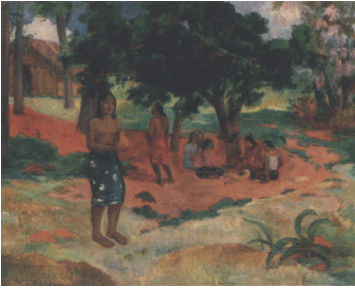


FIGURE 6
Paul Gauguin, *Parau Parau (Whispered Words)*, 1892. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, John Hay Whitney, B.A. 1926, M.A. (Hon.) 1956, Collection 1982.111.5

among them are van Gogh's intensely emotional *The Night Café* (fig. 5), painted in Arles in 1888, and Gauguin's lyrically visionary *Parau Parau* (fig. 6), painted in Tahiti in 1892. By the turn of the century, some aspects of Symbolism had begun to influence the paintings of Monet as well, a development we see in works like his *Artist's Garden at Giverny* (fig. 7). In the last decades of his career, Monet retreated to the country town of Giverny and turned away from purely Impressionist subjects and techniques. These later works show more fragmentary, evocative compositions, timeless rather than modern in character, and they are rendered in daring color, with unusually thick layers of pigment. With radical experiments like these, Monet brought Impressionism into the twentieth century.

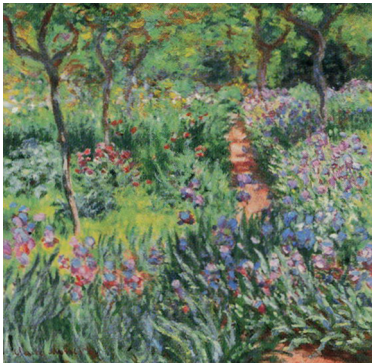


FIGURE 7
Claude Monet, *The Artist's Garden at Giverny*, 1900. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, B.A. 1929 1983.7.12

I Paul Cézanne

Aix-en-Provence 1839 –
Aix-en-Provence 1906

The House of Dr. Gachet at Auvers

1872–1873

Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches
(61.6 x 51.1 cm)

Collection of Mary C. and James W.
Fosburgh, B.A. 1933, M.A. 1935
1979.14.8

PROVENANCE: Georges Bernheim,
Paris; Mr. and Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson,
Chicago; The Art Institute, Chicago
(Ryerson Bequest); Paul Rosenberg,
New York; Mr. and Mrs. James W.
Fosburgh, New York.



FIGURE 8

Vincent van Gogh, *Doctor Paul Gachet*,
1890. Paris, Musée d'Orsay (photo:
Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

This painting represents the house of Dr. Paul Gachet (1828–1909), a homeopathic physician who was one of the earliest supporters of the Impressionists. Gachet, who would later be immortalized in Vincent van Gogh's *Doctor Paul Gachet* (fig. 8), endeavored to fashion a life within the realm of art by surrounding himself with painters and their work; he wrote his medical-school dissertation on melancholia and creativity. In 1872, Gachet moved his family from Paris to Auvers in the Oise valley, where Cézanne, Camille Pissarro, and Armand Guillaumin painted out-of-doors in the early 1870s. Gachet soon acquired works by Cézanne, which were the first the artist succeeded in selling, including *A Modern Olympia* (1873–1874). A parody of Manet's *Olympia* of 1863, the painting was lent by Gachet to the 1874 Impressionist exhibition and brought Cézanne much notoriety.

To depict Gachet's house, Cézanne situated the white, diamond-shaped dwelling in the middle of the canvas and surrounded it with four compositional wedges comprising the sky, the road, and, on both sides, the neighboring trees and houses. Cézanne's rigorous structuring of the canvas is reiterated by a dark line running up the center of the painting, which divides the foreground into two equal parts. In its verticality, this line also has the effect of tilting the road forward, toward the picture plane, while at the same time the house appears to be seen from head-on, which suggests an additional interest in combining different points of view and the avoidance of perspectival exactness. A brightened palette and lively facture, which animate the pared-down composition, suggest the influence of Pissarro, who introduced Cézanne to Impressionist technique while the two worked around Auvers from 1872 to 1874.

Two other landscapes by Cézanne depicting Gachet's house are related to this painting: a smaller work, with a similar composition and once owned by Gachet, in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, and a work representing a view from a different angle, in the Kunstmuseum in Basel.



2 Paul Cézanne

Aix-en-Provence 1839 –

Aix-en-Provence 1906

Village Road near Auvers

1872–1873

Oil on canvas, 15 x 18½ inches

(38.1 x 47 cm)

Bequest of Kate L. Brewster

(Mrs. Kate Lancaster)

1948.120

PROVENANCE: Alphonse Portier, Paris;

Eugène Blot, Paris; his sale, Hôtel

Drouot, Paris, 10 May 1906, no. 15;

Auguste Pellerin, Paris; J. Hessel, Paris;

Paul Cassirer, Berlin; Moderne Galerie

(Heinrich Thannhauser), Munich;

Paul Vallotton, Lausanne, until 1926;

Bernheim-Jeune, Paris; Walter S.

Brewster, Chicago, from 1928.

This small canvas demonstrates Cézanne's painting method as it developed during his excursions in and around the rural village of Auvers in the early 1870s. With rapid strokes of thinly applied paint, Cézanne first laid out the overall composition, comprising the village road, modest rural dwellings, and bordering trees. He then reworked and layered certain passages to create volume, such as the pale wall of the white house, rendered in thick strokes of opaque mint green, light blue, and mauve. He lingered on the wall's cracked surface just beneath its three dark windows, which he described in expressive dabs of brown and highlighted with a thin trace of bright red. Short, abundant strokes of dark paint also build up the pile of materials next to the house, an indecipherable mass of shapes and colors in which Cézanne found two pieces of wood that created a stark *X* form. He left other areas undeveloped, particularly in the upper-left corner, around the group of tall, thin trees, where the canvas remains visible.

Cézanne's technique of painting this view echoes the observation reputedly made by a peasant who had watched Cézanne and Camille Pissarro paint in the open air: "When working, Pissarro pecked [*piquait*] while Cézanne laid in [*plaquait*]." The two artists first met in 1861 at the Académie Suisse; in 1872 Cézanne joined Pissarro in Pontoise, and in the following year he was based in Auvers. After his return to Paris in 1874, Cézanne traveled periodically to Pontoise throughout the decade. Pissarro introduced Cézanne to the lighter palette and rapid stroke of Impressionism, though, as is evident in this painting, Cézanne absorbed its methods into his own deeply personal approach to painting nature. A comparison of this view and Pissarro's *Pond at Ennery* of 1874 (cat. 13) suggests the difference in approach between the two painters. Cézanne's broad, irregular strokes and ambulant eye catalyze the seemingly stable and timeless rural elements so firmly rooted in Pissarro's tranquil landscape.



3 Paul Cézanne

Aix-en-Provence 1839 –

Aix-en-Provence 1906

Picnic on a River

1873–1874

Oil on canvas, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches
(26.4 x 34 cm)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon,

B.A. 1929

1983.7.6

PROVENANCE: Pierre Ferdinand Martin, Paris; Claude Monet, Giverny, until 1926; Michel Monet, Giverny; Alfred Daber, Paris; Fritz Nathan, Zurich; Emil G. Bührle, Zurich; Marlborough Galleries, Zurich; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia, from 1967.

Ever since the Renaissance, painters had depicted the idyllic retreat of men and women in nature, engaging in activities like fishing or music making. This imaginative theme became especially popular in the eighteenth century through the works of Antoine Watteau (1684–1721), who invented the genre known as the *fête galante*, which represented elegant members of Parisian society amusing themselves in parks and gardens. In the nineteenth century, it was predictably Edouard Manet who radically updated the form in his controversial painting *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, exhibited in Paris at the Salon des Refusés of 1863 (see fig. 1). Prompted by Manet's example, the Impressionists, especially Claude Monet, remade the genre into modern, casual picnics depicted with an emphasis on the play of natural light.

Cézanne's interest in the *fête galante* dates from around 1870, and it resulted in a small group of modestly sized canvases depicting pastoral picnics and fishing parties. But, unlike Monet and Manet, Cézanne disliked Parisian society too much to paint sophisticated city dwellers leisurely enjoying nature. Instead, as in this painting, which was almost certainly executed outdoors, Cézanne depicts with frankness and immediacy three figures who fish quietly by a stream. To the right, a fourth figure sleeps under an oak tree. Cézanne's warm, pastel colors and soft brushstrokes, particularly evident in the woman's lavender dress, recall the rococo style of Watteau's *fêtes galantes*. Particular to Cézanne, however, is the firm compositional architecture created by the taut vertical tree at left, set perpendicular to the dark line formed by the stream in the foreground.

This work was owned in the late nineteenth century by Monet, who acquired it from the dealer Pierre Ferdinand Martin as partial payment for one of his own paintings. Monet hung it in his bedroom at his house in Giverny until his death in 1926, when it was sold by his son.



4 Edgar Degas

Paris 1834–Paris 1917

The False Start

c. 1869–1872

Oil on panel, 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches
(32.1 x 40.3 cm)

Signed lower right: E. Degas, and
partially overpainted: Degas

John Hay Whitney, B.A. 1926,
M.A. (Hon.) 1956, Collection
1982.111.6

PROVENANCE: Reitlinger Collection;
sold to Durand-Ruel, Paris, 4 March
1872; purchased by Ernest Hoschedé
(stock no. 1121, as “Cours au Bois de
Boulogne”); his sale (anonymous),
Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 13 January 1874 as
“La tribune des courses à Longchamps”;
Durand-Ruel, New York; Reid and
Lefevre, London, by 1928; M. Knoedler
& Co., New York, 1928; John Hay
Whitney, New York, by 1936.

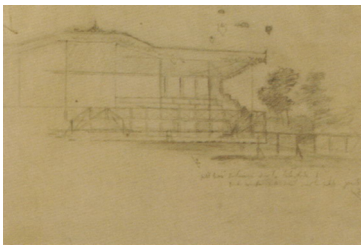


FIGURE 9
Edgar Degas, *The Grandstand* (study
for *The False Start*), 1869–1872.
Collection of Mrs. John Hay Whitney

This scene of the races has been identified as depicting Longchamp, the track in the Bois de Boulogne, the vast park on the fashionable western side of Paris. Horse racing came to France from England and began to be popular in Paris among the well-to-do in the 1830s. It was the opening of Longchamp in 1857, however, as part of the massive rebuilding of the Bois by Napoleon III, that brought the races to the center of upper-class Parisian social life. Edouard Manet and Degas both attended and painted the races, and they were the only Impressionists who treated the subject. Manet produced a small group of innovative paintings at Longchamp from 1864 to 1872, while Degas's passion for racing extended over some forty years of his career, from the early 1860s to around 1900.

The social life at the racetrack is evident in this early panel by Degas. Men, women, and children, clad in colorful hats and holding parasols, watch the race from the stands, while the lush green trees of the Bois fill in the rest of the background. The painting's viewpoint, however, is from across the stands and down below, on the track itself. Dominating the foreground is a large, traditionally modeled horse that lurches forward in a false start, prior to the wave of the official's red flag. Another horse, thrown off by his opponent's erratic behavior, circles around as his rider reigns him in. Angular, expressive shadows cast on the yellow-green track heighten the intensity of the moment. The cropping of the pointed roof of the stands, which Degas first studied in a preparatory drawing, also enhances the illusion of sudden movement (fig. 9). Through these pictorial strategies, Degas depicts a momentary deviation from the normal course of the races, one that a passive bystander would soon forget. But to the knowledgeable outsider, these aberrations were sources of information about the mental preparedness of horses and jockeys, and a way to predict the outcome of the race.



5 Edgar Degas

Paris 1834–Paris 1917

Jockeys

c. 1882

Oil on artist's board, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x

15 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches (26.4 x 39.8 cm)

Signed lower left: Degas

Gift of J. Watson Webb, B.A. 1907, and

Electra Havemeyer Webb

1942.302

PROVENANCE: H. O. Havemeyer,

New York; J. Watson Webb and Electra

Havemeyer Webb, New York.

Horse racing long fascinated Degas, and depictions of it form a significant part of his oeuvre. He often repeated from one work to another the positions of jockeys, reworking them in different combinations and in varying contexts. The jockeys in this painting are culled from the rich body of charcoal drawings, pastels, and paintings that Degas executed at the races, and their attitudes occur in a number of related studies.

Striking in this small work is the close proximity of the horses and jockeys to the spectator. Degas has used the pictorial strategies of overlapping and close focus, so that the horses' heads and rumps loom before the viewer, seeming close enough to touch. In addition, his use of cropping creates the illusion of the horses' lateral movement across the field of vision, as in a moving picture. In the foreground he has cropped the head from the horse on the left and the body from the horse on the right. Using the frame as an active agent in the composition, he has created the illusion of movement as one horse disappears on the left and another emerges on the right. The resulting back-and-forth action suggests that as one horse moves on, another moves into view. The animals' expressive heads, simultaneously real and monumental, conflate Degas's objective study at the races and his copies of horses from the east pediment of the Parthenon done early in his career. In effect, Degas has re-created the spectator's experience of judging the horses and jockeys as they file past, perhaps on their way to the starting gate; the painting's viewer can then size them up, gauge their size and strength, maybe decide on which one to place a bet. Degas has brilliantly overcome the limitations of the static, traditional medium of painting, and has recreated a modern and transient form of visual experience.

It is possible that in this work Degas may also have re-created the experience of honing in on a cluster of jockeys from a distance through the apparatus of binoculars. The oscillation of viewpoint between near and far, small and large—the coming into view of form from the distant patch of green-yellow landscape to the immediate, flattened-out jockeys—suggests an interest in modern viewing techniques, a topic that has been examined in recent Degas scholarship. Degas's exploration of vision and the gaze also led to an intriguing group of small sketches picturing women looking through field glasses at the races.



6 Edgar Degas

Paris 1843–Paris 1917

Ballet Rehearsal

c. 1890

Oil on canvas, 15 1/8 x 34 5/8 inches

(47.9 x 87.9 cm)

Signed lower left: Degas

Gift of Duncan Phillips, B.A. 1908

1952.43.1

PROVENANCE: Galerie Camentron, Paris; Durand-Ruel, Paris (bought from Camentron in 1897); Durand-Ruel, New York, from 1901; sold to Duncan Phillips, Washington, D.C., 1928.



FIGURE 10

Edgar Degas, *Dancer Ready to Dance, with Right Foot Forward*, 1882–1895.

New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of the Estate of Paul Mellon, B.A. 1929

2000.25.1

The subject of the ballet dancer dominates Degas's oeuvre. It is represented by approximately six hundred painted works, hundreds of charcoals and pastels, and a significant body of late sculptures. Degas's fascination with dancers began around 1870 and assumed increased importance after the completion of the glittering new Paris opera house, designed by Charles Garnier and inaugurated in 1875. The Opéra, located at the hub of the *grands boulevards* on the Right Bank, was one of the most popular of the capital's theatrical venues. Some of the ballet dancers who performed on the theater's stage were the celebrities of their day and objects of considerable public fascination. Degas represented this world of performance from a variety of viewpoints. He was particularly intrigued by the process of transformation through which working-class girls became larger-than-life stars. This interest took him behind the scenes to the practice rooms, where he observed the dancers in rehearsal—their repetitive steps and poses—with an odd, psychologically distant eye.

Twice as long as it is high, this painting has a frieze-like shape and is one of approximately forty elongated compositions of dance rehearsals by Degas dating from the late 1870s to the early 1890s. Throughout the series, poses are repeated, as Degas manipulated and rearranged the dancers from one context to another. Here, four dancers at rest are arranged in ascending order at the right and assume poses that Degas often depicted. In the background, to the left of the pole that bisects the scene, another four dancers snap into synchronized order along the bar and become an elegantly uniform ballet corps. The repetition and tedium of practice necessary to achieve this order are suggested in the dancer with her head in her hands, whose pose harks back to traditional representations of melancholia. Indeed, a melancholic blue-brown tonality pervades the entire room.

Degas also explored dancers' movements in a series of later sculptures, executed in clay and wax. During his lifetime he exhibited one sculpture of a dancer, the astonishingly lifelike *Little Dancer of Fourteen Years Old*, which he included in the Impressionist exhibition of 1881. Degas went on to produce approximately 150 sculptural works over a twenty-year period, from 1882 to 1911. These studies were found in his studio after his death, and seventy were cast in bronze between 1919 and 1921. One of these important original wax sculptures was donated to Yale by the Estate of Paul Mellon in 2000 (fig. 10).



7 Vincent van Gogh

Groot-Zundert 1853–

Auvers-sur-Oise 1890

Corner in Voyer-d'Argenson Park at Asnières

1887

Oil on canvas, 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 32 inches

(59.4 x 81.3 cm)

Gift of Henry R. Luce, B.A. 1920

1958.59

PROVENANCE: V. W. van Gogh,
Amsterdam, until 1928; Private
Collection, Scotland; Lefevre Gallery,
London; Sam Salz, New York; Henry
R. Luce, New York.

In February 1886 van Gogh left his native Holland for Paris, where he lived for two years before moving south to Arles. During this period, he absorbed the recent developments in avant-garde French painting—Impressionism—and also the more recent work of the Neo-Impressionists, whose subjects and techniques he quickly assimilated into his own individual and expressive style. Van Gogh studied the work of Camille Pissarro, Claude Monet, and Edgar Degas largely through his brother Theo, an art dealer at the firm of Goupil. His understanding of Neo-Impressionist technique was meanwhile catalyzed by the works of Paul Signac (1863–1935) and especially Georges Seurat, whose paintings were featured in the eighth and last Impressionist exhibition in spring 1886. The exhibition included Seurat's ambitious *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grande Jatte*, which introduced on a grand scale the technique of Pointillism, or the application of paint in small touches of variegated color. His innovative methods quickly came to be hailed as the most avant-garde form of artistic practice in Paris.

Van Gogh experimented with Pointillism in the spring and summer of 1887 while working on the grounds of the eighteenth-century château in the Park Voyer-d'Argenson, in the suburb of Asnières. In this view of the site, the château is visible in the distance on the right, while the rest of the painting is devoted to the path, trees, and decorative flower bed of the surrounding garden. Van Gogh's own idiosyncratic variation of Neo-Impressionist technique is most visible in the radiant sky, which pulsates with multidirectional dots and dashes of pastel greens, blues, and pinks. The horizontal white dashes in the lower area of the sky help form a halo around the trees, while the darker blue dots and dashes farthest from the ground burst outward like shooting stars. The experiment in stroke hints at van Gogh's expressive method of applying color in streaks and dashes in Arles and Saint-Rémy.

This painting appears within another work by van Gogh, hanging above the empty tables in his *Interior of a Restaurant*, painted during the summer of 1887 and now in the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo. There are two further works related to Yale's painting, also executed in the garden at Asnières in 1887 and now in the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam: a smaller oil sketch of the path running through the garden, and a large painting in the *fête galante* tradition, which depicts courting couples under the trees of the park.



8 Edouard Manet

Paris 1832–Paris 1883

Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume

1862

Oil on canvas, 37 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
(94.7 x 113.7 cm)

Signed and inscribed lower right:

à mon ami Nadar / Manet

Bequest of Stephen Carlton Clark,

B.A. 1903

1961.18.33

PROVENANCE: Félix Tournachon, called Nadar, Paris, to whom Manet presented the picture; his sale, Paris, 11–12 Nov. 1895, no. 60; Auguste Pellerin; Eduard Arnhold, Berlin, by 1902; Stephen Carlton Clark, New York.



FIGURE 11
Edouard Manet, Study for *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume*, 1862. Watercolor. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of John S. Thacher, B.A. 1927
1959.63

Manet exhibited this painting with thirteen other works in March 1863 at the Galerie Martinet in Paris. The present title, chosen by Manet for the exhibition, immediately calls attention to the young woman's studio costume, and to the idea of artificiality that organizes the work. The model reclines on a sofa, her legs outstretched, eyelids lowered, and fingers self-consciously perched atop her head, as she boldly invites the viewer's gaze. She further draws attention to herself by wearing a man's Spanish costume, an act of cross-dressing practiced in the nineteenth century by members of the flourishing *demi-monde* in Paris out to challenge bourgeois conventions. If, as was often the case in these years, Manet's touchstone for this painting is the Spanish master Francisco de Goya (1746–1828) and his *Clothed Maja* (c. 1800) and its pendant, the *Nude Maja*, he has taken the tradition of the recumbent female and modernized it, drawing attention to its very construction and artificiality.

Indeed, Manet gives equal, if not more, attention to the costume than to the sitter herself. In particular, he elegantly renders the shiny surface of her trousers, which stretch suggestively over her legs, using rich strokes of subtly differing hues of white and gray. His self-conscious emphasis on surface, and the act of painting, recalls the words of a contemporary critic, Théophile Thoré, who commented upon seeing Manet's studio paintings of models in Spanish costumes, "Under these dashing costumes, something of the personality of the figure is missing; the heads ought to be painted different from the fabrics, with more life and profundity." As if to punctuate this idea of the supremacy of painterly form over subject, Manet inserts in the lower-right corner of the painting the detail of a loosely painted cat playing with an orange. While undoubtedly a sexual innuendo, the cat is also made up of the very colors forming the painting's palette.

In the lower-right corner Manet inscribed the work "à mon ami Nadar" (to my friend Nadar). He presented the painting to Félix Tournachon, called Nadar (1820–1910), a caricaturist and photographer who captured many of the outstanding literary and artistic figures of his era. The model is commonly accepted to be the mistress of Nadar, though it has also been suggested that she is the studio model Victorine Meurent, who posed for a number of Manet's works, including the *Olympia*, exhibited at the Salon of 1865. But the precise identity of the sitter remains unknown.



9 Claude Monet

Paris 1840 – Giverny 1926

Camille on the Beach at Trouville

1870

Oil on canvas, 15 x 18 ¼ inches

(38.1 x 46.4 cm)

Signed lower left: Claude Monet 70

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay

Whitney

1998.46.1

PROVENANCE: Purchased from Monet by Martin in 1874 or 1875; Sam Salz, New York; Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney, c. 1960.



FIGURE 12

Eugène Boudin, *The Beach at Trouville*, 1871. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of Mr. and Mrs.

Paul Mellon, B.A. 1929

1983.7.2

Monet's ability to re-create on canvas an immediate impression of the visible world is masterfully displayed in this painting, executed on the beach in Trouville in the summer of 1870. The work is one of nine oils painted during Monet's honeymoon in the fashionable Normandy resort town with his new wife, Camille Doncieux (1847–1879), and their three-year old son, Jean. Doncieux, who is featured in four of these works, here sits just behind the picture plane, and she lowers her parasol to face the viewer, though her veil, worn to shield her face from the wind and sand, prevents direct eye contact. The effacement by the veil allows Monet to divert attention away from his subject (Doncieux) and toward the technique used to construct the painting. He applied broad strokes of white, tan, and blue, loosely laid on a warm, gray priming, to create form and light, in a clear display of Impressionist brushwork as it was formulated in its earliest and most radical stage during the late 1860s. With notable assurance, Monet used the unfinished areas of gray priming to inflect the existing forms.

Joining Monet in Trouville was his earliest mentor in open-air painting, the local Le Havre painter Eugène Boudin (1824–98). Boudin, who was sixteen years Monet's senior, established a reputation for modestly sized, on-the-spot seascapes of vacationers along the Normandy coast, works striking for their swift and momentary effect (fig. 12). Monet's own series of beach scenes may be understood as the reworking of Boudin's typical subject matter, using the updated method of Impressionist stroke and composition. In Yale's painting, Monet turned Boudin's tranquil, planar composition at an angle and viewed the scene obliquely, with the shoreline forming an active diagonal running across and up the canvas and crisscrossing Doncieux's figure. Furthermore, Monet chose a modern close-up view, in preference to Boudin's more distant vantage point, and instead of Boudin's numerous, distant figures he depicted the forms of a young boy and woman, used simply to punctuate the line of the ocean.

Monet's other paintings from Trouville include two small oils, also featuring Doncieux, that are now in the Musée Marmottan, Paris, and the National Gallery, London. Recent conservation work on the painting in the National Gallery drew attention to pieces of sand lodged in the paint, blown in from the surrounding beach.



10 Claude Monet

Paris 1840–Giverny 1926

Boulevard Héloïse, Argenteuil

1872

Oil on canvas, 13¼ x 22⅞ inches
(33.6 x 57.7 cm)

Signed lower right: Claude Monet
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul
Mellon, B.A. 1929
1983.7.11

PROVENANCE: Possibly bought from
Monet by Dubourg, Paris, April 1873
(as “Argenteuil, brouillard”); Sam Salz,
New York; Richard A. Peto, London,
c. 1960; Sam Salz, New York, 1969;
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville,
Virginia, c. 1973.

During the years of his involvement with the first Impressionist exhibitions in Paris, Monet lived in Argenteuil, where he settled with his family in 1872 after the Franco-Prussian War. He remained there until 1878, when he moved farther up the Seine to the town of Vétheuil. Other painters, including Alfred Sisley, Edouard Manet, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, joined Monet in Argenteuil and often worked with him side by side. For centuries Argenteuil was renowned for the wine produced in the surrounding countryside, though by the 1870s it was also a manufacturing center known for its steelwork, plaster, crystal, and embroidery. Monet executed around 170 canvases in Argenteuil, many of which depict leisure activities associated with sailing small boats. Other paintings consider the town’s infrastructure—highway bridges, railway bridges, and streets—and its relation to the surrounding landscape.

For this painting Monet positioned his canvas at the center of the boulevard Héloïse, one of Argenteuil’s main thoroughfares. Constructed from about 1790 to 1820, the boulevard ran along the length of the town’s Champs de Mars, which in turn bordered the promenade facing the boat basin on the Seine, which was a center for yachting in the capital region. The street was Argenteuil’s closest approximation to a city boulevard, and in the early 1850s it had been paved and straightened by the same company that had paved the Champs-Élysées, the boulevard de la Madeleine, and the boulevard des Capucines in Paris (which Monet painted in his lively *Boulevard des Capucines* of 1873). The sidewalks and street lamps visible in this painting were also recent imports from Paris. Here, however, the paved boulevard is empty, save for one man who ventures out into the street to talk with a coachman. Monet most likely chose to paint at a time of day when the boulevard was least busy in order to secure a vista of the street itself; the painting’s misty, muffled atmosphere suggests early morning. Monet captured the boulevard’s strict perspective, which orders the surroundings into two parts: buildings on the left and nature on the right. The street directs the movement of the townspeople, who walk quietly down its adjacent sidewalks. The muted, sober tones of the street also determine the overall palette, composed of oranges and browns, with hints of complementing lavender.



II Claude Monet

Paris 1840–Giverny 1926

Port-Domois, Belle-Isle

1887

Oil on canvas, 25½ x 32 inches

(64.8 x 81.3 cm)

Signed and dated lower left:

Claude Monet 87

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul

Mellon, B.A. 1929

1983.7.10

PROVENANCE: Bought from Monet by Durand-Ruel, March 1887; E. J. van Wisselingh, Amsterdam; M. P. Vouite, Amsterdam, c. 1938; L. E. Visser, The Hague, c. 1940; Mrs. M. Visser, Laren, c. 1946; Hector Brame, Paris; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia, 1968.

From September to November 1886, Monet painted on Belle-Isle, a rugged island off the southern coast of Brittany known for its unspoiled natural scenery. On the island he executed groups of pictures featuring the celebrated rock formations along the coast in extended and repeated painting sessions. The limitations he placed upon himself—the narrow repertoire of motifs as well as the standardized canvas size—forced Monet to concentrate on the nuances and variations in light and atmosphere that characterized the sea at different times of the day and in changing weather conditions. Monet attempted to describe his work at Belle-Isle in a letter to his companion Alice Hoschedé written midway through his trip:

Each day I feel I know the “old hag” a little better, and there’s no doubt it’s a perfect name for the sea here, terrifying as it is; just one look at those blue-green depths and its terrifying ways (I’m repeating myself) and you’re hooked. I’m absolutely mad about it in other words: but I do know that to paint the sea really well, you need to look at it every hour of every day in the same place so that you can understand its ways in that particular spot; and this is why I am working on the same motifs over and over again, four or six times even; but I’ll be able to explain all this to you much better when I see you with my paintings laid out in front of you.

During the winter of 1886–1887 while back in his Paris studio, Monet continued to paint variations on the works done on site. In the end, he produced nearly forty canvases of Belle-Isle. Yale’s painting, dated 1887 and thus painted in the studio, is one of four works that feature the Roche Percée (pierced rock), which lies in the center of the Bay of Port-Domois.

The new orientation in Monet’s art signaled by the Belle-Isle series was greeted positively by critics and dealers in Paris. In the spring of 1887, Monet exhibited eight of the paintings of Belle-Isle at the Sixth International Exhibition held at Georges Petite’s gallery. Critics described the paintings as powerful and forceful, “an impression filled with grandeur.” A significant number of the paintings, including this one, were bought by Durand-Ruel. Monet’s high estimation of his work at Belle-Isle is evident in his decision to include twelve of the paintings in a large retrospective with Auguste Rodin in 1889, again at Georges Petite’s. The Belle-Isle group anticipates Monet’s great series of grainstacks executed at Giverny in 1888.



12 Berthe Morisot

Bourges 1841–Paris 1895

Woman and Child

1894

Oil on canvas, 19⁷/₈ x 24¹/₆ inches
(50.5 x 61.1 cm)

Stamped lower left: Berthe Morisot
Bequest of Edith Malvina K. Wetmore
1966.79.9

PROVENANCE: Julie Manet; Kraushaar
Gallery, New York, c. 1920; Edith
Malvina K. Wetmore.

Throughout her career, Berthe Morisot painted many images of women in interiors. This attention to female subjects relates to, among other factors, the particular circumstances of her training and vocation as a woman artist. Without access to formal academic training and the study of the nude model, Morisot learned from several minor masters, who introduced her to copying paintings by Old Masters in the Louvre, where she worked from Titian, Veronese, and Rubens. In the early 1860s, Morisot studied with the landscape painter Camille Corot (1796–1875). The informality of her training contrasts with that of her male Impressionist counterparts, such as Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Alfred Sisley, who attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the painting studio of Charles Gleyre in the early 1860s. Morisot nevertheless resourcefully expanded a tradition of amateur picture making practiced by nineteenth-century women. She painted friends and members of her family, and with increasing frequency later in her career, hired female models.

This painting, undertaken in Morisot's apartment on the rue Weber, features two such models, Jeanne-Marie and Marcelle, who posed often in the 1890s. Positioned around a sofa, they enact an intimate exchange, as the seated woman reaches toward the standing child and tends to her cloak, its red hue rendered with a vibrant intensity. Their interchange is illuminated by a soft light coming through the windows, veiled by gauzy pink curtains extending along the wall behind them. Morisot's elegant, Impressionist style of rapid, sketchy strokes, with areas of the canvas still visible, creates a sense of the momentary. Meanwhile, her use of white paint dilutes the intense color and endows the work with the semblance of the more intimate form of a pastel. Appearing between and above the two models is a nude statue on a pedestal, its upper body and head cropped by the picture frame.

This painting is one of the last works executed by Morisot before her unexpected death in 1895 at the age of fifty-four.



13 Camille Pissarro

Charlotte Amalie 1830–Paris 1903

The Pond at Ennery

1874

Oil on canvas, 21 x 25¼ inches

(53.3 x 64.1 cm)

Signed lower left: C. Pissarro. 1874

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul

Mellon, B.A. 1929

1983.7.14

PROVENANCE: Jacques Dubourg, Paris; Georges Bernheim, Paris; Chester Beatty, Dublin (sold Sotheby's 28 June 1967, no. 6); Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia

Pissarro's landscapes of the 1870s have become inextricably linked to the town of Pontoise, some twenty-five kilometers west of Paris. The artist settled here with his family in 1872, after the Franco-Prussian War, and remained until 1884. His numerous depictions of the surrounding fields, dwellings, and village roads testify to the tensions between change and continuity, modernity and nostalgia that emerged in France in the later nineteenth century. In some of these works Pissarro confronted the industrialization of the countryside; in others, such as this painting, he represented intimate corners of rural villages as vestiges of a simpler, pre-industrial life.

The painting depicts a scene from daily life in Ennery, a village just north of Pontoise. It suggests the slow pace of rural life and impresses on the viewer a certain conception of time. Immediate access into the scene's foreground is impeded by a pond, whose reflective waters are stirred only by a few ducks. To enter the painting, one must take the long way round and follow the cobblestone road as it curves past the water. Once in the middle ground, Pissarro again slows down the viewing process: a stone wall blocks the dwellings, which are composed of blank, thick, windowless walls, while a rectangular column prevents our gaze from moving along the path and out of the village. In the painting's center, two peasant women walk close together, at the same pace. In a moment, they will be forced to slow down as their path crosses that of a man side-straddling a horse moving in the opposite direction. Pissarro's short and abundant brushstrokes, uniformly applied across the canvas, create a thick, dense, painted surface that is unyielding to our gaze. The painting's soft, restrained palette suggests the peaceful tranquility that could still be found in the French countryside.

Pissarro's steady hand and generous, paternal nature drew a number of younger artists to Pontoise. Paul Cézanne, who was nine years younger than Pissarro, worked in Pontoise in 1872 and stayed in nearby Auvers during 1873. On Pissarro's advice, Cézanne adopted a looser technique and brighter palette that would become associated with Impressionism, as in *The House of Dr. Gachet in Auvers* (cat. 1). In 1881, both Cézanne and Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) painted with Pissarro in Pontoise; Gauguin returned again in 1883 to nearby Osny and then joined Pissarro later that year in Rouen.



14 Camille Pissarro

Charlotte Amalie 1830–Paris 1903

View of Saint-Ouen- l'Aumône

1876

Oil on canvas, 23 x 31 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
(58.4 x 80.6 cm)

Signed and dated lower right:

C. Pissarro. 1876

Gift of Helen G. Altschul, Widow of
Frank Altschul, B.A. 1908
1983.53.1

PROVENANCE: M. Hoschedé, Paris;
Helen G. Altschul.

This painting was one of twenty-two landscapes exhibited by Pissarro at the third Impressionist exhibition in 1877, and is unique in Yale's collection as the only work to be included in one of the group shows. Pissarro was the only member of the group to take part in all eight Impressionist exhibitions, from the first in 1874 to the last in 1886. Of these works exhibited by Pissarro, most featured scenes from the Oise region around his home in Pontoise, as in this painting, which is a view of Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône, a town located on the bank opposite Pontoise on the Oise River. This work is unusual for Pissarro, because of the depth of the landscape; in his work he tended instead to favor more intimate views of the spaces in and around local villages. Here Pissarro stands back, adopting a high vantage point from the orchards and fields above the town. Close to the foreground, a woman pauses on a footpath to gaze at this view, and she functions as a stand-in for the artist and viewer.

Nestled in the landscape below are the small overlapping shapes of the village rooftops. Also visible, at right, is a narrow smokestack, which belonged to the large factory built only three years before in 1873 by the firm of Chalon et Cie. The factory quickly became the major landmark of Saint-Ouen. To the left, a train makes its way toward the complex, its smoke forming a soft arc over its square cars. Industry is visible, but not dominant, as the panoramic view subsumes its forms into the general character of the landscape composition itself: the train cars resemble houses lined up in a row, while the clouds of smoke from the smokestack—its form echoed in surrounding trees—merge softly with those in the sky. The painting is characterized by a warm, autumnal atmosphere, established by the blue-orange glow of the sky filled with expressive strokes of soft white.

Nature and industry also blend through Pissarro's technique. He applied a multitude of small, multidirectional strokes of contrasting color that cover the entire canvas and unify its surface. The active application of painted marks suggests Pissarro's visual engagement with his subject, one that the Impressionists sought to convey in their works exhibited to the Parisian public.



15 Pierre-Auguste Renoir

Limoges 1841–Cagnes 1919

Mont Sainte-Victoire

c. 1888–1889

Oil on canvas, 20 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches

(53 x 64.1 cm)

Signed lower right: Renoir

The Katherine Ordway Collection

1980.12.14

PROVENANCE: Purchased by Katherine Ordway from the Bignou Gallery, New York, 1941.



FIGURE 13

Paul Cézanne, *Mont Sainte-Victoire*, c. 1880–1890. (photo: Courtesy of Phillips, de Pury & Luxembourg)

As with most of the Impressionists, artistic friendship and exchange permeate the career of Renoir. Originally a porcelain painter, Renoir studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts from 1862 to 1864, where he attended the studio of Charles Gleyre and met Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, and Frédéric Bazille (1841–1870). Throughout the 1860s the four painters worked out-of-doors in the forests and countryside around Paris, and during the 1870s, Renoir painted often with Monet in Argenteuil. With no existing rules, they formulated on their own an Impressionist technique guided by vivid color, loose brushwork, and attention to the play of light.

In the 1880s, Renoir worked with Paul Cézanne, beginning with an excursion to L'Estaque in 1882. In early 1888, Renoir visited Aix-en-Provence, Cézanne's birthplace, and he returned again around 1889. During this second visit Renoir rented a house on the farm called Bellevue from Cézanne's brother-in-law. It was from the prospects around Bellevue that Cézanne had in the early 1880s begun to execute views of Mont Sainte-Victoire, the conical mountain that dominated the region, named in honor of the victory of Marius over the barbarians in the first century A.D. Cézanne's paintings of the mountain are among the best-known landscapes in the history of art (fig. 13).

For this view, Renoir painted Cézanne's mountain, though from his own perspective. He adopted Cézanne's recurrent parallel strokes but substituted his tectonic facture with a more fluid technique and denser application of paint. Furthermore, Renoir leads our eye gently into the painting through a line of olive trees that extends diagonally into the foreground space, their delicate, curvy trunks and cottony leaves shimmering in the Provençal sunlight and casting deep purple shadows. In the late 1880s Renoir cited the eighteenth-century painters Antoine Watteau (1684–1721) and Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732–1806) as models for his current work; their influence is evident here in the softened and variegated technique. Ultimately, the two paintings provide a contrast in technique, and also in mood: Renoir's intense color, decorative forms, and blurred stroke convey a rococo lightheartedness at odds with the gravity of Cézanne's cooler, classicizing vision.



16 Georges Seurat

Paris 1859–Paris 1891

Riverman; Fisherman

1884–1885

Oil on panel, 6 x 9¹/₁₆ inches

(15.3 x 24.9 cm)

Stamped lower right: Seurat

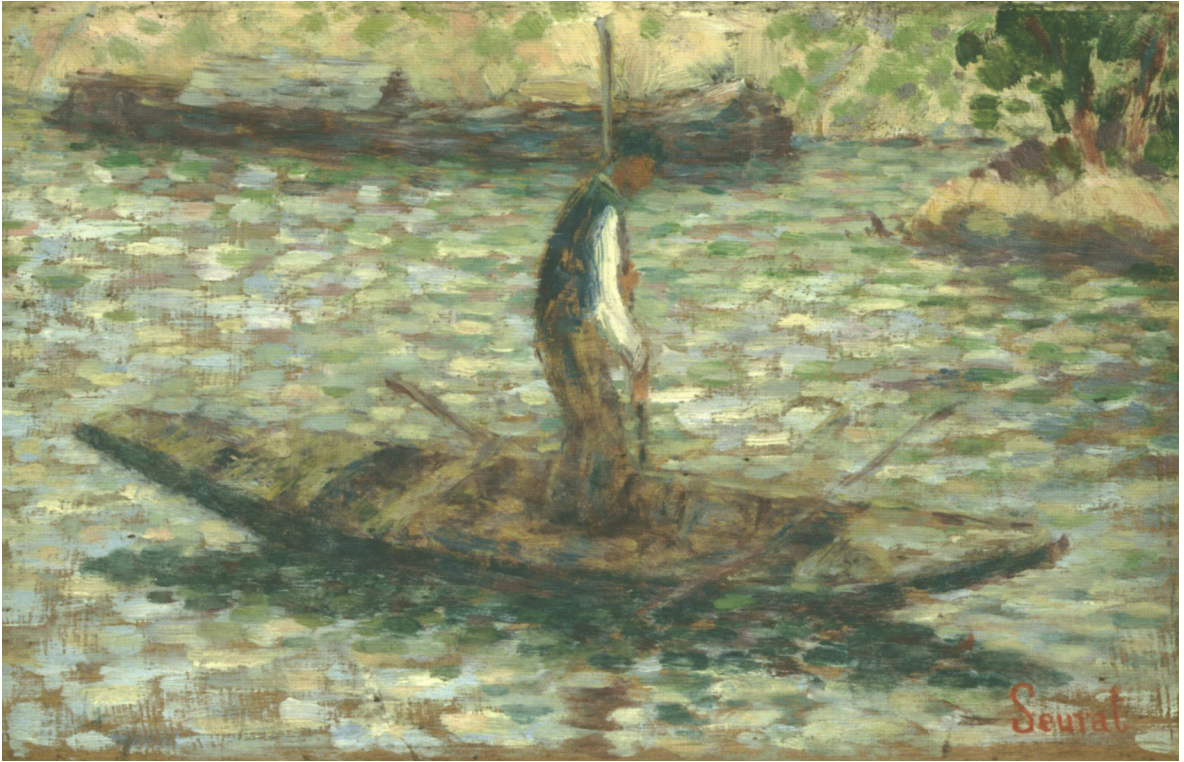
Bequest of Edith Malvina K. Wetmore

1966.79.14

PROVENANCE: Probably Madeleine Knoblock, Paris, from 1891; Félix Fénéon, Paris; Bignou Gallery, until 1929; sold to M. Knoedler & Co., 23 July 1929, until 1937; sold to Edith Wetmore 3 March 1937.

This panel was once owned by Félix Fénéon (1861–1944), one of the most important Parisian art critics of the late nineteenth century. In a brochure entitled *Les Impressionistes en 1886*, Fénéon used the term *Neo-Impressionism*, formulated chiefly in response to Seurat's masterwork, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grande Jatte*, exhibited at the eighth Impressionist exhibition, which was held that year. Seurat's painting moved beyond the Impressionists in scale, subject, and, to Fénéon, especially in technique. Based on his readings in contemporary color theory, Seurat called his division of color "Chromo-luminarism," while the more affectionate term *Pointillism* came to refer to his method of applying this unmixed color in small touches on the canvas. Seurat sought to achieve in his painting a luminous effect through successive layers of many touches of contrasting colors, each painted with increasing precision, which ended in a final layer of identically sized dabs or points.

An earlier stage in Seurat's technique is evident in this work, which was executed out-of-doors and directly in front of the motif. Seurat painted dozens of these small wood panels, which were easily portable during work and travel in the field. In contrast to the precise, small dots of his finished studio compositions, here Seurat applied broader, rectangular strokes of contrasting color, as in the purple strokes denoting the barge and boat that complement the green reflection in the water. In some areas the grainy texture of the wood appears through the paint, recalling the panel's unfinished state as an outdoor sketch. The idea of hands-on workmanship suggested by the work's size, style, and texture is reiterated in its subject. A man who appears to be fishing may instead be plunging a pole into the water to rake up gravel or sand used in building projects, to which the barge behind him may be related. Because of their small size and unpretentious character, these painted panels have been greatly admired by critics and collectors since the turn of the century.



17 Alfred Sisley

Paris 1839–Moret-sur-Loing 1899

The Seine at Bougival

1872

Oil on canvas, 20 x 25 ¹/₆ inches

(50.8 x 65.5 cm)

Signed lower left: Sisley

Gift of Henry Johnson Fisher, B.A. 1896

1962.54

PROVENANCE: Bought from Sisley by Durand-Ruel, Paris, in 1872; from whom purchased by Henry J. Fisher, Greenwich, Connecticut, in 1939.

The modernity of this landscape by Sisley derives not only from its depiction of the chic Parisian suburb of Bougival but also from a strict compositional design that was current among the Impressionists. Bougival's allure for the Parisian bourgeoisie stemmed from its courtly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century châteaux and pleasing, picturesque views; Sisley, who was from a prosperous British family, lived in the neighboring town of Louveciennes and then, after 1875, in the equally elegant Marly-le-Roi, home of Louis XIV's celebrated château. The painting, dating from 1872, shows sailboats docked along the Seine, perhaps to be used for a pleasure cruise by the couple leisurely talking nearby. Sisley organizes his composition so that the vertical pole of one ship is positioned at its middle and effectively divides the painting into two halves. Filling the left side is a close-up view of blooming trees and the river bank, rendered in flickering, colorful strokes; the right side opens up to an expansive vista of sky and distant houses, all reflected in the stretch of the Seine that spreads out before it. Sisley's scene of leisure on the Seine is thus subject to a strict pictorial organization, much like Claude Monet's *Boulevard Héloïse, Argenteuil* (cat. 10) also of 1872, which subjects the town and its inhabitants to the ordering system of perspective. Sisley's painting is an exercise in contrasts, between near and far, intimacy and distance. Furthermore, Sisley's construction of not one but two different views in this work may be understood as his re-creation of the experience of walking from one picturesque view to the next through the countryside around Paris—a leisurely pastime that was nevertheless a regulated visual experience.

Uniting Sisley's painting is a pleasing, gray-lilac tonality, not dissimilar to the cloudy atmosphere of British landscape painting. Sisley was a great admirer of the Barbizon painter Camille Corot (1796–1875), whose command of tone was emulated by a number of the Impressionists. Sisley's study of Corot inspired the subtle coloration that characterizes his best Impressionist paintings.



Robert L. Herbert, who taught art history at Yale from 1956 to 1990, is now Professor Emeritus of Humanities at Mount Holyoke College. In 2000 he published *Nature's Workshop: Renoir's Writings on the Decorative Arts*, revealing many previously unpublished manuscripts by the painter. Among his other books are *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (1988), *Monet on the Normandy Coast, Tourism and Painting, 1867-1886* (1994), and *Seurat: Drawings and Paintings* (2001). He will soon publish *From Millet to Léger, Essays in Social Art History*.

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