

Let's Talk Tours, April 16, 2019

Jim Allen, 'The Bumpy Road from Academic Art to Impressionism

Focus was the 1800's and what was happening historically, socially, artistically. The topic proved to be too big to include the World so Jim narrowed it down to primarily France.

Jim began his tour by soliciting responses to his question, 'What were some of this things happening in France in the 1800's'. Responses might be

- Political Revolution that threw out the Monarchy and the Church
- Industrial Revolution was really picking up steam at this time
- Urbanization
- Napoleon I (Bonaparte) came to power in 1815, issued the Napoleonic Code which embodied Enlightenment principles such as equality of all citizens before the law, religious toleration, and advancement based on virtue.
- Napoleon 3rd, 1848-1870
 - Haussman modernized Paris (displacing the poor)
 - Patron of the Arts to gain legitimacy
- Hygiene was improving with death rates down; population growth was high
- Adm Perry opens Japan to the West, 1853; Meiji Restoration, 1868
- China is dominated by foreign powers competing for 'spheres of influence', Boxer Rebellion (peasant revolt, 1898)

Brief history of the French Academy of Art and the Salons

- "Academy of Painting and Sculpture" was founded by Cardinal Mazarin in 1648
- held in the Salon Carré (which means 'Square Room or Salon')
- **PROP**: photo of Salon Carré
- The Academy hierarchy of painting and sculpture prized history painting above all else
- shows at the Salon were like our Super Bowl; press coverage, dominated discussions, was a must see, etc
- in 1800 N Bonaparte controlled the Academy and favored Neoclassicism above all else.

1. Japan – Ukiyo-e - included to make the point that other parts of the world were producing art. Also that peasant unrest, revolution, theories of class (Communism) were percolating not just in France but in other parts of the World too.

2. Africa - mask

3. Nicolas Poussin, *The Death of Germanicus*, 1627, g313, 58.28

While this work is much earlier, Poussin had written new intellectual rigor to the classical impulse in art

- **Neoclassicism**: illusionism of the real. Since Renaissance goal was to have a painting seem like you were looking through a window, 3 point perspective, smooth brushwork, even lighting True-to-life but high minded. Emulate artists of the Renaissance and classical antiquity
- France was on the brink of its first revolution in 1789, and the Neoclassicists wanted to express a rationality and seriousness that was fitting for their times.
- Poussin's paintings would have a profound influence on later artists, classical and classicizing painters as Jacques Louis David, Paul Cézanne, and Pablo Picasso.
- Poussin experimented with color in *Death of Germanicus* is painted the the style of Titan.
- Poussin wrote "theory of the modes."
- observed that all aspects of a painting should be chosen to arouse an emotion in the viewer that is appropriate to the subject. Thus, severe themes should look grave and joyous ones uplifting.
- Felt that the basic elements of painting—line, form, and color—can appeal directly to the emotions. Poussin applied that principle throughout his career, employing discordant color harmonies for tragic themes and seductive ones for tender and lyrical subjects.
- In 1816, the French Academy introduced a Prix de Rome in paysage historique, historical landscape painting.
- **PROP**: *The Coronation of Napoleon*, 1807, Jacques-Louis David,

4. Delacroix, *Convulsionists of Algiers*, 1837-38, g321, 73.42.3

- **Romanticism** - emotion, subjective, energy and movement
- Delacroix rejects religious and historical subjects
- visits Algeria in 1832 but paints *Convulsionists* later; working from visual memory
- *Convulsionists* rejected for exhibition by the Salon
- Delacroix was forerunner of the bold technical innovations that strongly influenced the development of Impressionism and subsequent modernist movements.
- Journaling by Delacroix on theory of color read aloud by Monet and other Impressionist painters
- **PROP**: *Raft of the Medusa* is a Romantic History painting
- **PROP**: *Liberty Leading the People*, 1830 Romantic history painting
- **PROPS**: color wheel, color triangle painted by Delacroix, notes on color by Delacroix.
- **PROPS**: French Franc with portrait of Delacroix; self-portrait

5. Delacroix, *Still Life with Dahlias, Zinnias, Hollyhocks and Plums*, 1835, g321, 2017.52

- Delacroix's still life paintings were his experiments with color.
- Art of Art's sake and he found no buyers for these still life paintings until late in life
- Van Gogh similarly experimented with the effects of color on color using ball of yarn
- **PROP**: *Barque of Dante*, 1822 and close up photo of pure color on top of color (yellow, green, red)

- **PROPS:** Compare portraits of Niccolò Paganini. one by Ingres (Neoclassicism) and one by Delacroix (Romanticism)

6. Jean-Francois Millet, *Seated Shepherdess*, 1852, g357, 61.23

- **Barbizon School** - part of an art movement towards Realism in art, which arose in the context of the dominant Romantic Movement of the time. The Barbizon school was active roughly from 1830 through 1870.
- the village of Barbizon offered refuge for painters from nearby Paris after a day of sketching nature in the Forest of Fontainebleau
- rejects the emotional, Romantic
- put hardworking peasants into the landscape
- ignored the upper classes
- Realism vs Realist
- Technique vs Theme
- practitioners like Millet (who moved his family there, Théodore Rousseau and Narcisse Diaz de la Peña, Camille Corot, Charles-François Daubigny shared a recognition of landscape as an independent subject and a determination to exhibit such paintings at the conservative Salon.
- Millet endows his subjects with a sculptural presence that recalls the art of Michelangelo and Nicolas Poussin, as seen in his *Woman with a Rake* (38.75).
- Van Gogh greatly admired Millet and made copies of his compositions, including *First Steps*, after Millet.
- **PROP:** *The Gleaners, 1857* the depiction of the working class made the upper classes feel uneasy about their status. illustrated a realistic view of poverty and the working class. Very large like Delacroix's *Liberty..* or *Raft of the Medusa*
- **PROP:** Van Gogh's *The Potato Eaters*, 1885

7. Gustave Courbet, *Deer in the Forest*, 1968, g321, 14.76

- **Realism** - attempt to represent subject matter truthfully, without artificiality.
- Jim would note this painting entered the collection even before the present building was completed.
- Realism flourished in France from 1840-1900.
- Realists democratized art by depicting modern subjects drawn from the everyday lives of the working class. Rejecting the idealized classicism of academic art and the exotic themes of Romanticism, Realism was based on direct observation of the modern world.
- Courbet quote: "painting is an essentially concrete art and can only consist in the representation of real and existing things,"
- **PROP:** *Stone Breakers, 1849* social realism
- **PROP:** fish. Courbet was an outdoorsman and knew these types of subjects intimately.

- Ginny Wheeler shared that any work that was submitted to the Salon for exhibition and was rejected would receive a big red 'R' on the back. We wondered if any of our works have a red 'R'??? Question for a curator.
- The elevation of the working class into the realms of high art and literature coincided with Pierre Proudhon's socialist philosophies and Karl Marx's Communist Manifesto, published in 1848, which urged a proletarian uprising.
- Courbet wrote a Realist manifesto, echoing the tone of the period's political manifestos, in which he asserts his goal as an artist "to translate the customs, the ideas, the appearance of my epoch according to my own estimation."
- **PROP:** Self Portrait of a young Courbet as 'a rabble rouser' (smoking pipe)
- **PROP:** *A Burial At Ornans*, 1849–50 one of the major turning points of 19th-C French art. The painting records the funeral in September 1848 of his great-uncle in the painter's birthplace, the small town of Ornans. It treats an ordinary provincial funeral with unflattering realism, and on the giant scale traditionally reserved for the heroic or religious scenes of history painting. Its exhibition at the 1850–51 Paris Salon created an "explosive reaction" and brought Courbet instant fame.
- A self proclaimed Communist, Courbet supported the Paris Commune
 - Commune of Paris, insurrection of Paris against the French government from March 18 to May 28, 1871. It occurred in the wake of France's defeat in the Franco-German War and the collapse of Napoleon III's Second Empire. Workers and students of Paris joined together to form a revolutionary government called the Paris Commune. The Commune was in direct opposition to the conservative national government; anti-monarchist.
- Courbet died prematurely at age 56 while in exile in Switzerland after fleeing France to escape legal and financial difficulties connected with his duties as a member of the Council of the Commune and responsibility for the demolition of Vendôme column on 16th May 1871. It had been erected by Napoleon I, and had become the symbol of the First and Second Empires.

8. Édouard Manet, *The Smoker*, 1866, g355, 68.79

- Role of portraiture is changing.
- FLAT, no shading, no chiaroscuro, painterly brushstrokes
- known for grays, browns with one accent
- Memorial exhibition at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1884 of 179 of his works hugely influential on the Impressionists.
- Salon of 1863. That year, more than half of the submissions to the official Salon were rejected, including Manet's own. To staunch public outcry, Napoleon III ordered the formation of a Salon des Refusés. Manet exhibited three paintings, including the scandalous
- **PROP:** *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* in the first Salon des Refusés. The public professed to be shocked by the subject of a nude woman blithely enjoying a picnic in the company of two fully clothed men, while a second, scantily clad woman bathes in a stream. While critics recognized that this scene of modern-day debauchery was, to a certain degree, an updated version of

- **PROP:** Titian's Concert champêtre; and Marcantonio Raimondi, *Judgement of Paris, after Raphael* etching (close up of trio)
- *Dejeuner* painted flat, cropped like Japanese wood block prints, overexposed like early photography
- **PROP:** early landscape photo very washed out
- **PROP:** *Grand Canal in Venice*, 1874, Manet
- *Olympia* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris) was considered the most shocking work in the 1865 Salon. a goddess was perfectly acceptable, but a contemporary prostitute awaiting her client was not. NAKED vs NUDE
- influenced one another and shared an interest in modern subjects, plein-air painting, bright colors (often purchased ready-made, in tube form), and visually arresting cropping (inspired by both photographs and Japanese prints).
- The critic Louis Gonse viewed things slightly differently. "Manet is a point of departure, the symptomatic precursor of a revolution," he wrote. To this day, Manet is still considered by many art historians to be the father of modernism.
- Known as Father of Impressionism but did not exhibit with Impressionist in Salon des Refusés; preferring to exhibit in the official Salon.

9. Berthe Morisot, *The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with her Nanny*, 1884, g351, 96.40

- quote of Ross King, *Judgement of Paris*, "wallpaper in it's embryonic state is more finished" than these paintings
- **PROP:** *Impression, Sunrise*, 1872, Monet
- Salon des Refusés included only three woman: Morisot, Cassatt, Eve Gonzalas
- three 'layers'; deep perspective
- brushstrokes visible, zigzag down the sleeve; juxtaposition of colors
- stand close and back up or start far away and move closer. Your eyes do the work of making the image coalesce; your eyes fill in the voids
- our group discussed the difficulty of woman artist to have a career and marriage; Morisot acknowledged that only because she could afford a nanny could she pursue a career.
- Morisot married Eugene Manet, brother of Édouard
- Julie was orphaned at age 16 (1895); lived with Degas for a while; Renoir took in Julie for the whole summer following Berthe's death, showing her great kindness and taking a continuing interest in her welfare.
- **PROP:** *Berthe Morisot with a bouquet of violets*, 1872 by Edouard Manet. Impressionism. portrait. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France
- **PROP:** Eugene Manet and His Daughter in the Garden, 1883
- Dreyfus Affair (1894) highlighted deep and sometimes violent schisms in French society over attitudes to nationalism, tradition, loyalty, justice, individual rights, religion and anti-Semitism. Julie relates Renoir's anti-Dreyfus (read: anti-semitic) feelings in her journal

10. Pierre Auguste Renoir, *The Piazza San Marco*, 1881, g355, 51.19

- Architecture is unusual subject for Renoir; more typically portraiture
- **PROP**: typical Renoir subject *Two Sisters (On the Terrace)*, 1881
- **PIGEONS!** there is no doubt they are pigeons but each is merely a dot or one brushstroke.
- **PROP**: Photography of current day Piazza San Marco with pigeons
- compare pigeons in *The Bronze Horses of San Marco, Venice*, 1876, Charles Caryl Coleman, 79.13. Each pigeon is precisely painted.
- discussion on whether it is illegal to feed the pigeons in Venice (it is, 100 Euros fine)
- **PROP**: Self portrait of Renoir, 1876.
- **PROP**: Frans Hals painting: Manet was particularly inspired by the Frans Hals' work he saw during a trip to Holland in 1872. The rapid brushstrokes of Hals convinced Manet to try the Impressionist's method of painting directly from life.

11. Eduard Vuillard, *The Artist's Mother entering A Door*, 1891, g351, 96.41

- **Les Nabis** (French pronunciation: [le nabi]) was a group of young French artists active in Paris from 1888 until 1900, who played a large part in the transition from impressionism and academic art to abstract art, symbolism and the other early movements of modernism.
- **PROP** Self-Portrait age 21 (440px-Self-Portrait,_Aged_21_A21192.jpg)
- After Impressionism (defined as : paint what we see) artists begin to paint "what they feel"
- Pierre Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, Maurice Denis, embraced decoration as painting's primary function. Their works celebrate pattern and ornament, challenge the boundaries that divide fine arts from crafts, and, in many cases, complement the interiors for which they were commissioned.
- abandoned both linear perspective and modeling, broad planes of unmediated color, thick outlines, and bold patterns that characterize Japanese prints, textured surfaces created by varied brushstrokes.
- In the words of Maurice Denis, the results remind us that painting "is essentially a flat surface covered with colors assembled in a certain order."

Suggestions for objects in the Kunin Collection. Both women artists were friends of Mary Cassatt. Thanks to Ginny Wheeler for contributing research on these two women artists.

- **Cecilia Beaux** (May 1, 1855 – September 17, 1942) was an American society portraitist, in the manner of John Singer Sargent. She was a near-contemporary of American artist Mary Cassatt and also received her training in Philadelphia and France. Her sympathetic renderings of the American ruling class made her one of the most successful portrait painters of her era.

Beaux was compared to Sargent, often favorably. Her strong technique, her perceptive reading of her subjects, and her ability to flatter without falsifying, were traits similar to

his.

Like Sargent, she remained single and devoted her life to her art. Like Sargeant, she developed a structured, professional routine, arriving promptly to her studio and expected her models to do so also.

Earned high praise:

- In 1933 Eleanor Roosevelt honored Beaux as “the American woman who had made the greatest contribution to the culture of the world.”
- One critic stood in front of Beaux’ paintings and exclaimed: “The ordinary ones are signed John Sargent, the best are signed Cecilia Beaux.”

Born in Philadelphia in 1855, 22 days before her mother died, the youngest daughter of a French silk merchant. Heartbroken, he left his girls with their maternal grandmother to raise and went back home to France.

As a female she was denied direct study in anatomy and could not attend drawing classes with live models. Even after having her work published at 18, she did not consider herself an artist.

Attended the new Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts but steered clear of the scandalous Thomas Eakins, so she never was a part of his inner circle.

Studied in NY and in Paris at the Academy Julian. Degas, Monet, Sisley, Caillebotte, Pissarro, Renoir, and Berthe Morisot had been receiving the wrath of the critics for several years. Their art, though varying in style and technique, was the antithesis to the type of Academic art taught by her teacher William-Adolphe Bouguereau. However, she adopted the Impressionist use of more white and paler coloration in her oil painting, particularly in depicting female subjects, an approach favored by Sargent.

While living in Paris, her Aunt Eliza reminded her niece to avoid the temptations of Paris,

"Remember you are first of all a Christian – then a woman and last of all an Artist."

In the summer of 1888 she tried the plein-air painting techniques with little success and thus

remained a realist painter for the rest of her career, even as Cézanne, Matisse, Gauguin, and Picasso were beginning to take art into new directions. Beaux mostly admired classic artists like Titian and Rembrandt.

In 1889 she returned to the states and decided to paint portraits in the “grand manner” earning her commissions from the elite including President Teddy Roosevelt at the



Mrs. Beauveau Borie and Her Son, Adolphe, 1896

White House.

In 1895 she became the first female teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, where she taught portrait drawing and painting for 20 years. She was a popular teacher.

About her struggle for perfection: "A perfect technique in anything means that there has been no break in continuity between the conception and the act of performance."

About her work ethic: "I can say this: When I attempt anything, I have a passionate determination to overcome every obstacle...And I do my own work with a refusal to accept defeat that might almost be called painful."

Lilla Cabot Perry

- Lilla Cabot Perry (January 13, 1848 – February 28, 1933), American



Lilla Cabot Perry, *The Picturebook*,

- Painted her own children indoors with dramatic lighting.
- Although the picture looks like a candid camera moment, it is carefully staged. Who or what captures our attention? How does Perry accomplish that? To what purpose?
- Both of these paintings are narratives - we the viewers create our own stories. Perry wandered Europe, entered the Salon, and painted with Monet. After marrying, Perry and her family traveled widely, living in Paris from 1887 to 1889, where Lilla studied painting. She also trained in Munich and copied old- master paintings in Italy, England, and Spain. It was in 1889, when she was 41 years old, that Perry saw her first Impressionist painting (a work by Claude Monet). Perry sought out

the artist and became his close friend. For nine summers the Perrys rented a house at Giverny, near Monet's, and although he never took pupils, he often advised Perry on her art.

Between 1898 and 1901, the family resided in Japan. This experience gave Perry a rare opportunity to study the sources of Impressionism—notably Japanese fabrics and prints—in depth. There, she produced some 80 paintings; she continued to be prolific throughout her life.

Studied with Kakuko in Japan.

Her blending of eastern and western aesthetics and her sensitive visions of the feminine and

natural worlds offered significant stylistic contributions to both the American and French

Impressionist schools.

Her vocal advocacy for the Impressionist movement helped to make it possible for other American Impressionists like Mary Cassatt to gain the exposure and acceptance they needed in the states. She furthered the American careers of her close friends Claude Monet and John Breck by lecturing stateside on their talents and showcasing their works. She also worked closely with Camille Pissarro to assist him in his dire financial situation by selling his work to friends and family in America.

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