



Claude Monet, *On the Bank of the Seine, Bennefont* (detail), 1868, oil on canvas. The Art Institute of Chicago, Potter Palmer Collection

Kimbell
ART MUSEUM

EDUCATION
PROGRAMS

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PREPARING STUDENTS IN ADVANCE

We look forward to welcoming your school group to the Museum. Here are a few suggestions for teachers to help to ensure a successful, productive learning experience at the Museum.

LOOK, DISCUSS, CREATE

Use this resource to lead classroom discussions and related activities prior to the visit. (Suggested activities may also be used after the visit.)

REVIEW MUSEUM GUIDELINES

For students:

- Touch the works of art only with your eyes, never with your hands.
- Walk in the museum—do not run.
- Use a quiet voice when sharing your ideas.
- No photography is permitted in special exhibitions.
- Write and draw only with pencils—no pens or markers, please.

Additional information for teachers:

- Please review the bus parking information provided with your tour confirmation.
- Backpacks, umbrellas, or other bulky items are not allowed in the galleries. Free parcel check is available.
- Seeing-eye dogs and other service animals assisting people with disabilities are the only animals allowed in the Museum.
- Unscheduled lecturing to groups is not permitted.
- No food, drinks, or water bottles are allowed in any galleries.
- Cell phones should be turned to silent mode while in the Museum.
- Tobacco use, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, electronic cigarettes, snuff, and chewing tobacco, is not permitted in the Museum or anywhere on the Museum's grounds.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Claude Monet	kload / moh-nay
Eugène Boudin	oo-jhen / boo-deh
Paul Durand-Ruel	pol / duh-rahn-roo-ehl
Édouard Manet	ehd-wahr / mah-nay
Camille Doncieux	ka-meal / dohn-see'yuh
Émile Zola	ay-meal / zoh-la
Gustave Courbet	goo-stav / coor-bay
Count Nieuwerkerke	nyuh-vuh-kehrk
Camille Pissarro	ka-meal / pee-sahr-roh
Pierre-Auguste Renoir	pee'air / oh-goost / reh-nwah
Charles-François Daubigny	shar-uhl-frohn-swah / doh-been-yee
Alfred Sisley	ahl-fred / sees-lay

PLACES:

Argenteuil	ahr-jhan-tay
Le Havre	luh ah-vrah
Pointe de la Hève	pwahnt-duh-la-ev
Chailly	shay-ee
Port of Honfleur	ohn-flur
Sainte Adresse	sahnt ah-dress
Bougival	boo-jhee-vall
Chatou	shah-too
Louveciennes	loo-veh-see'yen
Marly-le-Roi	mar-lee-luh-rwah
La Grenouillère	lah gruh-noo'ee-yehr
Trouville	troo-veal

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

This groundbreaking exhibition is the first ever devoted to the young genius of Claude Monet. *Monet: The Early Years* concentrates on the first phase of the artist's career, from his Normandy debut in 1858 until 1872, when he settled in Argenteuil, on the River Seine near Paris.

On the strength of his invention of a highly personal and distinctive mode of painting, the young man positioned himself as an artist to be recognized and to be reckoned with. *Monet: The Early Years* examines this period in depth, through the greatest examples of his painting—drawn from museums in the United States, Europe, and Japan. Uniting many of Monet's works for the first time since they left the artist's studio, *Monet: The Early Years* explores the invention of the painter—not only the evolution of his creative imagination, but also the stages of his conscious development as an artistic personality. Beginning when the artist is seventeen and concluding when he is only thirty-one, *Monet: The Early Years* chronicles that journey with paintings filled with all the ambition and vibrancy of the artist's youth. The exhibition is organized by the Kimbell Art Museum in collaboration with the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

Monet Before the Public

Monet began his career in Le Havre after the painter Eugène Boudin took him under his wing as a teenager, exhibiting [View Near Rouelles](#) in 1858. By age twenty-four, he was accepted into the Paris Salon on his first attempt, showing two paintings, including the Kimbell's *Pointe de la Hève at Low Tide* (pp. 13–14), the inspiration for this exhibition.

This first success was not to last long, however. A full-length portrait of his lover, Camille, was admired at the Salon of 1866, and one painting was much parodied at the Salon of 1868. But Monet's paintings were rejected in 1867, 1869, and 1870. Other exhibition opportunities brought some recognition: pictures rejected by the Salon could be put on view in the window of a dealer's shop, for instance, and be seen there by those particularly interested in modern art. By 1872, Monet's canvases were seen often at the premises of the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel.

There were exhibitions outside Paris, too, including a large show in Le Havre in 1868, where the painter was given a medal. And when an

enterprising dealer, Étienne Cadart, brought a selection of recent French paintings to New York and Boston in 1865, he included a Monet seascape, just the first of hundreds of paintings to cross the Atlantic.

In the Forest of Fontainebleau

Painting seascapes brought Monet recognition in his earliest years, but the attractions of the French countryside were very strong. In 1865, he settled for a time near the Fontainebleau forest, which had been since about 1850 the center of innovation in realist art, exemplified by artists from the village of Barbizon who became known as “the Barbizon School.” Both the forest and the nearby village of Chailly, at the edge of a vast agricultural plain, offered a wealth of motifs for the young painter.

Monet set out to create a monumental painting for the Salon of 1866, one that would blend the worldly modern subjects made famous by Édouard Manet with an equally modern treatment of nature. The vast *Luncheon on the Grass* (pp. 15–16), two large fragments of which are exhibited here, was never brought to completion. The pieces that remain, however, demonstrate how very “unfinished” the finished painting would have been.

The defiance of conventional standards of finish became the artist’s trademark and was typically the reason that so many of his works were either rejected for display or ridiculed when they were shown. The paintings gathered here show that Monet had brushes of many shapes and sizes—literally and figuratively. His bravery, indeed his bravado, became legendary—or else notorious.

Monet’s Family

Claude Monet and Camille Doncieux probably met around 1865. She might have been a model, but she lived with her parents in the same Parisian neighborhood as the painter, so perhaps they even met casually there. By the summer of that year, she was posing for some of the figures in *Luncheon on the Grass*, and in early 1866 she was the model for a full-length portrait that won favor at the Salon.

At some point, the two became lovers, and a son was born to them in August 1867. As a twenty-six-year-old struggling painter, Monet was suddenly responsible for the well-being of a lover and their baby. His relationship with his father and his aunt was strained; they ceased to

support him financially, leaving the young family to face periods of poverty.

The privations of their real life were not reflected in Monet's paintings. Two images of his young son—as a baby in his cradle and as a sleeping toddler—seem to be expressions of fatherly tenderness. Paintings of Camille show a variety of moods, from contentment to boredom or, as in *The Red Kerchief* (pp. 17–18), wistful melancholy.

The pair married in 1870, and Camille remained a frequent model for her husband. A second son was born to them in 1878, but Camille died, aged 32, in 1879.

Painting the Sea

From the time he was in his twenties, throughout his long career, the painting of water was one of Monet's great preoccupations. Furthermore, the ability to capture its changing effects was one of his great talents. More than half the paintings he sent for exhibition in the 1860s showed the sea or the river, attesting not only to the popularity of such themes but also to Monet's abiding interest in them.

His passion for the sea was evident to his audience. "There is a first-rank seascape painter in him," Émile Zola wrote in 1868. "But he interprets this genre in his own way, and I see this as further proof of his intense love for the reality of the present. . . . [H]e loves the water as a mistress, he knows each piece of a ship's hull and could name any rope of the masting."

The mutable surfaces of water posed challenges of representation that Monet was keen to meet, using a variety of techniques. He allowed paints to mix with each other on the surface of the canvas or on his brush, which was carefully selected for just the right effect. Rarely, but brilliantly, he used a flat palette knife—one of Courbet's favorite tools—to slather paint across the picture surface. None of his methods are disguised; on the contrary, Monet insists that the viewer be able to see the traces of his hand at work.

Painting Paris

Monet lived mostly in the country or by the sea, but from time to time he came to Paris to work and to paint the city itself. His first paintings of Parisian life are shown here. They date from 1867, when the capital had

been dressed in its finest on the occasion of the Universal Exposition.

The giant exhibition opened on April 1. At the end of the month, Monet wrote to the powerful Count Nieuwerkerke, minister of fine arts, asking for permission to set up his easel on the exterior colonnade of the Louvre, in order to paint the city streets surrounding the palace-museum.

The resulting [paintings](#) showcase his talent at depicting architecture, which equaled his talent at depicting natural phenomena. In addition, they show a side of Monet's interests that is rarely seen: his awareness of, and fascination with, the details of city life. Nearly 150 years later, his abbreviated indications of street traffic and social interchange seem vividly true.

Both of Monet's submissions to the conservative 1867 Salon had been rejected—a bitter disappointment to the young man. Working from atop the great repository of art of the storied past, Monet here ignores that art, casting his lot with the painters of modern life.

Finding His Path

The year 1867 was a critical juncture in Monet's early career. In that year, he sent two major paintings, [Women in the Garden](#) (Musée d'Orsay, Paris) and *Port of Honfleur* (now lost) to the Salon, which rejected both works. He painted the views of the environs of the Louvre in the spring; he experimented with new and exciting ways of painting the ocean; and over the course of the summer he worked furiously on as many as twenty canvases depicting Le Havre, Sainte-Adresse, and the Channel sea.

In the background of all this activity, Monet was forced to balance his duties as a lover and prospective father with his needs for family support and approval. Although he was living with some trepidation at the home of his aunt and father at Sainte-Adresse, under sunny summer skies his palette lightened and intensified, resulting in such compositions as the [garden scene](#) and [cliffside seascapes](#) included in the exhibition.

In these works, he began using the small brushstrokes—flickering, glancing marks that suggest nature both in motion and under changing conditions of light—that would become the hallmark of his art in the next decade. His evolution was not just in one direction, however: the [painting of his son in a cradle](#), where his manner of execution was broad and simple, was certainly painted after the shimmering garden and seascape hanging here.

Failure, Success, Experimentation

The Monet family spent most of 1869 near the riverside village of Bougival, where, along with the nearby towns of Chatou, Louveciennes, and Marly-le-Roi, Monet's colleagues Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and Alfred Sisley would gather. Although Monet's Salon offerings—including [The Magpie](#)—were rejected, he managed to display independently a small canvas that, according to Boudin, drew “the whole artistic world.”

In spite of this success, Monet complained that “dealers and collectors ignore me,” and counted himself “unable to work.” The summer was a period of great worry for Monet and his family, who were often without food and depended on the generosity of both Renoir and Bazille.

A period of feverish activity brought Renoir and Monet together. In tandem, they painted still lifes and remarkable studies of the bathing place [La Grenouillère](#). In a pair of daring canvases, Monet experimented with particularly novel ways of depicting reflected light. But he wrote in August that “for eight days, we have no bread, no wine, no fire for cooking, no light.” Impoverishment, nevertheless, gave rise to accomplishment, as demonstrated by the remarkable paintings of 1869 and 1870 exhibited here.

On the Beach at Trouville

Claude Monet and Camille Doncieux were married on June 28, 1870, in Paris; the painter [Gustave Courbet](#), with a physician and a journalist, served as witnesses. Significantly, in light of the coming [Franco-Prussian War](#) and the political unrest that followed, all three of Monet's witnesses were associated with the radical left.

The Monets went for their honeymoon to Trouville, on the coast, where they lodged at a modest hotel from the end of June through the summer. They were joined there for the last month of their stay by Boudin and his wife. The couples enjoyed the resort, and Monet and Boudin painted views of the beach. The honeymoon was not without its setbacks, however. Monet's aunt died about a week after the couple arrived in Normandy; less than two weeks later, on July 19, war was declared between France and Prussia.

Little of that personal or political background can be sensed in these pictures of life at a fashionable resort. The hotels along the boardwalk, with their colorful flags and bright, painted staircases, shine in the

summer sun. [Camille relaxes on the beach](#) in the up-to-date dresses that are *de rigueur* for such a modish locale. But as the month of September went on, the couple became more concerned for the future. Fearful of being called up by the army, Monet embarked for England in early October.

[London](#)

Monet arrived in London on October 6, 1870; his wife and son soon joined him there. The family eventually settled in rented rooms in the borough of Kensington. In the capital, they were reunited with the older painter [Charles-François Daubigny](#), through whom they were introduced to Paul Durand-Ruel, a Parisian art dealer. Also in England was [Camille Pissarro](#), living in South London with his family. Visiting the city's museums, the painters studied the works of the English masters John Constable and [William Turner](#).

By the end of 1870, Monet had undertaken a group of paintings of London. Some of these focus on the city's vast public parks, while others reveal his attraction to the broad river Thames, which he would revisit some thirty years later. Of the six paintings Monet completed while on his first stay in England, four are shown in the exhibition.

Of Monet's friends who remained in France only Frédéric Bazille came to harm, killed in battle at the end of November. Monet and his family were removed from the tumult of the fall of Paris, the armistice, and above all the declaration in Paris of an independent Republican government, the Commune, which led to Civil War. By the time the Commune fell, some 20,000 citizens had died. Even before the strife came to an end, the Monets quit England to go to Holland.

[Zaandam](#)

On June 2, 1871, Monet sent a letter to Pissarro, still in London, to give him news. "We have finally arrived at the end of our journey," he wrote. "We traveled almost the whole length of Holland and, to be sure, what I saw of it seemed far more beautiful than it is said to be. Zaandam is particularly remarkable."

Reaching Zaandam by ferry, which took about an hour from Amsterdam, the Monet family settled in to live at the Hotel de Beurs, on the city's port. They remained there for the rest of their stay, although they spent time in Amsterdam both at the beginning and at the end of their Holland

sojourn. At some point, Monet visited Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum and the [Frans Hals](#) Museum in Haarlem.

During his first visit in Holland—he would return a few years later—Monet completed some two dozen paintings. These are divided between studies of buildings along the water near the city center and views of canals lined by fields and working windmills. All are painted on narrow horizontal canvases, stressing the flatness of the Dutch landscape, its distant horizon accented only by the houses and mills. Holland's changeable weather, as well as the omnipresence of water—ports, rivers, and canals—provided Monet, as he said, with “enough to paint here for a lifetime.”

[Argenteuil](#)

Returning to France in November 1871, the Monets were briefly in Paris, where Monet obtained a studio, reestablishing himself in the capital. By the end of December, however, he had rented a house in the riverside town of Argenteuil, about eight miles from the city. For the first time in many years, the Monet family was at rest. No longer moving from place to place, the Monets enjoyed a period of domestic tranquility. The house and its garden at Argenteuil became their home for the next five years.

[Durand-Ruel](#) became a regular purchaser of Monet's paintings, buying twenty-nine works over the course of the year. Monet also had several opportunities for exhibition. Durand-Ruel showed Monet's canvases at his galleries in London and in Paris, alongside paintings by [Degas](#), [Pissarro](#), [Renoir](#), and [Sisley](#), as well as their mentor [Manet](#) and their friend Whistler. With his increased earnings, Monet was able to engage housekeepers and a gardener.

The year marked a closing of one stage of the painter's life and the beginning of another. At the end of the year, Monet painted a hazy view of the port of Rouen. Eighteen months later, he included the canvas in a group show; among the exhibitors were the artists shown by Durand-Ruel. “They asked me the title for the catalogue; it could not pass for a view of Le Havre, so I replied: ‘Put *Impression*.’ ”



The Pointe de La Hève at Low Tide
Oil on canvas, 1865
Kimbell Art Museum

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

The Pointe de La Hève at Low Tide

Oil on canvas, 1865

Kimbell Art Museum

A sense of brooding grandeur and the ominous forces of nature pervade *The Pointe de la Hève, Low Tide*, painted for exhibition at the Salon of 1865. Adapting a smaller painting for public exhibition, the artist increased its size and intensified its effects.

Monet's first submissions to the Salon were not only accepted but also warmly received. He was extolled as "the author of the most original and supple, firmly and harmoniously painted seascape exhibited in a long time. . . . M. Monet, unknown yesterday, has immediately made a name for himself with this single painting." This was an auspicious beginning for a twenty-four-year-old painter.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you notice about this setting? How would you describe the scene's mood to a friend?

Discuss the color scheme. How do Monet's choice of colors affect the overall mood? What is the season? Can you guess the time of day?

In what ways does Monet show movement? Identify the diagonal lines in this composition. Where do they lead your eye?

Imagine how it would smell, sound, or feel to walk along this coastline. What textures does Monet show? How does he vary the brushwork?

Where do we see people or evidence of people in this picture? What role do they play? What do you think the men are doing? How many boats do we see? Why are they important to this composition?

Why do you think Monet chose this subject for his first submission to the Paris Salon?

MAP this location on the Normandy coast, and then add other locations along the Seine and Atlantic coastline that Monet favored as subjects during these early years.



Luncheon on the Grass
Oil on canvas, 1865–66
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

Luncheon on the Grass

Oil on canvas, 1865–66

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

This painting was part of a much larger scene that Monet had planned to submit for the Salon of 1866. Turning away from marine subjects, he decided to paint a forest scene, inspired by the previous century's great depictions of fashionable people enjoying a meal in the open air (including the famous work of the same name by the slightly older Édouard Manet). To ready himself for the task, he studied the effects of light in the Fontainebleau forest, using his friends as models for studies of people against backgrounds of green leaves.

These studies led to a canvas measuring about four by six feet, a large-scale “study” made on site that would be enlarged, in Monet's Paris studio, to a canvas thirteen feet high by some twenty feet wide that was sure to make an impression at the Salon. In the end, Monet could not finish it in time. Certain parts are still tentative, while other parts are probably as finished as they would ever have been.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you see happening here? What are the individual figures doing? What social class do you think they belong to? Why?

Is it a good day for a picnic? How does Monet draw our attention to sunlight? Where is the light coming from? Where are the most noticeable contrasts of light and shade?

How would you describe Monet's brushwork? What textures does he show? Where does the painting look more or less finished? How does this idea relate to what you know about Impressionism and Monet in particular?

How does Monet invite the viewer to pay attention to patterns? What examples do you see? What shapes help to build and unify his composition?

REINTERPRET this popular leisure activity in twenty-first-century terms. Include a few friends—like Monet did—in your own depiction of a group outing.



The Red Kerchief
Oil on canvas, 1869
The Cleveland Museum of Art

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

The Red Kerchief

Oil on canvas, 1869

The Cleveland Museum of Art

The Red Kerchief is recognized as one of the most poignant of all images of Camille Doncieux, the future Madame Monet. She turns, as if she has just realized that her husband is within the house, observing her. The painting was likely inspired by just such a passing moment, yet even with Monet's speed of execution, the posing sessions that followed must have been uncomfortable for the sitter. The result, however, was one of the most memorable images of Monet's early years. He kept the painting with him for the rest of his life.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Choose three words to describe the mood of this scene. What artistic choices help to suggest those feelings?

What color contrasts do you notice right away? What are the dominant colors in the interior and exterior spaces? What lines and geometric shapes are emphasized? Is this a balanced composition? Why or why not?

Does this painting suggest a sense of time? How do brushwork and the "framing" of the scene come into play?

Is this a portrait? Why or why not? How is this choice of subject different from historical or mythological scenes?

Why do you think winter scenes appealed so much to Monet? What are the inherent challenges?

WRITE a short story that imagines what inspired Monet to paint this scene. Consider Camille's thoughts on the matter, as well as her important role as a frequent sitter for Monet during this period of his career.



The Garden of the Princess

Oil on canvas, 1867

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

The Garden of the Princess

Oil on canvas, 1867

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH

The panoramic quality of many cityscapes is countered, even denied, by the verticality of *The Garden of the Princess*. The narrowed lateral vista imposed by turning the canvas ninety degrees creates a new “vertical panorama” that radically changes the perception of the site. We might see the pair of paintings of the same general view—made from slightly different vantage points on the Louvre’s south façade—as an experiment conducted by Monet in perspective and perception, showing how such changes would affect one viewer’s understanding of the same motif.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What do you notice about this “slice of life” in 1860s Paris? From what perspective does Monet depict the city? How does the vertical format differ from horizontal views?

Consider how Monet treats the idea of space in this composition. How does he pull the eye of the viewer into the scene? Where do you become more aware of flattened areas or geometric shapes?

Describe the shape that dominates the skyline. Look for other visual cues that help to lead your eye to that spot.

Which details catch your eye on the street below? How do we “read” human activity in the urban setting? What looks or feels modern to you about this scene?

Why do you think Monet chose to paint this scene from the Louvre balcony rather than studying Old Master works inside?

RESEARCH the historic contributions of one of the famous French citizens whose remains are now kept in the Pantheon of Paris. (HINT: One was a famous art critic who helped to champion Impressionism.)



La Grenouillère
Oil on canvas, 1869
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

La Grenouillère

Oil on canvas, 1869

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

During two months in the late summer of 1869, Monet and Renoir spent considerable time together. Renoir was important to Monet and Camille as a source of sustenance—he literally brought them bread when they had nothing to eat. Inexplicably, in spite of Monet’s drastic personal circumstances, he continued to work, sometimes at Renoir’s side.

Thus it was that the friends found themselves painting *La Grenouillère* simultaneously, Renoir making three paintings to Monet’s two. All five have traditionally been seen as a major turning-point in the artists’ careers and in the history of art. As Charles Stuckey put it, their “invention of a stenographic style of brushwork to render the choppy, sun-dappled river initiates the pictorial language of classic Impressionism.”

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Look at how Monet experiments with brushstrokes to show different surfaces and the people in the scene. Which effects do you think most interested him?

What sort of leisure activities attracted Parisians to this spot on the Seine River? Describe the different clues included here. How are people dressed? Is this a formal gathering or informal hang-out? Do you think the people are aware that they are being painted?

What colors appear in the rippling water? What parts of the surroundings are reflected? Compare the brushstrokes for the water with other areas or other paintings that you have seen.

Where do you notice “cropping” in the composition? What effect does that have on the scene’s sense of time and place?

COMPARE this painting with [Renoir’s version](#) of the same location. What do these paintings show us about the friends’ different formal concerns and subject choices?



The Beach at Trouville
Oil on canvas, 1870
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

The Beach at Trouville

Oil on canvas, 1870

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT

Monet focuses on the hotels and the boardwalk laid over the sand as the stage for social interaction between the tourists who have come to enjoy themselves at the seaside. At right, the line of hotels rises above the beach, accessible via wooden staircases, each painted a different color. At the base of the staircase, a boardwalk has been laid on the sand—literally a succession of boards, which would permit it to be adjusted if necessary for particularly high tides. Blue sky and blue-green sea are separated by a line of blue at the horizon, indicating the distant hills of Le Havre and Sainte-Adresse, where Monet’s family is in residence.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What are some of the first things you notice about this “day at the beach”? How does this differ from today? What kind of coastal town do you think this is?

Where does Monet focus our attention? Why do you think the boardwalk is so important here? What is the main activity? What do you think attracted Monet to this subject and location?

In what ways does Monet lead the eye into the scene? Where or what is the vanishing point? What other types of lines appear in this composition, and where do they direct attention? (Do you believe that Monet was staying at one of these hotels?)

How would you describe Monet’s method for applying paint to the canvas? Where are you most aware of the dramatic interplay of light and shadow?

COMPARE this composition with Monet’s earlier seascape *The Pointe de La Hève at Low Tide* (1865). Consider compositional devices, subject matter, brushwork, color, and mood.



Regatta at Argenteuil
Oil on canvas, c. 1872
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926)

Regatta at Argenteuil

Oil on canvas, c. 1872

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Bequest of Gustave Caillebotte, 1894

The astonishingly bold *Regatta at Argenteuil* is rich in references to Monet's own recent history as a painter. The bold technique the artist had practiced in the working studies of 1867 is with him again as he paints the gleaming sails of boats on the Argenteuil basin. The effects that he had broached in the *pochades* of La Grenouillère lie behind the schematic shorthand he used to paint the bright orange houses reflected in the blue waters of the Seine.

The brave first owner of the painting was Monet's friend, the painter Gustave Caillebotte. When Caillebotte left it to the nation after his death in 1895, Monet's distant early years were largely forgotten. Offered to posterity by a fellow artist with a daring and discerning eye, *Regatta at Argenteuil* was the perfect declaration both of Monet's past and his future, a fitting threshold at the close of the artist's early years.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What are the first words you would use to “capture” this place, activity, season, and/or mood?

Which visual effects first catch your attention? Is this a particularly active picture? Why or why not? What roles do brushwork and color play? How does Monet play with geometric shapes in this composition?

Why do you think Monet returned to paint the Seine and other watery locations so many times throughout his career? What possibilities do those sites offer?

Consider this painting's manner of execution in relation to other images he painted around the same time. What makes this one remarkable? Why do you think this painting appealed its first owner, Monet's friend and fellow painter Gustave Caillebotte?

COMPOSE a poem (or haiku) inspired by this work.