

France 2018 – Part #6 Musee D'Orsay

Musee D'Orsay – The Museum was created in the former Orsay Railway Station and displays art collections for 1848 to 1914. It opened to the public December 9, 1986. This is definitely one of our favorite museums. There isn't much to compare to the Impressionist Masters like Monet, Renoir, Gauguin, and Van Gogh!

Impressionism

The Musée d'Orsay's collection of Impressionist paintings is one of the richest in the world. It enables us to trace the history of the movement, from its origins in the 1860s to its continuing influence into the 20th century. In 1874, Monet, Renoir, Degas, Cézanne, Sisley, Pissarro and Berthe Morisot organised an exhibition outside the official Salon, an essential step towards recognition, but an unreliable one for young, innovative painters who might be accepted one year then rejected the next. The first exhibition in 1874 was a great shock: one critic, ridiculing the works, considered unfinished, sketches almost, used the term "impressionist".

Although they did not follow a coherent programme, the Impressionists depicted the changes in the modern world, concentrating, in the 1870s, on the stations, dances and cafés of Paris, as well as its suburbs, a place for both leisure and industry. The artists preferred a style of painting that captured the moment, that conveyed a personal and subjective impression of a changing world. The brushwork is rapid and visible; the framing is often off-centre; the colours are light, seeking to capture the atmospheric effects outdoors in contrast to the precise, highly polished paintings produced in the studio.

By 1886, eight collective exhibitions had been organised, in spite of increasing divergences between artists who, from the 1890s on, were moving in new, personal directions. After several difficult years, when the Impressionists were particularly reliant on the support of a small group of committed art lovers, dealers and critics, the beginning of the 20th century saw these painters, who had overturned traditional methods of representation, achieve success and international recognition.

The Musée d'Orsay Impressionist collection has been put together, for the most part, through the generosity of great collectors like the painter Gustave Caillebotte, who bequeathed forty paintings by his friends. This legacy, accepted in 1896 amidst fierce debate, was followed by Etienne Moreau-Nélaton's donation in 1906 and the legacy of Count Isaac de Camondo in 1911. These outstanding private collections would be completed by the legacy and gifts of the Antonin Personnaz, Paul Gachet and Eduardo Mollard collections, by the generosity of artists, their families and art lovers, and by acquisitions and works accepted by the State in lieu of taxes.

A small scale model of the Statue of Liberty was at the beginning of our visit.





Clock Tower

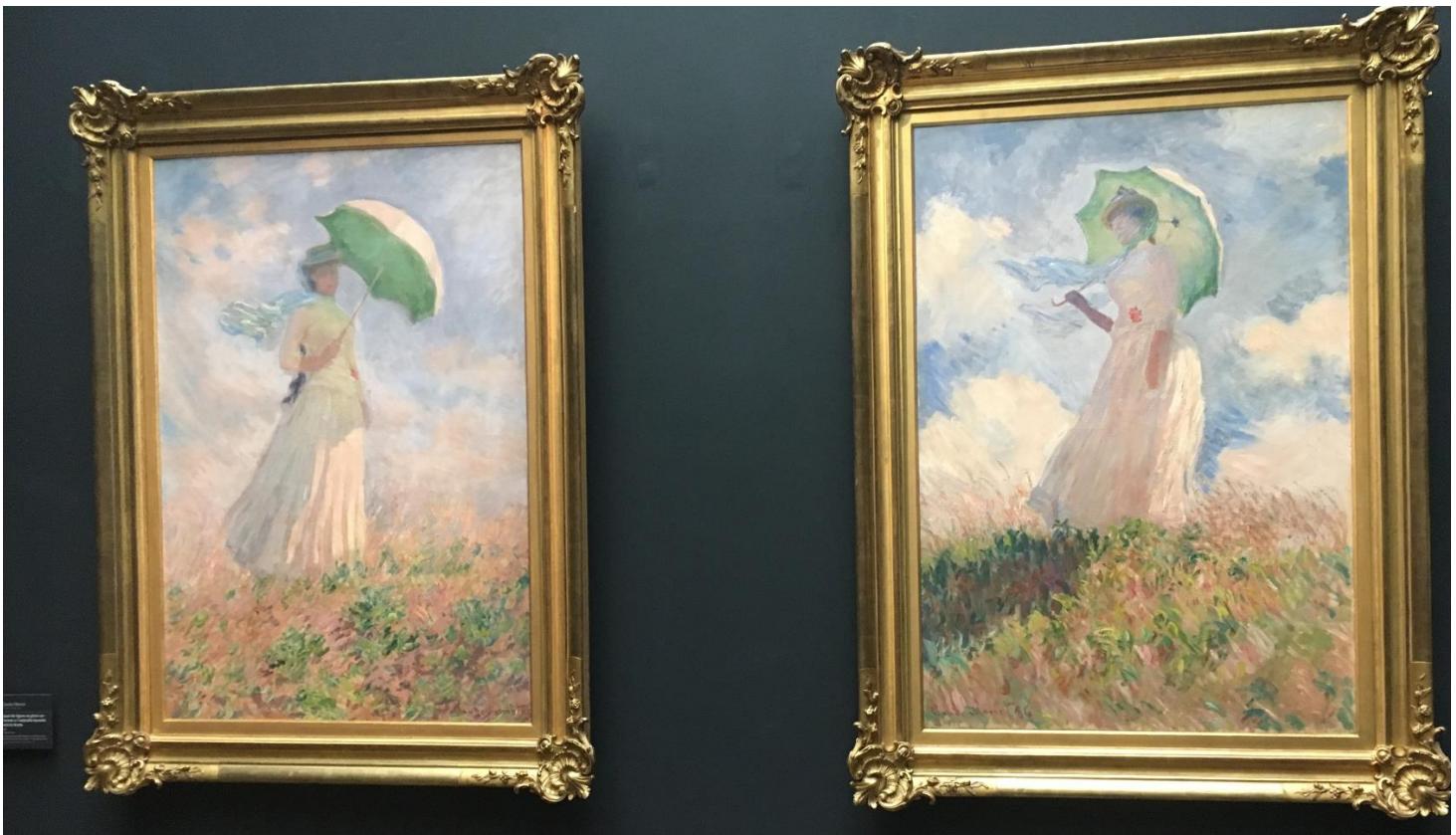


Seated Lion



Claude Monet





Claude Monet – Rouen Cathedral – Captured at different times of the day and year under different lighting conditions



Frederic Bazille



Edouard Manet



Henri Fantin-Latour



Henri Fantin-Latour
Grenoble 1836 – Buré 1904

Un atelier aux Batignolles
1870, Salon de 1870
Huile sur toile

1 Édouard Manet (1832-1883)
2 Zacharie Astruc, artiste et critique (1835-1907)
3 Otto Scholderer, peintre (1834-1902)
4 Pierre Auguste Renoir (1841-1919)
5 Émile Zola, écrivain (1840-1903)
6 Edmond Maître, musicien et collectionneur (1840-1898)
7 Frédéric Bazille (1841-1870)
8 Claude Monet (1840-1926)

ACQUIS EN 1892
RF 729



Henri Fantin-Latour
Grenoble 1836 – Buré 1904

Hommage à Delacroix
1864, Salon de 1864
Huile sur toile

1 Edmond Durany (1833-1880), écrivain
2 Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904), peintre
3 James Abbot McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), peintre
4 Jules Champfleury (1821-1884), écrivain
5 Édouard Manet (1832-1883), peintre
6 Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), poète
7 Louis Cordier (1823-?), peintre
8 Alphonse Legros (1837-1911)
9 Félix Bracquemond (1833-1914), peintre et graveur
10 Albert de Balleroy (1828-1873), peintre

DONATION ÉTIENNE MOREAU-NÉLATON, 1906
RF 1664

Edgar Degas



DEGAS



Petite danseuse de quatorze ans d'Edgar Degas est actuellement présentée dans l'exposition **EN COULEURS. LA SCULPTURE POLYCHROME EN FRANCE 1850-1910**, du 12 juin au 9 sept. 2018, au niveau 2 du musée.

Nous vous prions de nous excuser pour l'absence de cette œuvre.

UK *Small fourteen-year-old dancer* of Edgar Degas is temporarily featured in the **IN COLOUR. POLYCHROME SCULPTURE IN FRANCE 1850-1910** exhibition from 12 June to 9 Sept. 2018 at the level 2 of the museum.

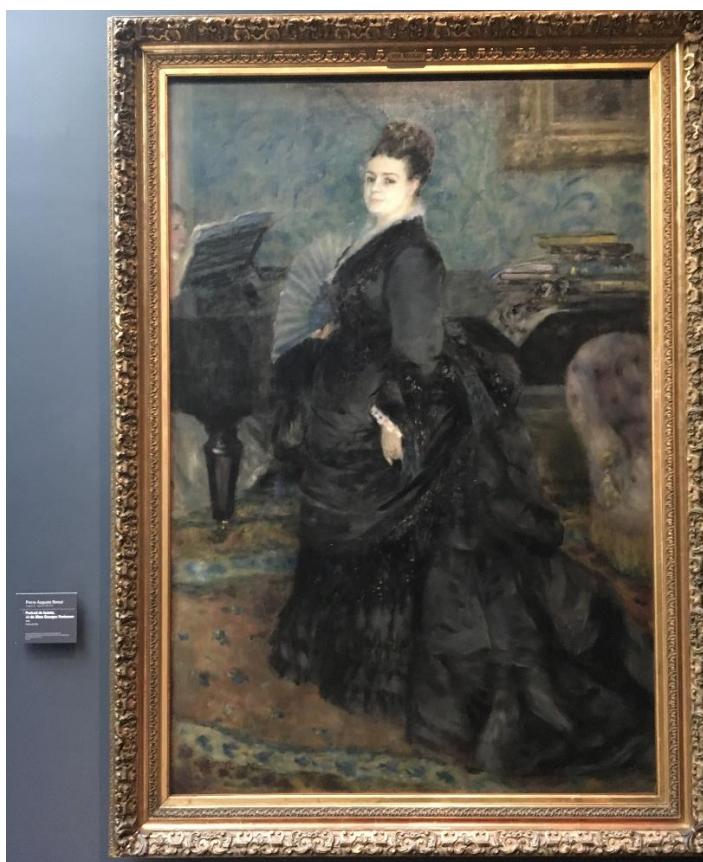
We apologize for the inconvenience.

ES *Pequeña bailarina de edad de catorce años* di Edgar Degas está actualmente presentadas alla mostra **EN COLORES. LA ESCULTURA POLICROMA EN FRANCIA 1850-1910**, dal 12 junio al 9 sept. 2018, al nivel 2 del museo.

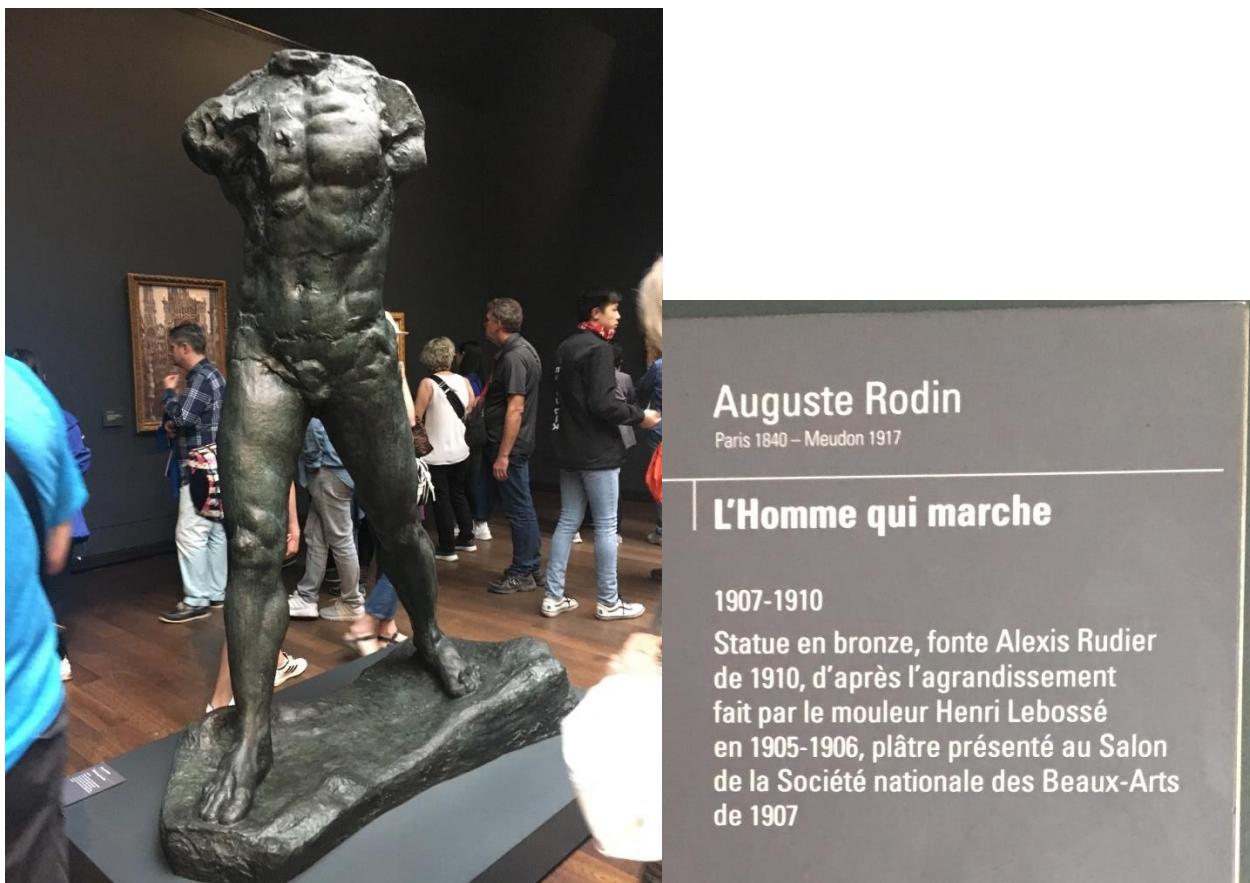
Les rogamos que acepten todas nuestras disculpas por las molestias ocasionadas



Pierre Auguste Renoir



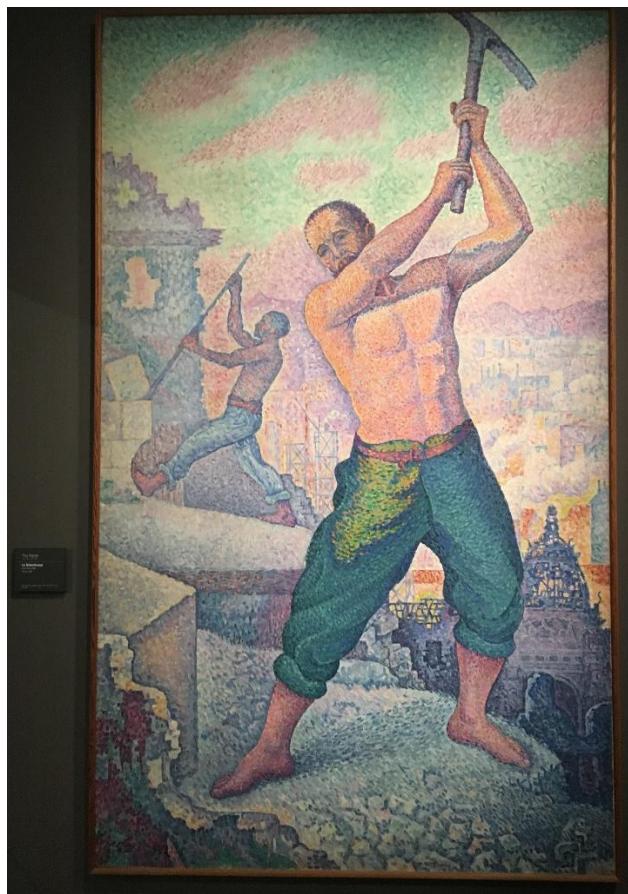
Auguste Rodin



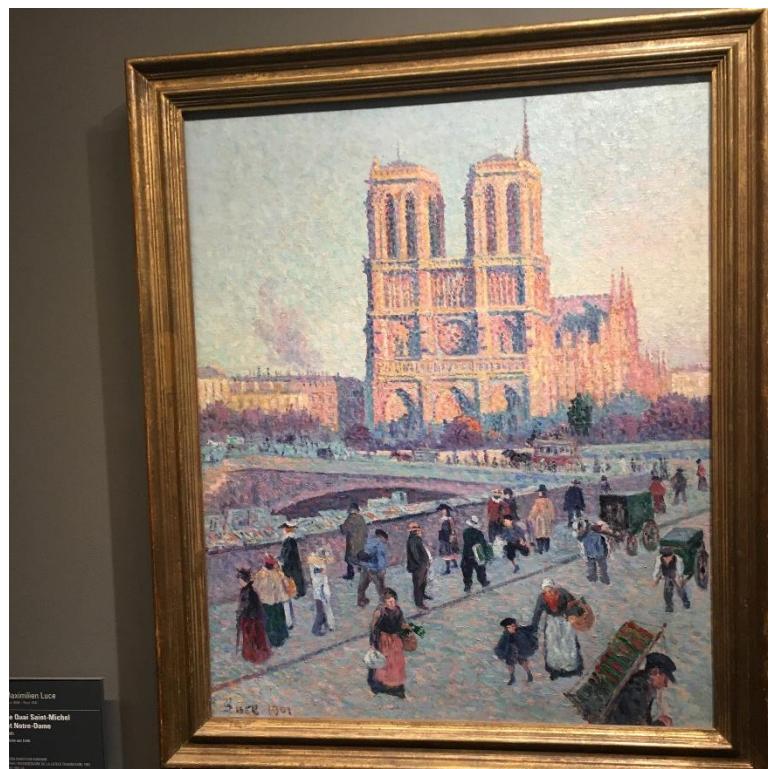
Paul Cézanne



Paul Signac



Maximilien Luce





Paul Dubois
Nogent-sur-Seine 1829 – Paris 1905
Bingen et Costenoble
Exécutant fondeur
Paris entre 1903 et 1913

Souvenir, Alsace-Lorraine
1905
Bronze

Ensemble commandé par l'État en 1899
et fondu en 1905, d'après un modèle modifié
par l'artiste à plusieurs reprises, et qui
se rapproche davantage de la cire de 1899
que du bronze exposé en 1902.

Henri Greber
Beauvais entre 1854 et 1855 – Paris 1941

Coup de grisou
Entre 1892 et 1896
Salon de la Société des artistes français, Paris,
1896
Marbre gris
Acquis au Salon 1896





Nikolaï Nikolaevitch
Gay

Voroneje, Fédération de Russie 1831 –
Ivanovskoïe, Ukraine 1894

**Le Calvaire dit aussi
Golgotha ; Crucifixion**

Non daté

Huile sur toile

DON DU FILS DE L'ARTISTE, 1903
RF 1981-25





Emmanuel Fremiet
Paris 1824 – Paris 1910

**Saint Michel terrassant
le dragon**

Cuivre martelé par la maison Monduit
Second exemplaire de la statue placée
au sommet de la flèche du Mont Saint-Michel
(statuette en bronze doré au Salon de 1879,
modèle colossal en plâtre au Salon des Artistes
français de 1896)

Dépôt du Centre des Monuments nationaux,
Château de Pierrefonds 1983,
INV. PIE 1969 000 541



Ernest Barrias
Paris 1841 – Paris 1905

Les Chasseurs d'alligators
ou Les Nubiens
1894

Plâtre

Modèle du haut-relief en bronze commandé par l'État en 1893 pour la galerie d'anthropologie du Muséum d'Histoire naturelle à Paris, inaugurée en 1898

Commandé par l'État en 1893,
affecté au musée d'Orsay en 1986



Auguste Rodin
Paris 1840 - Meudon 1917

Porte de l'Enfer
1880-1917

Plâtre

Modèle commandé en 1880, sur un sujet de la *Divine Comédie* de Dante, pour le musée des Arts décoratifs prévu sur l'emplacement des ruines de la Cour des Comptes - là où s'élèvera la gare d'Orsay. Presque achevé en 1888, il fut encore retouché par le sculpteur jusqu'à sa mort.

Donation Rodin à l'Etat, 1916 ;
dépôt au musée d'Orsay, 1986

Water Block Benches



Tokujin Yoshioka
Saga (Japon) 1967

Banc en verre «Water Block»
2002

Verre optique coulé dans un moule de platine,
piètement en acier inoxydable

Ce modèle de banc est conçu comme un bloc d'eau,
véritable sculpture puisant la dynamisme de sa forme
dans la nature. Il produit une atmosphère poétique
similaire à l'eau qui renvoie la lumière.
Tokujin Yoshioka designer japonais, est né à Saga
en 1967. Il a travaillé pour Shiro Kuramata en 1987
et Issey Miyake depuis 1988. Il a créé son propre
studio, Tokujin Yoshioka Design en 2000.

Optical glass produced in platinum mold,
stainless steel

This transparent glass bench, as if sculpted from
a block of water, holds the dynamical shape of nature,
and the miraculous aura. This special glass is produced
by platinum mold. It creates the poetic atmosphere
as if water reflects the light.
Born in Saga, Japan in 1967. Worked under
Shiro Kuramata in 1987 and Issey Miyake since 1988
and established his own studio, Tokujin Yoshioka
Design in 2000.



Paul Gauguin

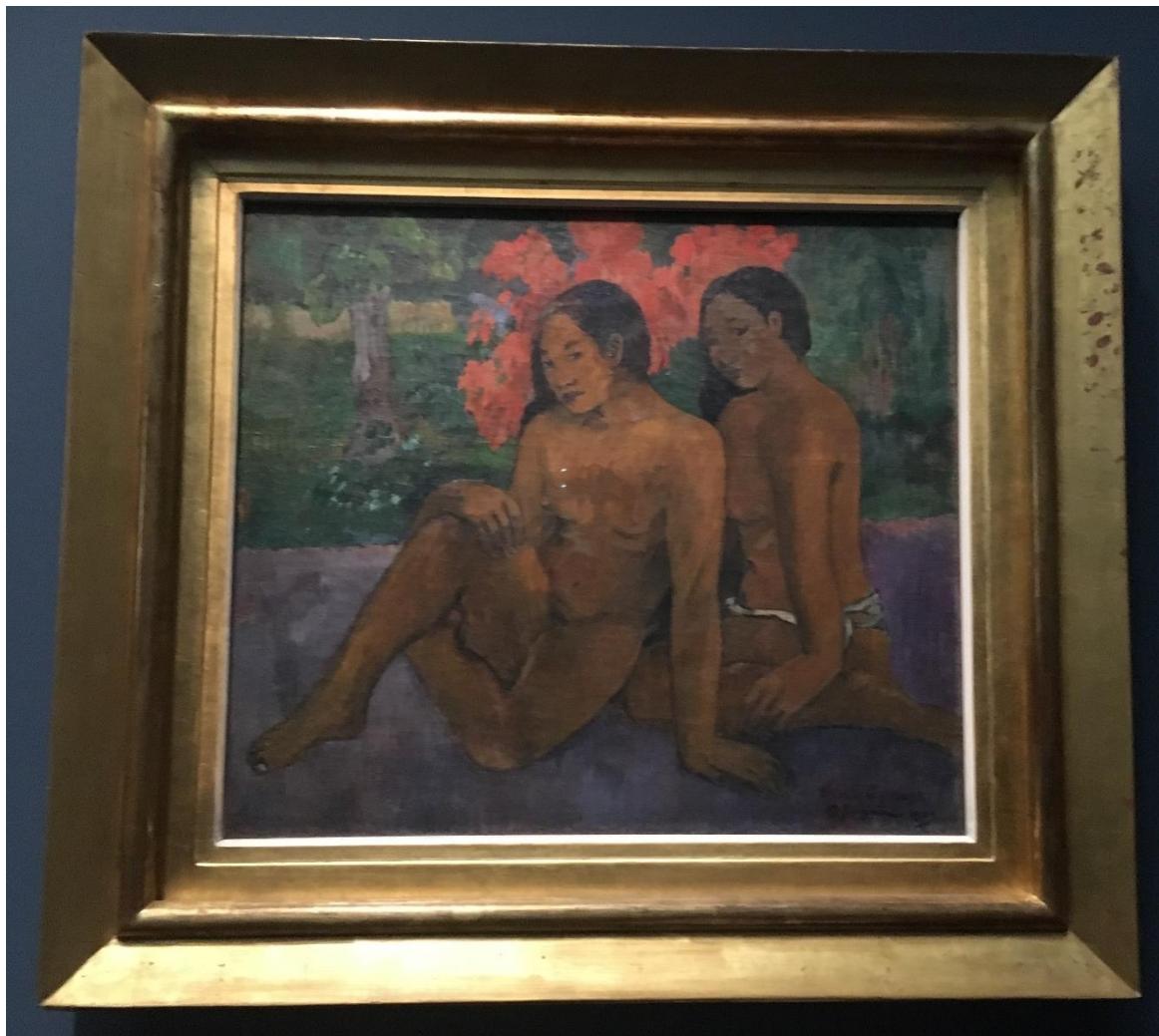
Paul Gauguin The Pont-Aven School

After his early Impressionist works, Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) turned towards a symbolist and decorative style of art. He started to develop this in 1888 while in Brittany - in Pont-Aven and Le Pouldu. He moved away from an accurate reflection of nature, simplifying his composition and colours and abandoning modelling and traditional perspective.

His studies of Japanese prints, medieval statuary, stained glass and popular arts led him to juxtapose planes of pure colour in a flat spatial arrangement. His ideas were adopted by the young painters around him: Émile Bernard, Paul Sérusier, Meyer de Haan and others, who formed what was known as the Pont-Aven School.

At the height of his fame, Gauguin went into self-imposed exile, distancing himself from Western models in order to pursue his research. In 1891, he moved to Tahiti where he painted visions of an earthly paradise suffused with the melancholy of the Tropics. In 1901, his wanderings finally ended at the Marquesas Islands where he built his "House of Pleasure", the last message carved by the artist who claimed the "right to dare to do anything".





Paul Gauguin
Paris 1848 - Rennes (Ille-et-Vilaine) 1903

Et l'or de leur corps
1892
huile sur toile

Vincent Van Gogh

Vincent van Gogh

The Dutch painter, Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890), spent most of his life in France. In 1886, he went to live with his brother Theo who ran the Galerie Boussod, Valadon & Cie in Montmartre. His discovery of the paintings of Monet, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec and Gauguin, was a catalyst for change in his own art: he abandoned the sombre Naturalism of his early work in favour of a colourful palette and subjects taken from modern life.

The simplification in Japanese prints, the Pointillism of Seurat and Signac, and Émile Bernard's Cloisonnism also contributed to the development of his style.

After the excitement of his stay in Paris, Van Gogh withdrew to Arles to continue his experiments with colour. He painted portraits of great sensitivity and landscapes expressing the radiant power of Nature, demonstrating his creative exhilaration. Following his stay in the asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, he moved to Auvers-sur-Oise, close to Doctor Gachet, a collector of Impressionist paintings. Van Gogh committed suicide at the age of 37.

Somewhere between genius and alienation, Van Gogh remained an isolated artist. His paintings in the Musée d'Orsay are a brilliant expression of his visionary art.



Eugène Boch

Van Gogh met the Belgian painter Eugène Boch (1855-1941) in mid-June 1888, while Boch was spending a few weeks near Arles. Around 8 July, Vincent mentioned Boch in a letter to his brother Théo: "I very much like the looks of this young man with his distinctive face, like a razor blade, and his green eyes". On 11 August, his idea began to take shape: "I should like to paint the portrait of an artist friend, a man who dreams great dreams, who works like the nightingale sings, because it is his nature to do so. This man will be blond. I would like to convey in the picture my appreciation, the love that I have for him. So I will paint him just as he is, as faithfully as I can [...]. Behind his head, instead of painting the ordinary wall of this shabby apartment, I will paint infinity, I will do a simple background of the richest blue, the most intense blue that I can create, and through this simple combination of the bright head against this rich, blue background, I will obtain a mysterious effect, like a star in the depths of an azure sky". Two weeks later, Boch sat for Van Gogh. "Well, thanks to him I have at last the first sketch of this painting that I have dreamt of for so long – *The Poet*. He sat for me. His fine head with his green eyes stands out in my portrait against a starry sky of deep ultramarine; he wears a short, yellow jacket, a collar of unbleached linen and a colourful tie". Although he only considered it to be a "sketch", Van Gogh framed this work, which he called *The Poet*. We know that it hung for some time on the wall of his bedroom in the Yellow House, because it appears in the first version of *The Bedroom* (Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum).

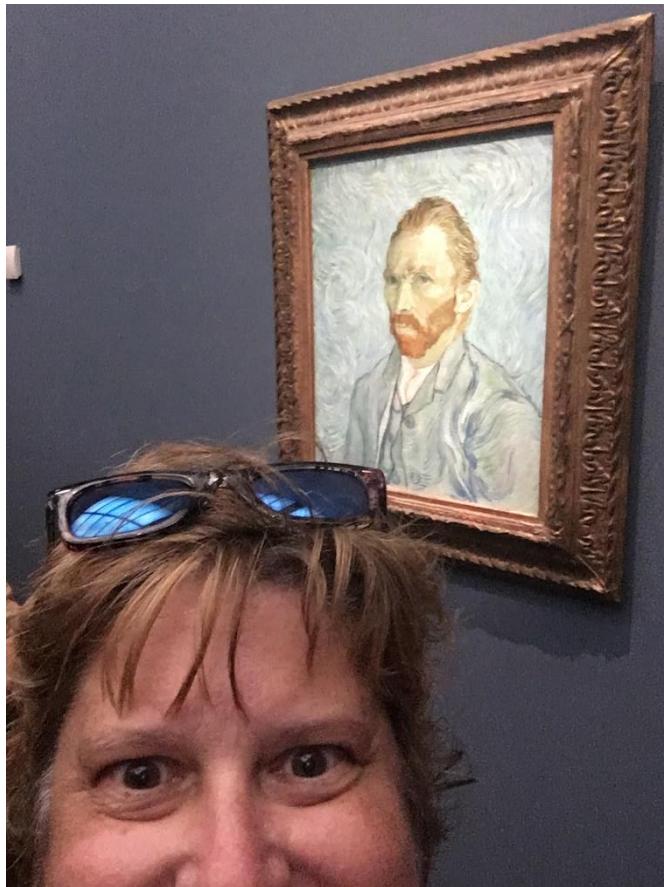


Fritillaries - Fritillaries are bulbs which, like tulips, flower in spring. It is therefore easy to work out what time of year Van Gogh painted this picture. The variety which he represents is the imperial fritillary, which was grown in French and Dutch gardens at the end of the 19th century. It has an orange-red flower, with a long stem from which each bulb produces between three and ten flowers. So to compose this bouquet, Vincent used only one or two bulbs, placing the cut flowers in a copper vase. When he produced this painting, Vincent was living in Paris and was in close contact with Paul Signac. It is not surprising, therefore, to note that Van Gogh applied some of the principles of Neo-Impressionist painting, of which Signac was one of the major figures: pointillist brushwork is used for the background, and a contrast of complementary colors, blue and orange, dominates the painting. However, the influence of these Neo-Impressionist theories remains limited. The separate brushstrokes were only used for a defined surface, the interplay of complementary colors did not limit Van Gogh in his choice of shades in any way, and finally, by choosing a still life, he was moving away from the themes treated by Seurat and his followers. The painter Emile Bernard would later recall that Vincent was courting 'La Segatori', the Italian owner of the Tambourin café on the boulevard de Clichy, and used to give her paintings of flowers, "which would last forever". Thanks to painted bouquets like this one, the Tambourin would soon become a veritable artificial garden.



Starry Night

From the moment of his arrival in Arles, on 8 February 1888, Van Gogh was constantly preoccupied with the representation of "night effects". In April 1888, he wrote to his brother Theo: "I need a starry night with cypresses or maybe above a field of ripe wheat." In June, he confided to the painter Emile Bernard: "But when shall I ever paint the *Starry Sky*, this painting that keeps haunting me" and, in September, in a letter to his sister, he evoked the same subject: "Often it seems to me night is even more richly coloured than day". During the same month of September, he finally realised his obsessive project. He first painted a corner of nocturnal sky in *Cafe Terrace on the Place du Forum, Arles* (Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller). Next came this view of the Rhône in which he marvellously transcribed the colours he perceived in the dark. Blues prevail: Prussian blue, ultramarine and cobalt. The city gas lights glimmer an intense orange and are reflected in the water. The stars sparkle like gemstones. A few months later, just after being confined to a mental institution, Van Gogh painted another version of the same subject: *Starry Night* (New York, MoMA), in which the violence of his troubled psyche is fully expressed. Trees are shaped like flames while the sky and stars whirl in a cosmic vision. The Musée d'Orsay's *Starry Night* is more serene, an atmosphere reinforced by the presence of a couple of lovers at the bottom of the canvas.



Self-Portrait

Like Rembrandt and Goya, Vincent van Gogh often used himself as a model; he produced over forty-three self-portraits, paintings or drawings in ten years. Like the old masters, he observed himself critically in a mirror. Painting oneself is not an innocuous act: it is a questioning which often leads to an identity crisis. Thus he wrote to his sister: "I am looking for a deeper likeness than that obtained by a photographer." And later to his brother: "People say, and I am willing to believe it, that it is hard to know yourself. But it is not easy to paint yourself, either. The portraits painted by Rembrandt are more than a view of nature, they are more like a revelation". In this head-and-shoulders view, the artist is wearing a suit and not the pea jacket he usually worked in. Attention is focused on the face. His features are hard and emaciated, his green-rimmed eyes seem intransigent and anxious. The dominant colour, a mix of absinth green and pale turquoise finds a counterpoint in its complementary colour, the fiery orange of the beard and hair. The model's immobility contrasts with the undulating hair and beard, echoed and amplified in the hallucinatory arabesques of the background.



The Church in Auvers-sur-Oise

After staying in the south of France, in Arles, and then at the psychiatric hospital in Saint-Rémy de Provence, Vincent Van Gogh settled in Auvers-sur-Oise, a village in the outskirts of Paris. His brother Théo, concerned with his health, incited him to see the Doctor Gachet, himself a painter and a friend of numerous artists, who accepted to treat him. During the two months separating his arrival, on May 21, 1890 and his death on July 29, the artist made about seventy paintings, over one per day, not to mention a large number of drawings. This is the only painting representing in full the church in Auvers that may sometimes be distinguished in the background of views of the whole village. This church, built in the 13th century in the early Gothic style, flanked by two Romanesque chapels, became under the painter's brush a flamboyant monument on the verge of dislocating itself from the ground and from the two paths that seem to be clasping it like torrents of lava or mud. If one compares this painting with Claude Monet's paintings of the cathedral in Rouen, painted shortly afterwards, one can measure how different Van Gogh's approach was from that of the impressionists. Unlike Monet, he did not try to render the impression of the play of light on the monument. Even though the church remains recognizable, the painting does not so much offer the spectator a faithful image of reality than a form of "expression" of a church. The artistic means used by Van Gogh anticipate the work of the fauvists and expressionist painters.



Dr Paul Gachet

Inseparably entwined with the last period of Vincent van Gogh's life in Auvers, Dr Gachet was an original character. He was a homoeopathic doctor interested in chiromancy but his real passion lay with the arts. An accomplished engraver himself, he kept in touch with many different artists including Manet, Monet, Renoir and Cézanne. It was therefore logical for Van Gogh to go to him, on the advice of his brother Theo, when he was discharged from hospital in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. Specialized in psychiatry, the doctor did his best to help Vincent overcome his anguish while affording him the material comfort conducive to his well-being. The portrait of the doctor was painted during this particularly intense creative phase. He was no ordinary model and is portrayed in a melancholy pose reflecting "the desolate expression of our time," as Van Gogh wrote. The only touch of hope in this severe portrait brushed in cold colors is the foxglove which brings a little comfort and relief through its curative properties. Despite his devotion, Dr Gachet was unable to prevent Van Gogh's irremediable gesture; the artist committed suicide shortly afterwards.



The Siesta

The siesta was painted while Van Gogh was interned in a mental asylum in Saint-Rémy de Provence. The composition is taken from a drawing by Millet for *Four Moments in the Day*. To justify his act, Vincent told his brother Theo: "I am using another language, that of colors, to translate the impressions of light and dark into black and white". Van Gogh often copied the works of Millet, whom he considered to be "a more modern painter than Manet". Remaining faithful to the original composition, even down to the still life details in the foreground, Van Gogh nevertheless imposes his own style upon this restful scene which, for Millet, symbolized rural France of the 1860's. This highly personal retranscription is achieved primarily by means of a chromatic construction based on contrasting complementary colors: blue-violet, yellow-orange. Despite the peaceful nature of the subject, the picture radiates Van Gogh's unique artistic intensity.



Boy Leading a Horse by Pablo Picasso

Boy Leading a Horse by Pablo Picasso, an exceptional loan from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, is presented for the first time alongside a masterpiece from the Musée d'Orsay collections, Paul Gauguin's *White Horse*.

Paul Gauguin's work was one of Picasso's main sources of inspiration in early 1906. In this large painting, prepared with numerous studies, the young Picasso was clearly measuring himself against Ingres, and making a direct reference to Gauguin's Tahitian paintings. Just as Gauguin's *White Horse* culminated in his theme of the *Riders on the Beach* (1902, Museum Folkwang, Essen), *Boy Leading a Horse* is a variation on the theme of The Watering Place that Picasso was exploring at the time.

Picasso's painting will be presented in the exhibition "Picasso. Blue and Pink" coproduced by the Musée d'Orsay and the national Picasso-Paris museum which opens on 18 September 2018 (Musée d'Orsay, level 0, big space of temporary exhibition).