

DISCOVERING the IMPRESSIONISTS

PAUL DURAND-RUEL
art dealer among the artists

Large Print Labels

Paul Durand-Ruel:

Art Dealer Among the Impressionists

Impressionism is one of the most beloved artistic movements in the world. Its history is inseparable from that of the art dealer Paul **Durand-Ruel** (1831–1922).

A visionary figure, Durand-Ruel distinguished himself both through his unwavering support for artists and through innovative commercial strategies that helped shape the modern art market.

This exhibition celebrates the artistic vision that Durand-Ruel championed from the 1870s onwards. It was founded upon principles that, in the second half of the nineteenth century, were still regarded as marginal and unconventional. The movement was characterised by a lighter palette and by its emphasis on scenes of modern life, whether landscapes or depictions of everyday experience.

This exhibition presents two generations of artists. The first comprises the Impressionists: **Claude Monet** (1840–1926), **Berthe Morisot** (1841–1895), **Camille Pissarro** (1830–1903) and **Pierre-Auguste Renoir** (1841–1919). Less well known, the succeeding generation has only recently begun to receive renewed attention from art historians in Europe. With their works presented in Australia for the first time, it includes **Albert André** (1869–1954), **Georges d'Espagnat** (1870–1950), **Gustave Loiseau** (1865–1935), **Maxime Maufra** (1861–1918) and **Henry Moret** (1856–1913).

Exhibition Curators

Claire Durand-Ruel and Marianne Mathieu

Pierre-Auguste RENOIR

French 1841–1919

Portrait of Paul Durand-Ruel

(Portrait de Paul Durand-Ruel) 1910

oil on canvas

Private Collection

At the time of drafting his memoirs and reflecting on his lengthy career as an art dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel commissioned this portrait by Pierre-Auguste Renoir: one of the first generation of Impressionists Durand-Ruel represented, and an artist he had known for over thirty years.

Renoir had played an important role in Durand-Ruel's success, encouraging him to take an interest in the second generation of Impressionists, particularly Albert André.

The familiarity and trust between the artist and his subject see Renoir depict Durand-Ruel in a relaxed pose contemplating the successes and struggles of his extraordinary career as an art dealer among the artists.

Paul Durand-Ruel and the Impressionists

The birth of Impressionism is generally dated to 1874, the year in which Monet and his colleagues organised an independent exhibition in the former Paris studio of the photographer Nadar on the Boulevard des Capucines.

One of Monet's seascapes, *Impression, sunrise* (1872; Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris), inspired a hostile critic to coin the term 'Impressionists' as a means of disparaging the works on display, which he considered too sketchy, unfinished and therefore imperfect. Despite its pejorative origins, the term 'Impressionism' was immediately adopted. The group formed by Monet and his associates now had a name.

Paul Durand-Ruel had shown an interest in this new style of painting long before it acquired a label. In 1870, during the Franco-Prussian War, he met Monet and Pissarro in London, where they had voluntarily gone into exile. He exhibited their work immediately.

Upon his return to France, Durand-Ruel became acquainted with other members of the group, including Morisot, Renoir, Alfred Sisley and their colleagues. He was captivated by their unprecedented artistic language, founded on painting directly from nature, the predominance of light colours and a distinctly visible brushstroke.

From that moment onwards, Durand-Ruel tied his professional destiny to the Impressionists. He championed them alone and against considerable opposition, at a time when public and critical recognition remained elusive. Their success would not arrive until some twenty years later, around 1890.

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

Bridge, Triel-sur-Seine

(Le Pont de Triel-sur-Seine) c. 1917

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

L'Ailly Point, low tide

(Pointe de L'Ailly, marée basse) 1882

oil on canvas

Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

Étretat 1902

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Between 1902 and 1904, Gustave Loiseau visited Étretat, Fécamp and Dieppe along France's Alabaster Coast where he embraced the landscape traditions established by painters since the mid-nineteenth century and emphasized by the Impressionists, particularly Claude Monet.

Like Monet, Loiseau repeatedly returned to the same cliffside and coastal subjects. The Normandy seaside town of Étretat—renowned for its towering chalk cliffs and ever-changing atmospheric conditions—was an important site for both artists.

Following in Monet's footsteps, Loiseau shifted his focus from urban subjects to the natural landscape, which he painted directly from observation. This fostered his mastery in capturing the changing effects of light, weather, and season, with particular attention to the effects of rain, frost, fog, morning mist, and overcast skies.

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

Rough weather at Étretat (Gros temps à Étretat) 1883

oil on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1913

The dramatic cliffs and coastline of Étretat, on the Normandy coast of France, was a location that Claude Monet returned to. He created over fifty paintings at Étretat between 1883 and 1886.

Here, Monet depicts the turbulent waters of the English Channel in rough weather conditions: the figures dwarfed by the cliffs and power of nature.

Monet placed this work with the Durand-Ruel Gallery in the year it was painted, and after a period of private ownership and its return to the Gallery in 1901, it was acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria in 1913 through the Felton Bequest.

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

Banks of the Eure (Bord de l'Eure) c. 1913

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

**Fir trees at Varengeville
(Sapins à Varengeville) 1882**

oil on canvas

Vargi Collection

Impressionism and Artistic Fellowship

In their early years, the Impressionists frequently worked side by side. At Argenteuil, Monet, Renoir and Sisley often set up their easels together, painting similar subjects from closely related viewpoints. Pissarro did the same with Paul Cézanne at Pontoise. These years of artistic companionship played a crucial role in shaping the Impressionist aesthetic, as demonstrated by the paintings presented in this gallery.

Most of these works were painted between 1869 and 1886, the year of the eighth and final Impressionist exhibition, which marked the disbanding of the group. Thereafter, each artist pursued an independent path and developed a more personal artistic language.

The period that followed, now known as Post-Impressionism, was characterised by extraordinary creative diversity and the emergence of a range of distinct artistic movements, including the Nabis, the Symbolists and the Synthetists. Some younger painters nevertheless remained closely connected to the legacy of Impressionism.

Among them were Albert André, Georges d'Espagnat, Gustave Loiseau, Maxime Maufra and Henry Moret, all of whom were identified and championed by the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel. From the mid-1890s, he placed these artists under contract and became their principal advocate. Together, they represent the final generation of painters supported by the Durand-Ruel Gallery.

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

**Banks of the Oise, misty morning
(Bord de l'oise, matinée brumeuse) n.d.**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

**The Dawn at Champagne-sur-Oise
(L'Aube à Champagne-sur-Oise) 1901**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

Nettle Island (L'île aux Orties) 1897

oil on canvas

Onyx Art Collection

Nettle Island depicts a tranquil stretch of the Seine near Giverny, close to Claude Monet's home. The small island, owned by the artist and used to moor his boats, provided an ideal vantage point for his exploration of light and atmosphere.

Monet produced four versions of this composition in 1897, each capturing the subtle interplay of mist, water and reflection. The scene shares the luminous, ethereal quality of his *Morning on the Seine* series, painted along the same river that year. Through delicate brushwork and a restrained palette, Monet transforms an everyday landscape into a meditation on the fleeting effects of nature and the passage of time.

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

**Olive tree at Bordighera
(Olivier à Bordighera) 1884**

oil on canvas

Onyx Art Collection

Camille PISSARRO

French 1830–1903

Apple trees at Pontoise, the house of Père Gallien (Pommiers à Pontoise, la maison du Père Gallien) 1868

oil on canvas

Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth

Pontoise is a small town on the River Oise northwest of Paris that became a key centre of early Impressionism. Camille Pissarro lived in Pontoise between 1866–68 and then for a longer period between 1872–82.

He is largely credited with the town's fame through his depictions of its rural scenery, rustic fields, and residents.

Paul Durand-Ruel and the Second Impressionist Generation

It was in the mid-1890s that Albert André, Georges d'Espagnat, Gustave Loiseau, Maxime Maufra and Henry Moret joined the circle of artists championed by the Durand-Ruel Gallery. Their painting drew inspiration from the Impressionists, with whom they shared a preference for luminous colour and light-filled palettes. Belonging to a younger generation, these artists came to be described as Post-Impressionists.

By this time, Paul Durand-Ruel, then in his sixties, already had many years of professional struggle behind him. Just as the Impressionists were beginning to achieve recognition from critics and collectors, the dealer took the bold step of promoting this new generation of painters. He supported them with the same unwavering commitment and determination that had characterised his earlier advocacy of Impressionism.

Durand-Ruel was now able to apply the methods he had gradually developed since the 1870s. He sought exclusive rights to acquire the artists' work; provided them with regular monthly stipends; paid for their materials, travel and day-to-day expenses; and actively supported their market prices at public auction. Through his international network of galleries in Paris and New York, where he organised a continuous program of solo and group exhibitions, he took responsibility for promoting their careers.

This remarkably generous commercial policy provided these artists with a degree of financial security while allowing them to work under conditions of stability rarely offered by an art dealer. The stock books of the Durand-Ruel Gallery record the acquisition of more than 5,000 works by these five artists alone.

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

River at Landerneau

(La Rivière à Landerneau) n.d.

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Interior (Intérieur) c. 1918

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

Avenue de Friedland, grey weather (Avenue de Friedland, temps gris) c. 1931

oil on canvas

Private Collection

From 1925 to 1974, the Durand-Ruel Gallery was located at 37–39 Avenue de Friedland, within close proximity of Paris's iconic Arc de Triomphe.

At the time of painting this vista from an upper level of the building, Gustave Loiseau had been associated with the Durand-Ruel Gallery for over three decades; his first solo exhibition was held in 1898 on the invitation of Paul Durand-Ruel.

Depicting the bustling avenue and grand monument in overcast conditions, Loiseau's composition is reminiscent of the urban streetscapes of influential artist Camille Pissarro who he is thought to have met in the mid-1890s. Pissarro's panoramic views of Paris were often painted from elevated vantage points, and in different light and atmospheric conditions.

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

Stormy weather in Brittany (Gros temps en Bretagne) 1899

oil on canvas

Private Collection

In 1894, Henry Moret moved to Doëlan, a charming Breton village nestled around the shores of a ria (flooded river valley). This remained his home-from-home until the end of his career. From this base, he tirelessly explored the coastal paths of Morbihan and Finistère, fascinated by the beauty of the Ponant islands, and in particular by Groix, Belle-Île and Ouessant.

Inspired by Claude Monet's landscape campaign on Belle-Île in 1886, he painted a remarkable series of luminous landscapes showing grass-grown cliffsides, calm-weather sea swell, fluffy clouds and human figures. His broken-up strokes, pure pigments and maritime atmospheres conjure a vision of the seascape in all its mutability.

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

Creek at Le Lavandou (Crique au Lavandou) c. 1899

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'Espagnat spent time on the French Riviera around 1899–1900, and discovered the incandescent sunlight of this region, so different from the more veiled light of Normandy and Brittany. He illustrated it in *Creek at Le Lavandou*, with its fiery red-orange rocks caught in the twilight of a hot day.

D'Espagnat and Albert André often travelled together in the south of France. In January 1901, André wrote to Paul Durand-Ruel to tell him 'Tomorrow I'm going to stay in Lavandou with d'Espagnat', and in March 1902, 'I'll leave Renoir's this week to go and spend a few days in Lavandou with d'Espagnat'.

Georges d'Espagnat and Albert André: The Joy of Living

A genuine friendship united Georges d'Espagnat and Albert André from the time of their meeting around 1890 in the studios of the Académie Julian in Paris, a major centre of training and exchange for the young painters of the Post-Impressionist generation. This period was particularly significant, as it also coincided with the emergence of modern movements associated with the Nabis (Pierre Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, Maurice Denis and others) and with the evolving legacy of Impressionism, to which both André and d'Espagnat were closely connected.

Without formally aligning themselves with any particular movement or school, the two artists developed closely related sensibilities, sharing a love of colour and light, an interest in decorative painting and scenes of everyday life, and a pursuit of intimate, poetic atmospheres.

The masterpiece *Autumn afternoon* reveals the influence of the palettes of Peter Paul Rubens and Eugène Delacroix, whom d'Espagnat greatly admired, through its use of warm, radiant and powerfully expressive colour. D'Espagnat also produced works of more emphatic structure, such as *Women bathing*, whose decorative character is expressed through its large scale, Arcadian subject matter, and the brilliance of its colour and light.

Among the five Post-Impressionist artists championed by Paul Durand-Ruel, Albert André and Georges d'Espagnat stand out as the painters of *joie de vivre*—artists who celebrated the pleasures, beauty and vitality of life.

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

In the garden (Au jardin) c. 1913

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

**Woman with feather plume
(La femme à l'aigrette) c. 1912**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

Women bathing (Femmes au bain)

c. 1900

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'Espagnat's *Women bathing* exemplifies the artist's mastery of brilliant light and engagement with Arcadian subject matter.

While training at Paris's Académie Julian alongside his lifelong friend Albert André, d'Espagnat engaged with the Nabis—a cohort of Post-Impressionist artists who rejected realism to focus on symbolic, flat areas of colour and decorative patterns.

Though d'Espagnat never formally joined the group, he shared their fascination with poetic atmospheres and everyday life.

Championed by the prominent art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, d'Espagnat infused these classical scenes with the hallmarks of Impressionism and his observations of the beauty and vitality of life.

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Panels from the dining room doors of Joseph Durand-Ruel (Panneaux des portes de la salle à manger de Joseph Durand-Ruel) 1900

oil on canvas

Private Collections

Following in his father's footsteps, Joseph Durand-Ruel commissioned the decoration of his doors from Albert André and Georges d'Espagnat in his apartment at 37 Rue de Rome in Paris. André painted decorative panels for the doors of the dining room in a style reminiscent of his friend and mentor Pierre-Auguste Renoir, whose own paintings and those of Claude Monet, Edgar Degas and Camille Pissarro, among others, hung harmoniously on the apartment walls.

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

Orchard in September

(Verger en septembre) c. 1901

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

Climbing rose

(Le rosier grimpant) c. 1901

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

Autumn afternoon

(Après-midi d'automne) c. 1899

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Painted around 1899, this work reflects Georges d'Espagnat's early Parisian style, and the influence of his close friendship with Albert André. With the exception of bright colors, both artists were noticeably resistant to the Impressionist aesthetic and preferred still life and decorative painting to landscape. They shared a greater emphasis on and spectacularly large formats as exemplified in *Autumn afternoon*.

Although never an official member of the Nabis, d'Espagnat adopts their preference for flattened space, and an emphasis on mood over naturalistic description. Here, delicate brushwork and subtle tonal shifts evoke the changing atmosphere of autumn, capturing the season's fleeting qualities alongside the modern sensibility emerging in Paris at the turn of the century.

Albert André: Between Expression and Intimacy

The full range of Albert André's talent is revealed in this gallery. His masterpiece *Woman and peacocks* (1895), a work of monumental scale, is displayed alongside a group of intimate paintings. Together, these works reflect an aesthetic close to that of his friends among the Nabis, notably Édouard Vuillard, one of the movement's leading figures.

The composition of *Woman and peacocks* is striking in its decorative audacity. The pictorial space is entirely filled by the motif of the woman and the peacocks, while perspective is deliberately flattened in the spirit of Japanese-inspired compositions. Colour takes centre stage: vivid, often pure hues animate the surface. The yellow and red blossoms intertwine with the iridescent plumage of the peacocks in a chromatic harmony that is both expressive and powerful.

Yet no artist possessed a greater sensitivity to intimacy than Albert André. Through works of modest scale and delicate colouring, he entered, with discretion and restraint, into the private world of women's bathrooms—the most mysterious and confidential of spaces. Together with Vuillard, he excelled in the depiction of interior scenes and traditionally female pastimes, whether sewing, reading or other moments of domestic life. Within these softly enveloping interiors, richly furnished and decorated, one senses the quiet silences and warm fragrances of everyday existence, rendered with remarkable sensitivity and poetic insight.

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Interior (Intérieur) c. 1898

oil on panel

Private Collection

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Woman and peacocks (La femme aux paons) 1895

oil on canvas

Private Collection

In 1894—the year before this work was painted—Albert André exhibited five works at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris. Renoir was very impressed by this promising artist and advised Durand-Ruel—who was visiting the exhibition with him—to take the artist under his wing. Paul Durand-Ruel immediately bought all five pictures and thus began a long and trusting relationship.

In 1895, André exhibited alongside artists of the emerging Nabis group. *Woman and peacocks* reveals how closely his artistic style aligned with the group's principles. All vibrant colour with just a hint of the exotic, the painting exudes serenity, as if evoking the Garden of Eden.

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Toilette (La toilette) c. 1901

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Woman lying on a chaise longue (Femme étendue sur une chaise longue) c. 1898

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Albert André's *Woman lying on a chaise longue* captures a richly decorated and softly enveloping interior with delicacy and poetic insight. Within this serene setting a solitary figure reclines, seemingly lost in her own thoughts.

Alongside Édouard Vuillard, André excelled at depicting these quiet moments of domestic life, which often included women readying themselves for the day.

From the mid-1890s art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel championed the artist, regularly exhibiting his work in Paris and New York. By 1904, André made his first appearance at the Salon d'Automne in Paris and was included in a landmark show at the Libre Esthétique in Brussels celebrating Impressionism and its influences.

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Interior, toilette

(Intérieur, toilette) c. 1918

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Woman at her toilette
(Femme à sa toilette) c. 1902

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Édouard VUILLARD

French 1868–1940

Conversation at the Natansons' at Valvins (La conversation, chez les Natanson à Valvins) 1896

oil on cardboard

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2023

Édouard Vuillard's painting captures the intimate social world surrounding *La Revue Blanche*, the influential Parisian journal that championed art, literature and music in the 1890s. The magazine's directors, Alexandre, Thadée and Alfred Natanson, ran the journal from 1889, the same year that Vuillard was persuaded by fellow artist Maurice Denis to join the Nabis—a group of French painters who, inspired by Synthetism, rejected naturalism in favour of flattened forms, decorative colour and symbolic expression.

The Natansons became important patrons of the Nabis, collecting works by Vuillard and Pierre Bonnard that aligned aesthetically with their vision for the magazine.

Through its flattened forms and intimate atmosphere, this work evokes the creative exchanges that flourished within this influential artistic and literary network.

Édouard VUILLARD

French 1868–1940

The doors (Les portes) 1894

gouache on cardboard

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1952

As a member of the Nabis, along with Maurice Denis, Pierre Bonnard, Félix Vallotton and Ker-Xavier Roussel, Édouard Vuillard believed that painting should not imitate nature so much as express an inscape; this resulted in areas of plain colour (*aplats*), decorative motifs and simplified outlines. Flat images were ‘in’, inspired by the Japanese prints that were all the rage in Paris’s artistic milieus. The patterned picture-plane trumped perspective.

At this time, Vuillard was mostly producing indoor scenes, such as those within his mother’s house, seamstresses in their workshops, and the homes of his friends.

The Importance of Friendship

The archives of the Durand-Ruel Gallery preserve an extensive correspondence between the dealer and the artists he represented. Most of these exchanges concern practical and financial matters, while personal subjects are only rarely discussed. Yet friendship formed an essential bond, not only between Paul Durand-Ruel and the painters, but also among the artists themselves.

One example is the close relationship that developed between Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Berthe Morisot from 1886 onwards. Julie Manet, Morisot's daughter, posed on numerous occasions both for her mother and for Renoir. After the death of her parents, when she was only sixteen years old, Renoir continued to watch over her. He advised her on the promotion of her mother's work and, together with his fellow Impressionists, organised the posthumous exhibition dedicated to Berthe Morisot at the Durand-Ruel Gallery in 1896.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Albert André were united by an equally strong friendship. It was with Paul Durand-Ruel that Renoir first encountered André's work at the Salon des Indépendants in 1894. Impressed by the young artist, Renoir immediately drew Durand-Ruel's attention to his paintings and encouraged him to support André. This meeting marked the beginning of a deep and enduring friendship between the two painters. Renoir frequently stayed with André at Laudun, while André regularly visited Renoir at Cagnes-sur-Mer. The trust and affection between them found their ultimate expression when Renoir appointed Albert André as the executor of his estate shortly before his death in 1919.

Berthe MORISOT

French 1841–1895

Paule Gobillard in a ball gown (Paule Gobillard en robe de bal) 1887

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Berthe Morisot exhibited in the first Impressionist exhibition in Paris in 1874. She was the sole female artist in the group of thirty exhibitors.

Morisot developed a distinctive style of painting, characterised by loose, dynamic brushstrokes and a light palette. She painted the atmosphere and figures of society life, favouring the young women in her family and social circle.

The model, Paule Gobillard, the niece and student of Berthe Morisot, aged 20 at the time the work was painted, perfectly embodies the theme of young girls on the cusp of adulthood, so dear to Berthe Morisot.

Gobillard was a French artist and Post-Impressionist painter who was heavily influenced by the Impressionists, particularly Morisot and Renoir.

Promoting the New Painting

To promote the artists he championed, Paul Durand-Ruel published specialist journals at his own expense. Among them was *L'Art dans les Deux Mondes* (*Art in Two Worlds*), aimed at an established clientele on both sides of the Atlantic, bringing together American and European collectors and art enthusiasts. The venture, however, proved extremely costly and was short-lived: the journal appeared only between November 1890 and July 1891.

Berthe Morisot's *Embroidery* (*La broderie*), painted in 1889, was reproduced as a drawing on the cover of the 28 March 1891 issue of *L'Art dans les Deux Mondes*, reflecting Durand-Ruel's commitment to promoting and publicising the artist's work.

Berthe MORISOT

French 1841–1895

Embroidery (La broderie) 1889

oil on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Barry Janes and Paul Cross, Paula Fox AO and Fox Family Foundation, Norman Bloom and Pauline Bloom, Myriam Boisbouvier-Wylie and John Wylie AM, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family, The Bowden Marstan Foundation, Ken Harrison AM and Jill Harrison OAM, John and Rose Downer Foundation, Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax and donors to the 2021 NGV Foundation Annual Dinner and 2021 NGV Annual Appeal, 2022

This painting provides a glimpse into the artistic concerns and of Berthe Morisot and her family. It depicts her daughter Julie Manet on the left (aged eleven), who was her favourite model, and Berthe's step-niece Alice Gamby who posed for her in 1888–89.

The signature in the lower right corner underscores the importance of the work to the artist, who rarely signed her paintings, except on the occasion of exhibitions or donations.

Eugène MANET

French 1833–1892

Embroidery (La broderie) 1889

watercolour, graphite on paper

Private Collection

Painted side by side, Berthe Morisot's painting and the watercolour created by her husband based on the same subject are brought together here for the first time. Both works were created in 1889, in the living room-studio of their family apartment at 40 Rue de Villejust, just a stone's throw from the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. While Morisot's work is signed and intended for exhibition, Eugène's piece better illustrates the close bond that united the Morisot–Manet clan and their love of painting.

Renoir and Albert André at Laudun

For health reasons—he suffered from severe rheumatism—Pierre-Auguste Renoir settled at Cagnes-sur-Mer in the south of France in 1903. He continued however, to regularly travel between Paris and Cagnes by car, breaking his journey near Lyon at Laudun, the birthplace of Albert André.

The photograph reproduced here was taken in 1906. It shows Renoir, aged sixty-five, together with Albert André, almost thirty years his junior, following a country lunch in the garden of the André family home at Laudun.

In the portrait of Renoir painted by André in 1912 and displayed here, the artist's difficulty in holding a brush is clearly evident. Yet despite his illness, Renoir never abandoned painting. Towards the end of his life, when he no longer had the strength to grip a brush, he devised a device that attached to his hand, enabling him to continue working until his final days. This determination to continue his work despite physical limitations reveals the central place that painting occupied in his later years.

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Portrait of Pierre-Auguste Renoir (Portrait de Pierre-Auguste Renoir) 1912

oil on canvas

Private Collection

André painted many portraits of Renoir and, in 1918, at the behest of his friend, the art critic and publisher George Besson, he wrote the only biography of Renoir to appear during the older artist's lifetime.

The volume begins with a letter from André to Besson: 'I have tried to paint a portrait of this wonderful man as he is in his daily life, in his studio, and standing before the masters he loves'.

Renoir wrote to André from Cagnes in May 1919: 'My dear friend, when I read your preface, I saw one thing only, that you write with love and friendship. Not everyone can say as much. You see me through rose-tinted spectacles, but that is how you see me ...'

Maxime Maufra: Painter of the Sea

Alongside Henry Moret, Maxime Maufra is regarded as one of the great painters of Brittany. Nearly three-quarters of the photographs of his landscape paintings preserved in the Durand-Ruel Archives depict Breton subjects. Water, in all its forms, was his preferred motif.

A committed plein-air painter, Maufra depicted the rugged coastlines of Brittany and Normandy, as well as ports, cliffs, rivers, fishing scenes and villages. His paintings often convey the power of the natural elements—as in *Cliff of Saint Nicolas*—capturing the interplay of sky, sea and wind in works that are both poetic and decorative. Human figures are rare in Maufra's art.

Together with his close friends Henry Moret and Gustave Loiseau, Maufra was associated with the Pont-Aven circle and developed a friendship with Paul Gauguin from the 1890s onward. Influenced by Gauguin's Synthetist experiments, he briefly adopted their principles, creating simplified compositions with clearly defined forms and bold colour, as seen in *In the sunlight*, *Sciotot Cove* and *The black cliffs at Thurso*. The wild grandeur of these cliffs, swept by flocks of seagulls, conveys a striking sense of daring and freedom.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, however, Maufra, like Moret and Loiseau, returned to a more traditional Impressionist approach. His paintings became increasingly attentive to the effects of light and atmosphere, characterised by a broken, luminous brushwork that remained a defining feature of his mature style.

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

**Medieval castle, Vianden
(Château du Moyen-Âge, Vianden)
1910**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

**Entrance, Goulphar Harbour
(Entrée du port, Goulphar) 1905**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

Holburn Head, Scrabster, near Thurso (Scotland) 1895

oil on canvas

Association des Amis du Petit Palais, Genève

Painted during a visit to northern Scotland in 1895, *Holburn Head* reveals Maxime Maufra's fascination with the drama of rugged coastal landscapes.

Best known as one of the leading painters of Brittany, Maufra was devoted to painting *en plein air* and frequently explored the changing effects of sea, sky and weather.

At this time, his friendship with Paul Gauguin and the Pont-Aven circle encouraged him to experiment with Synthetism, simplifying natural forms through bold colour and strong outlines.

Here, the windswept cliffs and expansive coastline are rendered with striking clarity and expressive force, evoking the wild grandeur of Scotland while reflecting a pivotal moment in Maufra's artistic development between Impressionism and Synthetist-inspired innovation.

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

**The black cliffs at Thurso (Scotland)
(Les falaises noires à Thurso) 1895**

oil on canvas

Association des Amis du Petit Palais, Genève

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

In the sunlight, Scioto Cove

(Au soleil, Anse de Scioto) 1894

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

Storan Point, Groix island (Pointe de Storan, île de Groix) 1890

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Henry Moret is one of several artists who followed in the footsteps of Synthetists Paul Gauguin and Émile Bernard, applying thick outlines (*cernes*) and areas of flat, undifferentiated colour (*aplats*) to his compositions.

This work exemplifies Moret's most celebrated, richly coloured landscapes of coastal Brittany where he was nurtured by the artist colony at Pont-Aven, while retaining the sensory vibrancy of Impressionism. Through swirling brushwork and a shifting palette from rich and contrasting foreground tones to layered blues of sea and sky, it creates a vivid sense of coastal atmosphere. The centrally placed cow sits harmoniously within the vibrant landscape.

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

Cliff of Saint-Nicolas

(Falaise de Saint-Nicolas) 1899

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

**The old lighthouse of Le Havre
(Le vieux phare du Havre) 1905**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Maxime MAUFRA

French 1861–1918

Fishing boat at Yport (Bâteau de pêche à Yport) 1900

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Painted in 1900, this work was completed by Maxime Maufra during an extended period working along the coasts of Brittany and the English Channel, where the working life of fishing communities became a central motif in his practice.

Yport, a picturesque fishing village in the Seine-Maritime department of Normandy, was an important site for Post-Impressionist artists drawn to its dramatic chalk cliffs, crashing waves, and quiet maritime rhythms. This painting evokes a world shaped by tides, weather, and the uncertain returns of sea fishing, while capturing the warm, golden light and serene, contemplative atmosphere of the coast.

Exhibitions at the Durand-Ruel Gallery

Paul Durand-Ruel was a bold and visionary art dealer. He was the first to challenge the prevailing tastes of his era by recognising the significance of Impressionist painting. He was also the first to develop highly innovative methods for promoting the artists he represented. Among the most important of these was the organisation of monographic exhibitions within his galleries. These exhibitions allowed visitors to discover a comprehensive selection of an artist's most recent works, while simultaneously enabling the dealer to showcase the breadth and depth of his holdings.

Assisted by his sons Joseph and Georges, Paul Durand-Ruel tirelessly organised both solo and group exhibitions in his galleries in Paris and New York. Beginning in the 1920s, the family systematically photographed the installations in their galleries, particularly at their final Paris premises at 37–39 Avenue de Friedland and at the New York gallery, which remained open until 1950.

These photographs constitute invaluable records from a period when exhibition catalogues were little more than simple booklets without illustrations. They reflect the Durand-Ruel family's determination to preserve these important exhibitions for posterity. In promoting Albert André, Georges d'Espagnat, Gustave Loiseau, Maxime Maufra and Henry Moret, the dealers spared no effort. Between 1896 and 1973 alone, this group of artists was the subject of a remarkable 73 solo exhibitions and 33 group exhibitions organised by the gallery.

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When the Avenue de Friedland gallery closed in 1974, it was transformed into the home of the Durand-Ruel Archives, becoming the custodian of this extraordinary legacy and preserving the memory of the gallery's pioneering role in the history of modern art.

Albert ANDRÉ

French 1869–1954

Montmartre, view of the Boulevard de Clichy (Montmartre, vue du Boulevard de Clichy)

c. 1921

oil on canvas

Private Collection

From the vantage point of an open window or balconette, Albert André has captured the rooftops of Montmartre's famed Boulevard de Clichy beneath an expansive sky and celestial depiction of Sacré Cœur in the distance.

Perched on a hill overlooking Paris, Montmartre evolved from a rural village of vineyards and windmills into one of the city's most vibrant artistic centres. Although annexed to Paris in 1860, it retained its distinctive character, with winding streets, old buildings, and traces of its agrarian past.

Affordable lodgings and a reputation for radical politics and bohemian culture attracted students, writers, musicians, and artists from the 1880s onward, fostering an atmosphere of creativity and experimentation. The neighbourhood's more affluent areas housed the apartments and studios of established painters such as Degas, Renoir, and Moreau, art supply vendors and several important art dealers and galleries, such as Paul Durand-Ruel, Georges Petit and Goupil et Cie.

Henry Moret and Gustave Loiseau: Between Synthetism and Impressionism

Henry Moret is often regarded as the quintessential painter of Brittany. With easel under his arm, he spent a lifetime exploring its untamed landscapes. Wind-swept coastlines, heathlands, rivers and Breton villages became his favoured subjects, rendered with a deeply poetic sensibility.

Stylistically, Moret's work moves between the free, light-filled language of Impressionism and the more formal principles of Paul Gauguin's Synthetism. In 1888, Moret met Gauguin and his fellow artists in the Breton village of Pont-Aven. Their innovative aesthetic was characterised by simplified forms, an absence of modelling, broad areas of vivid colour and dark outlining contours.

Gustave Loiseau travelled to Pont-Aven in 1890 and likewise embraced this approach. Moret's *Waiting for the fishermen's return* and Loiseau's *Tréboul Douarnenez (Brittany)* demonstrate a stylistic affinity with Gauguin's *Breton fishermen*. Through simplified forms and bold colour harmonies, these works reflect the influence of the Pont-Aven school at a pivotal moment in the development of modern painting.

Over time, however, and in part through the encouragement of their dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, both Moret and Loiseau returned to a more classical Impressionist manner, from which they would never again depart. Like Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro before them, they sought to capture the subtle vibrations of light across the landscape through a fragmented, luminous brushstroke.

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

The green rocks (Les roches vertes) 1893

oil on canvas

Association des Amis du Petit Palais, Genève

Gustave Loiseau first travelled to Pont-Aven in May 1890 where he met Henry Moret and became firm friends with Maxime Maufra.

Together they frequented Paul Gauguin and his entourage during the summer of 1890.

The green rocks is an example of Loiseau's experimentation with the principles of Synthetism, evident in its heightened palette, and the evocation of the atmosphere of the landscape through light and shadow.

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

**Waiting for the fishermen's return
(L'attente du retour des pêcheurs) 1894**

oil on canvas

Association des Amis du Petit Palais, Genève

Paul GAUGUIN

French 1848–1903

Breton fishermen (Pêcheurs bretons)

1888

oil on canvas

Onyx Art Collection

In 1888, beginning in Pont-Aven, then moving to Le Pouldu, Paul Gauguin and Émile Bernard developed the Synthetist style. They preached the simplification of forms and colour harmonies, seeking to express emotion rather than create an accurate reproduction of nature.

The vivid shades and pared-down forms of *Breton fishermen* exemplify the principles of Synthetism. Executed during his time in the rural village of Pont-Aven, here Gauguin portrays local men fishing in the shallow waters of the Aven river.

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

**Two Breton women on the clifftop at
Moëlan (Deux bretonnes sur la falaise à
Moëlan) c. 1898–99**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

Cliff at La Hague (Falaise à la Hague) 1912

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

Kelp collectors

(Ramasseuse de varech) n.d.

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Henry MORET

French 1856–1913

**The river, Saint-Maurice
(La rivière, Saint Maurice) 1899**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Gustave LOISEAU

French 1865–1935

**Tréboul Douarnenez (Brittany)
(Tréboul Douarnenez [Bretagne]) 1913**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

The Doors of Joseph Durand-Ruel's Living Room

Presented here is a reconstruction of two decorative doors commissioned in 1899 from Georges d'Espagnat by Joseph Durand-Ruel, the son of the dealer, to adorn the living room of his apartment at 37 Rue de Rome in Paris (seen in the adjacent photograph). The concept originated with Paul Durand-Ruel, who had previously commissioned decorative panels from Claude Monet in 1883 for the doors of his own apartment.

For Paul Durand-Ruel, discovering a work of art in a gallery was not enough; it was equally important to imagine it within a lived environment. His living room, furnished in a refined bourgeois taste, functioned as a genuine showroom in which collectors could experience Impressionist paintings integrated into an elegant domestic interior. This carefully orchestrated setting helped familiarise audiences with the art of their own time and enabled them to imagine such works within their own homes.

Following in his father's footsteps, Joseph Durand-Ruel commissioned d'Espagnat to paint the doors of his living room and Albert André to decorate those of his dining room, an example of which is presented in the adjacent gallery. Each set of double doors comprised seven decorative panels—children at play in the case of d'Espagnat, and figures enjoying the outdoors in André's designs. They were originally displayed alongside masterpieces by the Impressionists, evoked here by Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *Bathers*.

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Placed side by side, these two generations of artists reveal no discordance. On the contrary, the affinity of their styles is immediately apparent, creating a harmonious dialogue between Impressionism and its successors. Together, they embody the distinctive taste of the Durand-Ruel family.

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

**Women sewing in the garden
(Couseuses au jardin) c. 1898**

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

**Panels from the living room doors of
Joseph Durand-Ruel (Panneaux des
portes du salon de Joseph Durand-Ruel)
1900**

oil on canvas

Private Collections

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

**Panels from the living room doors of
Joseph Durand-Ruel (Panneaux des
portes du salon de Joseph Durand-Ruel)
1900**

oil on canvas

Private Collections

Georges d'ESPAGNAT

French 1870–1950

Bernard asleep (Bernard endormi)

c. 1923

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Pierre-Auguste RENOIR

French 1841–1919

Bathers (Baigneuses) c. 1882

oil on canvas

Vargi Collection

Renoir's *Bathers*, painted around 1882, reflects a pivotal moment in the artist's career. Having declared that he had 'gone as far as one could go with Impressionism', Renoir found new inspiration after travels to Algeria and Italy, where he studied the great Renaissance masters. The experience prompted a shift towards a more structured and classical approach, with firmer outlines and greater emphasis on drawing while retaining the luminous colour and vitality of his earlier work.

In this exuberant scene of bathers and onlookers, Renoir unites the freshness of Impressionism with the enduring traditions of European figure painting, signalling a new direction that would shape the remainder of his career.

Beyond Durand-Ruel: Claude Monet and the Path to Abstraction

When Monet embarked upon his serial paintings in the early 1890s, including the celebrated *Haystacks*, his work began to move beyond the defining principles of Impressionism.

The subject of his painting was no longer determined primarily by the motif itself, but by the changing effects of light. The motif became a vehicle through which Monet explored perception, atmosphere and visual sensation.

By the time of Paul Durand-Ruel's death in 1922, Monet's art had evolved even further, as demonstrated by the late *Japanese bridge* displayed in this gallery. Its near-monochromatic green palette, freely handled brushwork and compressed perspective render the subject almost unrecognisable, anticipating the language of abstraction.

The work of two contemporary artists, the French-American Vicky Colombet and the Australian Louise Weaver, demonstrates the continuing relevance of the concerns explored in Monet's late paintings. Their works highlight the enduring influence of his final artistic achievements and his foundational role in the development of the art that emerged in the decades following the Second World War.

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

Japanese bridge (Le pont Japonais) 1918–24

oil on canvas

Onyx Art Collection

In 1892, Berthe Morisot's daughter Julie Manet described the Japanese bridge that Monet had just installed in his water garden.

Twenty years later, the footbridge is shaded by an imposing wisteria. This motif was particularly favored by Monet in the 1920s. This painting belongs to a group of four canvases painted in the same shades of green. Never exhibited during the artist's lifetime, these works, bordering on abstraction, are striking in their modernity.

Vicky Colombet

Vicky Colombet's work is structured around 'landscape-canvases' that she develops on completely flat, smooth surfaces, achieved through sanding the canvas, laying it flat and using a very fluid medium. Any trace of brushstrokes is eliminated by the use of smooth brushes with natural bristles. The subtle formation of fractals and particles resulting from her use of ground pigments gives the illusion of a three-dimensional pictorial topography. The gaze oscillates between magnified particles and landscape, between the macro- and the microscopic, which belong in a single continuum.

Colombet's paintings never represent a particular landscape but construct the idea of one. They work as visual catalysts, offering an inward experience of time and place. They convey a sensory relationship to the world: an attempt to capture the instant, the breath, the fleeting vibration of the elements—mist, wind, water, and light—and afford a path to contemplation. Her works are direct expressions of the earth, suggestive of imaginary and meditative landscapes. Colombet attempts to express the idea that the absolutely simple contains a universe, and what we see is in a constant state of becoming. It is a quest for the indefinable.

Claude Monet and Vicky Colombet's shared relationship with nature is their point of convergence. With Monet, painting becomes the translation of the motif through light and the visual impression; Colombet's pictures become the translation of a state, an inscape, freed of any direct reference. Where Monet dissolves form via perception,

Continued overleaf

Colombet dissolves sensation in meditative abstraction.
Her work is profoundly different from Monet's, but they both
embody the same demand for presence in the world and for
capturing the instant.

Vicky COLOMBET

French–American, born 1953

**Monet series: Night in the garden #1421
(Série Monet: Nuit dans le jardin #1421)
2019**

oil, pigments and alkyd on canvas

Private Collection

Vicky COLOMBET

French–American, born 1953

**Monet series #1396 (cobalt, green,
bluish-Mars black) (Série Monet: #1396
[cobalt, vert, bleuâtre-Mars, noir]) 2018**

oil, pigments and alkyd on canvas

Private Collection

Louise Weaver

Louise Weaver's abstract paintings are inspired by nature and informed by ecological and feminist discourses. Through subtle gradations of colour and tone, Weaver stimulates the sensation of being in nature and in landscapes.

The atmospheric effect achieved in each painting is the result of labour-intensive processes. Iridescent pigment and synthetic polymer emulsion are hand-mixed and Weaver applies multiple layers of these coloured paints to thin lengths of Japanese Kozo paper made from the Mulberry plant. The painted Kozo strands are then woven across a warp of hand-painted cotton threads. Across the lustrous, textural grid of the final woven works, colours interact with light and alter subtly across the picture plane as the viewer's position shifts. The experience of light and time evoked in each painting is fleeting; a mutability that echoes the endless changes in and rhythms of nature.

Weaver's work is inspired by numerous and diverse art historical precedents. In these recent paintings we see the influence of Claude Monet and the principles of French Impressionism. Weaver's innovative use of Japanese Kozo paper, most commonly used in Ukiyo-e printmaking for its strength, absorbency and pliability, links materially and conceptually to Monet's fascination with the medium and his prized personal collection of Ukiyo-e that he actively collected from the 1860s.

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Atmospheric conditions caused and conditioned by light, impermanence, a desire to represent the organic 'wholeness' of nature, and a focus on emotions and sensations evoked by landscape, are characteristics shared by the artists across time.

Louise WEAVER

Australian, born 1966

For the time being 2025

synthetic polymer emulsion, iridescent pigment, Japanese
Kozo natural paper and cotton thread on linen

Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

Louise WEAVER

Australian, born 1966

Cave of a seashell 2025

synthetic polymer emulsion, iridescent pigment, Japanese
Kozo natural paper and cotton thread on linen

Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

Claude MONET

French 1840–1926

Peonies (Pivoines) 1887

oil on canvas

Private Collection

Monet settled in Giverny in 1883. When he painted this picture, he was still renting the Pressoir estate.

The work depicts peonies grown under a straw shelter. The painting is striking for its freedom of execution. The motif is difficult to discern, the flowers being represented by simple patches of color. One might think one is looking at the painter's palette rather than the flowers in the garden.

The freedom of execution in this painting foreshadows Monet's final work and the beginnings of abstraction.