



## MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM

### *Impressionism: Masterworks on Paper*

Find below a list of all the resources on this site related to *Impressionism: Masterworks on Paper*, on view October 14, 2011–January 8, 2012, at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

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#### **Background Information**

Featuring over 120 works on paper—pastels, watercolors, and drawings—by some of the most famous artists in the history of Western European art, *Impressionism: Masterworks on Paper* is an exhibition with a game-changing thesis. Older students can dive into what is fresh in art history as a result of this new scholarship, while younger students can engage with works by Monet, Degas, Van Gogh, Cézanne, and others. Notably, these works on paper are rarely seen because they are extremely delicate and sensitive to light. Works on paper are generally shown for only three months at a time, after which they must go back into storage for at least three years.

You probably already know the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists represented in this exhibition—but did you know that these artists created art other than painting? Many of their most experimental and groundbreaking techniques and ideas were fleshed out on paper rather than on

canvas. They mixed materials, chose untraditional subject matter, and pushed conventions. Here, **you and your class will have a chance to explore these artists' innovations firsthand.**

Impressionism was revolutionary because it introduced a different way of thinking about art than traditionally taught and recognized by the official art academies in France during the 1800s. Artists who aligned themselves with the movement wanted to create an art that reflected modern times and were interested in capturing atmosphere—of light, of a landscape, of daily life—to give the effect of immediacy to the viewer. They also painted in a style that was freer, looser, and more experimental. Post-Impressionists combined the style and interest in atmosphere that the Impressionists heralded with a desire to depict emotion (often that of the artist him or herself) in their brushstrokes.

Since painting has dominated the discussion on the effect these two avant-garde movements had on the development of modern art, it comes as a surprise to some that the Impressionists included drawings and watercolors in all their Salons (or exhibitions); in fact, 40 percent of the artworks in these shows were works on paper. These works were mostly finished pieces in their own right, rather than preparatory studies for oil paintings. This exhibition is among a limited, but growing, examination into these Impressionist works on paper as significant artworks in themselves—apart from their relation to paintings.

You can find out more about the artists and their contributions to art history in the [Exhibition Walkthrough](#). The [Technique & Vocabulary](#) section features a glossary of the media that artists use when working on paper. There is also a guide for talking about Nudity and Art with your students.

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## Exhibition Walkthrough

The artworks in the *Impressionism: Masterworks on Paper* exhibition are organized by artist. As you walk through the exhibition, you will find it roughly organized chronologically, from the precursors of Impressionism to the Impressionists themselves, and then to the Post-Impressionists; each group of artists built upon their predecessor's innovations.

This walkthrough gives you an overview of the artists, in the order they are presented in the exhibition, and briefly explains how they contributed to the movement through their works on paper, along with discussion ideas to use in the galleries with your class.

### Eugene Boudin (1824–1898)

Most well known for being the teacher of a young Claude Monet, Eugene Boudin was an established artist in his own right whose work paved the road for later Impressionists. His interest in nature, light (particularly that of the sea), and upper-middle-class society and his quick, sketchy style capturing specific scenes were influential on future artists.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi\\_boudineugene.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi_boudineugene.htm)

### **Claude Monet** (1840–1926)

The famous Claude Monet was also a fine draftsman, highly skilled in drawing. Late in life, he took a trip to London and lost his painting materials on the way; he turned to pastels to create *Waterloo Bridge* and *Charing Cross Bridge*, both of which are featured in the exhibition.

► **Compare these pieces with the painting of Waterloo Bridge in the Museum’s Collection:** what is different and similar? Does the view, colors, or mood of the scene change when depicted in pastels versus oil?

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[\(\[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cmon/hd\\\_cmon.htm\]\(http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cmon/hd\_cmon.htm\)\)](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cmon/hd_cmon.htm)

### **Edgar Degas** (1834–1917)

Edgar Degas’ favored subject matter—seascapes, the ballet, and nudes—figure prominently in his work on paper. By layering colors, different kinds of marks, and fixative, he created dense drawings and complex, deliberate compositions.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[\(\[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsp/hd\\\_dgsp.htm\]\(http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsp/hd\_dgsp.htm\)\)](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsp/hd_dgsp.htm)

### **Édouard Manet** (1832–1883)

The small watercolors by Édouard Manet featured in this exhibition are in contrast to his revolutionary, envelope-pushing work in oil—but his delicate handling of color and the chance to view his handwriting make these works on paper worth a peek.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[\(\[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mane/hd\\\_mane.htm\]\(http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mane/hd\_mane.htm\)\)](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mane/hd_mane.htm)

### **Berthe Morisot** (1841–1895)

The sketchy watercolors of Berthe Morisot, **Manet’s sister-in-law**, portray scenes of upper-middle-class society in strokes both dry and saturated with liquid, capturing the essence of light and feeling in each moment.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[\(\[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi\\\_morisotberthe.htm\]\(http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi\_morisotberthe.htm\)\)](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi_morisotberthe.htm)

### **Federico Zandomenighi** (1841–1917)

An Italian so taken with French Impressionism that he moved permanently to Paris in 1874, Federico Zandomenighi layered pastels with many small, vertical strokes, creating thick, dense colors. He was mainly interested in depicting nudes and interior scenes with women, and was much inspired by Degas.

### **Mary Cassatt** (1844–1926)

Mary Cassatt, beloved Post-Impressionist, used similar subject matter on paper as she did on canvas: touching images of mothers and their children, intimate and personal.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[\(\[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cast/hd\\\_cast.htm\]\(http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cast/hd\_cast.htm\)\)](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cast/hd_cast.htm)

### **Eva Gonzalès (1847–1883)**

Eva Gonzalès' work is sketchier and a little tighter than Cassatt's, but similarly intimate. In the work represented here, Gonzalès used colored paper to heighten the effect of her chosen palette.

### **Camille Pissarro (1830–1903)**

Camille Pissarro focused on landscapes. He was interested in the light during the different seasons and consistently experimented with mark-making. As such, his works on paper evoke a sense of temperature, from an icy cold frost to the warmth of a summer day. A natural teacher, he mentored the younger Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. Late in life he moved to the countryside to depict the life of peasants and escape the capitalism in the city.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi\\_pissarrocamille.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi_pissarrocamille.htm)

### **Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919)**

Pierre-Auguste Renoir was in many ways a traditional artist, but he was still interested in and aligned himself with Impressionism and its avant-garde ideas. Using a variety of media, he layered different kinds of marks to create his landscapes and compositions of young women.

► Your students should definitely check out **Renoir's *Bathers with Crab*** painting, on loan to the Museum from the Carnegie Museum of Art. The painting is at the Museum thanks to the Green Bay Packers winning Super Bowl XLV against the Pittsburgh Steelers! The Museum bet its Gustave Caillebotte painting, *Boating on the Yerres*, which would have gone to Pittsburgh if the Packers had lost. Ask your students: What work of art would they have suggested we bet? Look at the **Carnegie Museum of Art's website**. **Is there a piece they would have asked for instead?**

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/augu/hd\\_augu.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/augu/hd_augu.htm)

### **Jean-Louis Forain (1852–1931)**

An illustrator as well as a painter, Jean-Louis Forain depicted scenes of everyday life—from brothels to theatres—in his highly detailed style. He used gouache (a dense, opaque kind of watercolor) to make bright images of modern life.

### **Georges Seurat (1859–1891)**

Georges Seurat, famous for pointillism and color theory, here surprises us with his monochromatic works on paper. But there is a connection: the varying pressure of his mark-making shows his interest in the texture of paper and the handling of value. Use his works to talk to your students about the principles of art, and have them try to emulate his technique.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/seni/hd\\_seni.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/seni/hd_seni.htm)

### **Odilon Redon (1840–1916)**

Odilon Redon's dreamy, eerie worlds are just as haunting on paper as they are on canvas. Even his tiny, detailed flowers are little universes that invite close examination.

► Students might create a story about the characters in these pieces: What are they thinking? What could the colors or lack of colors represent?

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi\\_redonodilon.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi_redonodilon.htm)

**Albert-Charles Lebourg** (1849–1928)

Albert-Charles Lebourg was known for his “fusain” works, created entirely out of black chalk.

**Paul Signac** (1863–1935)

Paul Signac's watercolor landscapes show a clear connection to the well-known work of Seurat. It was with Seurat that he developed “Neo-Impressionism,” pioneering pointillism. Signac also wrote a book on Neo-Impressionism, becoming, with his friend's early passing, an unintended spokesperson for the movement.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi\\_signacpaul.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi_signacpaul.htm)

**Paul Gauguin** (1848–1903)

Once a stockbroker, Paul Gauguin left the business world to pursue art full-time, eventually moving to Tahiti, where he created works on and with unusual materials. Encouraged by Van Gogh to create art that expressed feelings rather than simply represented what was seen, Gauguin made art that was unique and full of untraditional marks and symbols.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gaug/hd\\_gaug.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gaug/hd_gaug.htm)

**Vincent van Gogh** (1853–1890)

Vincent van Gogh was a troubled man but prolific artist, and it was through his works (in pen, brush, chalk) that he represented thoughts or feelings from deep within. His mark-making and use of color served to express his emotions.

► Look closely with your students at Van Gogh's marks: What mood do they get from the work of art? What mood do they think Van Gogh was in when he made it? What do they see in the work that makes them think that?

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gogh/hd\\_gogh.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/gogh/hd_gogh.htm)

**Paul Cezanne** (1839–1906)

Paul Cezanne's love of landscapes comes through in his works on paper. In oil the artist built up layers and created blocks of color to describe a scene, often of his beloved Mont Sainte-Victoire;

on paper he used sparse lines and pale washes of color to provide just enough context for the viewer.

- ▶ Ask your students to create an image of their favorite place using only the most essential lines and marks—you might even give them a limit on the number of lines they can use, or talk with them about using white space.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pcez/hd\\_pcez.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pcez/hd_pcez.htm)

### **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901)**

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec used a variety of media on the same sheet of paper to depict scenes of theaters, performances, and cafés. Through his confident mark-making, he was able to express the distinct character and personalities of the figures in his compositions.

- ▶ Ask your students to look closely at one figure from one of his pieces, and then write a monologue from **that person's** point of view.

*More information on this artist from the Met*

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/laut/hd\\_laut.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/laut/hd_laut.htm)

## **Technique & Vocabulary**

Artists use many kinds of tools to create the pieces you see in the Museum. Below are some common media that you will find on the labels in the *Impressionism* exhibition. If you have these art supplies in your classroom, give your students a chance to experiment with them to get a sense of how the Impressionists represented in the exhibition might have used them. Can they make similar marks? Is the media easy or difficult to use?

### **Backing**

The material onto which the media being used is placed—for the Impressionists, this was usually paper, handmade paper, cardboard, cardstock, and sometimes canvas.

### **Chalk**

Soft sticks of pigment mixed with gum (to bind the pigment to itself); think sidewalk chalk or classroom chalk.

(More on the ArtLex Art Dictionary <http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/c/chalk.html>)

### **Charcoal**

Burned wood that is compressed into a stick.

### **Conté crayon**

Graphite or charcoal mixed with wax to form a stick. (Harder than chalk.)

**Essence** (pronounced *ess-ahnce*)

Oil paint that has been thinned.

**Fixative**

A thin varnish that is sprayed over pastel, charcoal, chalk, and other dry media to prevent smudging and smearing.

**Gouache** (pronounced *gwash*)

Highly pigmented, and opaque, watercolor.

(More on the ArtLex Art Dictionary <http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/g/gouache.html>)

**Media**

The material with which you draw (a pencil, pastel, conté crayon, etc.).

**Pastel**

Soft sticks of pigment mixed with gum (to bind the pigment to itself). (Softer than chalk.)

(More on the ArtLex Art Dictionary <http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/p/pastel.html>)

**Pencil**

The familiar classroom tool we all know and love. Comes in different degrees of hardness or softness.

**Pen/ink wash**

The use of ink like watercolor.

**Pigment**

Color, usually in powdered form from natural substances.

**Tempera**

A kind of paint made, traditionally, from pigment mixed with eggs. Tempera dries much more quickly than oil paint.

**Watercolor**

Quick-drying pigment mixed with gum (which binds the pigment to itself) and water.

(More on the ArtLex Art Dictionary <http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/wxyz/watercolor.html>)

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## Nudity in Art and Your Students

You will find many images in the *Impressionism: Masterworks on Paper* exhibition that feature the nude body. This can sometimes present a challenge in the classroom or galleries with students,

but **don't let that deter you from showing your** students work in the exhibition. Use the tips below to get past the giggles and look more closely at the works of art.

A note: Ultimately, **it is up to you to decide your school community's comfort level** with nudity. Know that there are also many landscapes and portraits featured in the exhibition that you may choose to focus on instead.

If students get the giggles in front of a work of art that has a nude figure, whether in the classroom or galleries:

- Explain that it is important for artists to understand what is underneath our clothes in order to realistically re-create how fabric appears on the body. Artists believe the human body is a beautiful thing. For these reasons, artists often show people who are nude in their works of art.
  - Allow students to talk about it. Ask what they are focusing on, and offer to have a discussion around it. When they see that you are comfortable discussing nudity, they may be less interested in doing so themselves. That said, should a discussion about nudity start, see where it takes you: it can be an illuminating entry point to explore the piece.
  - Ask students to write down any funny comments to share later, especially if they become disruptive. They can get the giggles or inappropriate comments out of their system so that you can continue. They can share the comments with you after class or after your Museum visit. (Thanks to The smARTteacher for this tip. <http://www.thesmartteacher.com/>)
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## Playing on Paper

All Grades, Pre-Visit Activity

Explain to your students that on your Museum visit, they will see many different ways of making marks on paper. In fact, the artists used paper as a playground, of sorts, for their pencil. Give your students their own paper and pencils. How many different kinds of marks can they make with just a pencil? Beyond straight lines and curved lines, have them think about using the side of the pencil to shade, and about making crosshatch marks, layering strokes, and more. After your visit, have them pull out their sketches again. Did they see any of their marks in the works of art at the Museum? Should any new marks be added based on what they saw?

## Parlez-vous Français?

Elementary, Middle, Pre-Visit Activity, French

Look at the image gallery of pieces featured in the *Impressionism* show. Ask students to make a list of 5–10 places, objects, jobs, or feelings that come to mind when they look at the works. Then, use an online French-to-English dictionary to translate those words into French. Have students learn 15 words (depending on their age) to remember for their trip. They should teach that word to a fellow student and look closely for it when they are at the Museum.



## Field Trip to Impressionist Europe

Elementary, Middle, High, Pre-Visit Activity

Let your students take a “virtual” field trip to the Europe of the Impressionists. Use the Google Earth program or Google Maps’ satellite and street view feature to look up the following places that were important to the Impressionists.

Moulin Rouge, Paris, France—a popular bar and theater where Impressionists hung out

<http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Moulin+Rouge,+Boulevard+de+Clichy,+Paris,+France&hl=en&ll=48.884083,2.33247&spn=0.00103,0.001789&sll=48.884811,2.332449&sspn=0.032961,0.057249&vpsrc=6&hq=Moulin+Rouge,+Boulevard+de+Clichy,+Paris,+France&t=h&z=19&iwloc=A>

The Eiffel Tower (Paris, France)—**France’s icon**, built towards the very end of most of the Impressionists’ lifetime

<http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Eiffel+Tower,+Avenue+Anatole+France,+Paris,+France&hl=en&ll=48.859633,2.294254&spn=0.032978,0.057249&sll=49.364936,0.082741&sspn=0.06797,0.114498&vpsrc=0&hq=Eiffel+Tower,+Avenue+Anatole+France,+Paris,+France&t=h&z=14>

Beach at Trouville-sur-Mer, France—Boudin painted many beach scenes here

<http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Trouville-sur-Mer,+France&hl=en&ll=49.364936,0.082741&spn=0.06797,0.114498&sll=48.884083,2.33247&sspn=0.00103,0.001789&vpsrc=0&hnear=Trouville-sur-Mer,+Calvados,+Lower+Normandy,+France&t=h&z=13>

Waterloo Bridge, London, England—**featured in Monet’s** views of London

<http://maps.google.com/maps?q=waterloo+bridge,+london&hl=en&ll=51.509103,-0.117567&spn=0.00812,0.014312&sll=48.859633,2.294254&sspn=0.032978,0.057249&vpsrc=0&hnear=Waterloo+Bridge,+Westminster,+London+WC2E+7,+United+Kingdom&t=h&z=16>

## Making Marks Part 2

Post-Visit Activity, All Grades

The Impressionists made a wide variety of marks in their artworks. Have your students use this worksheet of just a few different kinds of marks found in the exhibition to make their own work of art. Encourage them to use the subject matter of the Impressionists as inspiration. See if they can incorporate all of the different marks into one piece. Some require smudging! Let them use pencil, watercolor, pastel, chalk, and charcoal if available.

Please visit [http://mam.org/learn/teacher\\_resources.php](http://mam.org/learn/teacher_resources.php) to download the Worksheet.

*Use the activity called Making Marks Part 1 (Eye Spy) in the galleries on your visit to the Museum; see below.*

## Répondez S'il Vous Plaît

Middle, High School, Post-Visit Activity

The Impressionists were friends with many creative people in Paris in the 1800s, including writers. Charles Baudelaire was one of the most famous writers of all, and Impressionist paintings and works on paper inspired many of his writings.

Here is an excerpt of **his writing about Boudin's seascapes**:

In the end, all these clouds, with their fantastic and luminous forms; these ferments of gloom; these immensities of green and pink, suspended and added one upon another; these gaping furnaces; these firmaments of black or purple satin, crumpled, rolled, or torn; **these horizons in mourning, or streaming with molten metal...** (*Impressionism: Pastels, Watercolors, Drawings*, p. 26 – link to catalogue on Store website)

**Baudelaire is so inspired by Boudin's skies that the colors become "satin," they begin to have emotions ("in mourning"), and they even take on different forms entirely in his imagination ("molten metal").**

Have students choose a work of art in the exhibition to use as inspiration for their own short nonfiction, descriptive writing piece. Encourage them to use their most flourishing vocabulary, like Baudelaire—over the top is the way to go. This piece might be the start of another assignment—a story or essay, depending on your curriculum.

## Making Marks Part 1 (Eye Spy)

Gallery Activity, All Grades

Go on a mark-making eye-spy hunt! Give your students copies of this PDF worksheet, which shows many (but not all!) of the different marks that Impressionists used. Have them try to replicate the marks with pencil, and then search through the galleries to see if they can find those marks in the work. **Have them write that piece's artist and title underneath the mark.**

Please visit [http://mam.org/learn/teacher\\_resources.php](http://mam.org/learn/teacher_resources.php) to download the Worksheet.

*Follow this gallery-based activity with Making Marks Part 2, back in your classroom (see above).*