A Blueprint for Taste

Contemporary Collecting of Ébénisterie And French Impressionism

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ABSTRACT

This exhibition will look at the taste among contemporary wealthy collectors for Louis XV and Louis XVI ébénisterie and French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings by examining objects from the recent sales at Christie's of three prominent private collections. A review of the history of collecting of both categories of objects, from their beginnings to the present day, will address the issue of how these objects have come to command the very highest prices in today's art market. In so doing, prominent collectors and market performance throughout these periods will be examined. It will be argued that collecting eighteenth-century ébénisterie and French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism has today become a pattern among the wealthiest collectors, and furthermore, that this particular pattern has come to represent the height of taste.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In an exhibition with such a broad theme but such a limited size, an exhaustive study is not possible. Some compromises must necessarily be made. It is difficult enough to have to choose only several Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, but choosing exemplary pieces of ébénisterie, whose range is so vast, is all the more challenging. The aim and the hope is to represent a varied range of fine work produced by different makers, while achieving some kind of unity. It is for this reason that the selection of ébénisterie has been limited to examples of case furniture and tables, to the exclusion of other types of furniture, most notably seating.

The temptation in an exhibition like this, so focused on the market, is simply to choose objects that fetched the highest prices at auction. Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings will, inevitably, fetch prices in the millions, so a catalogue of high-priced paintings is virtually unavoidable. This is not true, though, of ébénisterie, as not all the pieces collected today fetch the very highest prices. Some do, and a few examples of such pieces are included in the catalogue. But a kind of high-price hall of fame has been avoided in favor of a selection of objects at a range of prices, which far more accurately reflects the true state of the market.

I would like to thank Ian Cox for his many useful suggestions and ideas when this project was at its formative stages and for his assistance along the way. And I would especially like to thank Deborah Lambert for helping me bring a vague idea into sharp focus and for her interest and encouragement.

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A Blueprint for Taste

Old works of art are not, however, desirable only for their rarity or beauty, but for their associations, for the memories they evoke, the trains of thought to which they lead, and the many ways they stimulate the imagination and realize our ideals. Only the minority of collectors perhaps are swayed by these impulses . . .[1]

Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, 1896

[1] Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild. Bric-à-Brac, p.2. *Reminiscences*, MSS. (1896).

Introduction

Contemporary taste for art is diverse, ranging from the most unassuming of everyday household collectibles to the oldest of antiquities, and exists on many levels, from that of the novice weekend bargain hunter to the most rarefied of the discriminating and wealthy collector and connoisseur. Thus, contemporary taste constitutes a jumble of sometimes conflicting aesthetic values. However, closer inspection or the contemporary market reveals a kind of hierarchy of taste, with the aesthetic values, the style of collecting, of the wealthiest collectors generally (although there are always exceptions) the most admired, envied, and, if possible, emulated.

The market tends to be a reliable indicator of taste. The objects regarded as the most desirable, whether due to their inherent quality or their rarity or simply to the whims of fashion, will naturally fetch the highest prices. Renoir himself, speaking about paintings, acknowledged it himself: 'there's only one indicator for telling [value] and that is the sale room.'[2] That said, taste and aesthetic or historical value are not always related. Some objects that in the past seemed to have no real value can later become the most sought-after objects, to which collectors go to any lengths to obtain. Twentieth-century collectibles (movie posters, toys, baseball cards, etc.) provide the most obvious example. And objects that were once much sought-after can after some time lose their appeal completely. So it is a complicated matter to decide just why taste is the way it is. It is far easier to determine what it is. The market, in the form of auction results and sales figures, provides the most direct answer.

If we are to go by the results in the most recent years, some of the objects that consistently fetch the highest prices are Louis XV and Louis XVI ébénisterie and

French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings.[3] For example, among the several objects advertised by Christie's to have realized exceptional prices at auction are two pieces of Louis XVI ébénisterie and a van Gogh painting. A royal Louis XVI commode by Jean-Henri Riesener (see catalogue object 5) fetched £7,401,500 and a Louis XVI Commode by Martin Carlin and Adam Weisweiler (see comparative catalogue object 21) $34 million, while van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* managed $82.5 million.[4] Now the wealthiest collectors surely do not collect objects only in these categories. But these record figures, and the consistently high figures for other similar objects, indicate these objects are indeed some of the most consistently sought-after, objects for which collectors are willing to pay astonishing sums of money.

To illustrate this idea, we will examine the collection of three prominent collectors of Louis XV and Louis XVI ébénisterie and French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, who have sold their collections through Christie's in the last four years: Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild[5], John and Frances L. Loeb[6], and Akram Ojjeh[7]. These collectors had their own diverse interests. The Rothschilds collected arms and armor, Old Masters, Renaissance objects, and musical instruments. Ojjeh collected Orientalist and Salon paintings, the Loebs the Fauves and others. However, from among all the diversity emerges a common pattern of taste. The Rothschilds collected the finest eighteenth-century French ébénisterie, the Loebs masterworks of French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, and Ojjeh a

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[2] Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, p.249.
[3] Over the course of the twentieth century, especially, there has been a more or less sustained rise in prices for both, something that will be explored more at length in the sections that follow.
[4] *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* sold Christie's New York, May 1990. For exceptional prices see www.christies.com/history/exceptional_prices.asp.
[5] Sold Christie's London, July 1999.
[6] Sold Christie's New York, May 1997.
[7] Sold Christie's New York and London, November-December and Monaco, December 1999.

combination of the two. Thus, when the collections of these wealthy and celebrated collectors are taken together, what emerges is a pattern of taste, namely for eighteenth-century French ébénisterie and French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism.

These collectors are just a few of the many collectors to occupy a place in the more recent chapters of the rich, centuries-old history of collecting reaching back to the Medici and further. And they are at the same time authors of and followers of a model of taste that has grown out of the modern art market as it has developed over the last one hundred fifty or so years. An examination of the objects in these collections and of the history of collecting eighteenth-century ébénisterie and French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism will show how this model of taste, which has been decades in the making, has evolved to the point where it is today. And if one wishes to understand, or even aspire to the highest taste of today, there might be no better blueprint than the one that follows.

Louis XV and Louis XVI Ébénisterie

Ébénisterie in Eighteenth-Century France

The term *ébéniste* first appears in documents in the early seventeenth century to distinguish a more artistic, creative cabinet-maker from the *menuisier*, the ordinary cabinet-maker. In 1608 Laurent Stabre was given the special title *Menuisier en ébène, Faiseur des Cabinets du Roi* (carpenter in ebony, maker of the royal cabinets) by Henri IV and permitted his own workshop in the palace of the Louvre. Similarly, in 1627 the *Maître menuisier* Van Opstal and in 1631 the *tourneur et Menuisier du Roi en Cabinets d'ébène* Pierre Boulle were permitted workshops in the Louvre. The

distinction between the two types of cabinet-maker was based initially on the materials they used, as the ébénistes used rare and costly ebony, later adding other costly hardwoods, precious metals, semi-precious stones, tortoiseshell, ivory, and horn. These materials made for the most luxurious pieces of furniture, including cabinets, wardrobes, and tables, which were used for important ceremonial rooms. It was not only the materials that distinguished the ébénistes from the menuisiers, but also the techniques used in manufacture. The ebony used was cut into thin sheets and applied to a carcass of ordinary timber, a technique known as *placage d'ébène*, the predecessor to veneering, although the sheets of ebony were thicker than later veneers and the means of application differed. *Placage* gradually gave way to the use of thinner foils and different hardwoods. Veneers were applied in plain sheets over the entire piece of furniture or in decorative patterns, such as patterns of geometrical shapes. Even more luxurious pieces were decorated in marquetry in wood of a variety of foliate and other decorative motifs, as well as the brass and tortoiseshell marquetry pioneered by the great early ébéniste André-Charles Boulle (1642-1732), which bears his name.[8]

It is from these roots in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century that the ébénisterie of the Louis XV and Louis XVI periods evolved. Like those before them, the ébénistes of these periods came from the Flemish Netherlands and Holland, like the van Risenburghs, and also increasingly from Germany, like Latz, and the Rhineland, like as Riesener, Carlin, and Weisweiler. As foreigners in Paris, they grouped themselves together in the quarters like the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, where ancient privileges allowed them to work outside of the restrictive regulation of the

[8] Sassone, *Furniture: From Rococo to Art Deco*, pp.114-16.

Parisian Guild of Menuisiers, which sought to protect established craftsmen from competition.[9]

Although a few, like Riesener, enjoyed celebrity, most ébénistes worked in virtual anonymity and sold their luxury pieces through the intermediary marchands-merciers.[10] These 'dealers in everything—makers of nothing'[11] were indeed allowed to sell everything, including imported goods, but forbidden to make anything themselves. Located not far from Les Halles, on a smart section of the rue Saint-Honoré near the Palais-Royal, they served the wealthy elite, royalty among them, who sought the utmost in luxury. The pieces of luxury ébénisterie they sold included a range of seat furniture, beds, case furniture, tables, and accessories such as gueridons (candlestands).

As France was Europe's richest and most populous country in the eighteenth century, Paris, its center, had no shortage of demand for luxury goods. It was the capital of the luxury goods market, and sumptuousness, ostentation, and novelty were its ideals. This taste for luxury fueled the economy, actively encouraged by royalty and the ruling authorities. Royal orders were fundamental to the luxury goods market and to the furniture-making industry of the ébénistes, in particular. The French royal family, even from the time of Louis XIV (1643-1715), were the ébénistes most loyal clients. They filled their palaces with the most sumptuous furnishings, replacing many of them with astonishing frequency and placing orders for newer and more lavish objects. Thus the ébénistes and marchands-merciers who worked with them had to be innovative, constantly pushing themselves to create something new (and creating new styles in the process) to satisfy demand. The climate of the period can be characterized by, in the words of Pierre Verlet, 'clients making unreasonable

[9] Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.9.

demands, artists displaying technical mastery, and all craving [and achieving] perfection.'[12]

The long list of clients of the ébénistes was a veritable 'who's who' of the French political and social elite. King Louis XV (1723-1774) and Madame de Pompadour were loyal clients (see catalogue objects 1-4), as were King Louis XVI (1774-1793) and Queen Marie Antoinette (see catalogue objects 5-7), and the Duc de Penthièvre (see catalogue object 3) and Prince de Condé (see catalogue object 6), to name but several. By the end of the century, the clients came to include wealthy Parisian financiers, who benefited from the economic prosperity in France, as well as numerous noblemen and courtesans. In addition, there were also numerous foreign clients throughout the century: the Catholic princes in Germany, the Elector of Saxony, and the King of Prussia, the Bourbon kings in Spain, the Russian royal family, and even some prominent Englishmen (despite a strong native furniture-making trade and a general taste in their country for less ostentatious pieces), such as Lord Coventry, Horace Walpole, and the Prince Regent.

As demand increased, prices for luxury furniture steadily rose as the century wore on.[13] At the beginning of the century a commode, for example, could cost up to 3,000 livres for the most extravagant example, while by the end of the century prices of 4,000 to 5,000 livres were not unusual (there are records of some extraordinary examples that cost 10,000 livres or more).[14] The price for any piece of ébénisterie depended on its decoration. Detailed marquetry raised the price considerably, lacquer even more so, and Sèvres porcelain-plaque mounts were extremely costly. But more

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[10] The ébénistes also made less luxurious pieces, which they themselves sold directly.
[11] From the *Encyclopédie* as quoted in Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.30.
[12] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.12.
[13] Records list prices in eighteenth-century French livres, for which it is difficult to provide a contemporary monetary equivalent. Therefore, prices will be left in livres. See Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, pp.24-29, for one interpretation of the value of the livre.

costly than anything else were gilt-bronze mounts, which could double the price of any piece.

The eighteenth century was a time of prolific production for the ébénistes, with the adoption of the Louis XV and Louis XVI styles across virtually all of Europe and the strength of demand and the desire for design innovation. All of this, however, would be brought to an abrupt change with the advent of the French Revolution in 1789. As it swept the *ancien régime* from power, the Revolution changed the market for ébénisterie, decimating the client base and putting many ébénistes out of business. Changes in taste and fashion were already under way from about the 1770s, as the Rococo was giving way to more sober neo-classical influences, but the Revolution brought about a more emphatic change to the industry.

Furniture was sold in massive quantities during the Revolution, as the property of former clients of the ébénistes was dispersed, such as in the government auctions of the furnishings at Versailles. The value of both Louis XV and Louis XVI furniture, ébénisterie in particular, collapsed. Objects were being sold for a fraction of the price originally paid for them. Verlet gives the example of a suite of encoignures and a commode by Jean-Henri Riesener made for Versailles that cost 18,764 livres new in 1774, which was sold in the Versailles sales of 1793-94 as a lot with a separate bureau plat originally costing 5,716 livres. The final price for the lot, worth 24,480 livres new, was only 5,000 livres.[15] But there were astute buyers present at many of these sales that took advantage of the low prices for some of the finest examples of ébénisterie.

[14] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.172 and p.175.
[15] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.175.

The Rise of the Great Nineteenth-Century Collectors

For the first thirty years of the nineteenth century, eighteenth-century ébénisterie was out of fashion in France, its place taken by the Empire and Restoration styles—although some, including Talleyrand, Empress Josephine, and even Napoleon, continued to live with earlier pieces. Politics had changed, society had changed and had adopted new values. But while in France interest had disappeared, in England it began to grow. In first third of the century eighteenth-century ébénisterie was widely collected by the English, eventually reaching such proportions that they emptied France of an enormous quantity of furniture. The more visible enthusiasts included Watson Taylor, William Beckford, Lord Yarmouth,[16] the Prince of Wales (later the Prince Regent), in addition to other aristocracy, who made some of the finer pieces the cornerstones of their growing collections. Thus, a market began to develop once again for eighteenth-century ébénisterie and prices began to rise. A Rococo revival began in the 1830s and others, including Queen Victoria, began to take interest. Over the years, the enthusiasm of the English began to be felt elsewhere, including in France, and the formation of great collections followed.

The spread of this enthusiasm was doubtless helped by the high profiles of the collectors as well as by a series of exhibitions of ébénisterie throughout the nineteenth century. In 1853, for example, Queen Victoria lent some of her finest pieces of French furniture (and also Sèvres porcelain) to the Gore House Exhibition in London, as well as to subsequent exhibitions during her reign. Other exhibitions followed, including those held by the Musée Rétrospectif in Paris in 1860 and 1865 (similar exhibitions

[16] He was later to become the 3rd Marquess of Hertford, whose collection formed the beginnings of what would become the Wallace Collection in London. In addition to acquiring pieces for his private collection, Lord Yarmouth acted as sale room agent for the Prince of Wales, later the Prince Regent, between 1810-19.

were held into the 1870s), which included loans from the 4th Marquess of Hertford.[17] Princess Eugénie helped to sponsor an exhibition at the Petit Trianon to accompany the 1867 Exposition Universelle, and there were other notable exhibitions into the 1880s, including one at the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 1882. Notably, too, Richard Wallace, who had inherited the collection or the 4th Marquess of Hertford, made a substantial loan of his furnishings[18] to London's new Bethnal Green Museum from 1872-75; upon its return to Wallace it had been seen by five million visitors. Indeed, all of the exhibitions were well attended by the general public and by connoisseurs and collectors, in particular. Extensive catalogues of the various exhibitions were published and periodicals ran illustrated articles. The impact all of this made on taste, fashion, and collecting habits was enormous.

The latter half of the nineteenth century was also a time of great sales, at which collections of eighteenth-century ébénisterie acquired by the first generation of collectors immediately following the Revolution was acquired by a new generation of great collectors. The Lords Hertford, as mentioned already, were active participants, as were other prominent figures like the Rothschilds and Isaac de Camondo. The sales of the 12th Earl of Pembroke in 1862, the prince de Beauveau in 1865, and the six San Donato sales beginning in 1871 were well attended and saw a consistent rise in prices. And the Paris sale in 1881 of the furnishings of Baron Double was celebrated for the quality of the ébénisterie on offer, with many of the most important pieces purchased by Isaac de Camondo.

[17] See Hughes, *The Wallace Collection Catalogue of Furniture*, Introduction, vol. I p.38 and 58.
[18] Most of these would be included in the future Wallace Collection.

However, the pinnacle of nineteenth-century sales was surely the Hamilton Palace Sale in 1882,[19] containing the collection of Scotland's dukes of Hamilton and objects from the collection of William Bedford (one of the first English collectors of French ébénisterie after the Revolution), whose daughter, married to the 12th Duke of Hamilton, had inherited them. Totaling more than two thousand lots, the sale was conducted jointly over seventeen days in June and July by Christie's, who sold the furnishings and paintings, and Sotheby's, who sold the books. Reporting on the event, *The Times* wrote that one of the most desirable items was 'old French furniture, in the matter of which people are said to be going to such extravagant lengths.' And referring to pieces of French royal furniture on offer, it is 'the very highest *chic* to possess any relics of the ill-fated Queen [Marie-Antoinette].'[20] Among the Old Master paintings (Velázquez, Van Dyck, Rubens, Botticelli, Leonardo), rare books, and Gobelin tapestries were such premier examples of French ébénisterie as the Louis XVI Royal Commode by Riesener (see catalogue object 5). The subject of much publicity, the sale was attended by an assortment of international buyers, great collectors and dealers among them, and observers. The catalogue, reissued following the sale due to demand, featured engravings of the objects sold and (in the latter issue) the prices fetched and names of the purchasers. When it was finally all over, the sale fetched a record total to date of £397,562.

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[19] The Hamilton Palace Sale is considered one of the events to give rise to the modern art market, because of the great works on offer, the attention and publicity it received, and the record total it fetched. Britain's Settled Lands Act of 1882 was also a major contributing factor to the modern market. It replaced existing probate, account, and succession duties with a single estate duty (from 1% on estates valued under £500 to 8% on estates of more than £1 million). In order to pay this duty, many wealthy British collectors were forced to sell some of their prized collections. Thus, art objects (paintings, furniture, etc.) that had been locked away in private collections were once again brought to market, creating much interest and activity and putting objects into the hands of new collectors. Dealers and their clients (the Rothschilds are one example) benefited enormously. See Watson, *From Manet to Manhattan*, pp.38-42 and de Bellaigue, *The James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor*, Introduction, vol. I, p.10.

[20] *The Times*, 21 June 1882, p.11, cols. 3 and 4.

The Twentieth Century: Consolidation of Collections and Record Prices

The enthusiasm for collecting French ébénisterie continued to grow in the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, it should be said, there was a strong market for new reproductions of French eighteenth-century ébénisterie. However, most collectors now sought authentic pieces, even though some, particularly Americans, preferred expensive, unworn reproductions.[21] Many great collections were formed. As the Rothschilds added to their already fine collections, other now notable collectors formed theirs: Castellane, Lelong, and Doucet in France and Morgan and Vanderbilt in the United States.

Many private collections became very rich in fine ébénisterie, so much so that the collectors sought to prevent their dissolution after their deaths. The collections of Wallace in London and Frick in New York, remained intact, even in situ, and went on public display, while the collections of the Camondos went to museums—Isaac's to the Louvre and Moïse's to the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs.

Influential exhibitions continued, such as the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, during which an exhibition was given at the Petit Palais featuring Louis XV and Louis XVI royal furniture owned by the French state that was being used in ministerial offices and stored in the museum warehouse of Quai d'Orsay. Having been brought to the attention of the public, most of the pieces were acquired by the Louvre following the exhibition.[22]

As museums continued to acquire ever more pieces of fine ébénisterie, dealers and auctioneers had to look to untapped sources in order to find remaining pieces to bring to market. They managed to find them in the many chateaus of France, which provided a steady supply. Paris with its auctioneers, assisted by the preeminent

[21] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.178.

experts in the field who were located there, was the center of the trade, however Christie's and Sotheby's in London, drawing on the many collections already in Britain, proved strong rivals.

Prices continued to rise. The Lelong sale in 1903 and the Doucet sale in 1912 were highly successful and received as much publicity as the great sales of the nineteenth-century. From 1920 until the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s the market was very strong, highlighted by the Dutasta sale in 1926 and the Polès sale 1927. The Depression caused a fall in the market, but some demand remained as evidenced by the successful sales in Paris: Guérault and Founès in 1935 and Burat and Coty in 1937. By the end of World War II, prices began to waver from their upward climb, but even greater numbers of collectors sought French eighteenth-century furniture.[23]

By the 1970s prices for French eighteenth-century ébénisterie had resumed their upward climb, but new kinds of collectors had arrived on the market. While Some old-style collectors and connoisseurs remained, they found themselves increasingly on the sidelines as investors, investment groups or corporations, looked at furniture (and some looked at paintings and other art) as a commodity. Then came the oil millionaires, such as Akram Ojjeh (see exhibition catalogue objects 3, 7),[24] with enormous resources at their disposal and a keen interest to acquire the finest pieces. This added to the increasingly skillful way in which auctioneers managed to publicize their important sales as imperative for serious buyers and to the rising awareness and importance of historic provenance and expert authentication. Prices, as a result, began to escalate dramatically. Competition for the finest ébénisterie, which by this time was

[22] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.178.
[23] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.180.
[24] Ojjeh became the subject of much attention when he acquired the entire collection of the dealer Wildenstein in the 1970s.

becoming ever more difficult to get hold of, was never fiercer. And what proved most sought-after were the extravagant pieces—the more gilt-bronze mounts the better. The rise in prices has continued to this day. Pieces of ébénisterie form the Ojjeh and Rothschild sales fetched millions (see catalogue entries for exact totals).

Pierre Verlet argues some prices for ébénisterie that seem absurdly high are not always unreasonable, as the finest quality pieces are inevitably expensive and historic provenance only adds to the value.[25] He might, then, approve of the price paid for the royal Louis XVI commode by Riesener (see exhibition catalogue object 5) sold by Christie's in 1999 as part of the Rothschild sale. It fetched, as mentioned above, nearly £7.5 million, but its buyer was the Château de Versailles, where it now resides again some two hundred years after it was first delivered.

[25] Verlet, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century*, p.181.

French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism

Just as great collections of Louis XV and XVI ébénisterie were being assembled in the later nineteenth century, Impressionism was beginning to emerge. Today the names of the painters are well known to everyone: Monet, Renoir, et al, later van Gogh. And given the current market—where Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, almost as a matter of routine, fetch prices in the millions—it hardly seems possible there was a time when these painters were not so highly regarded.

When the Impressionists first appeared they were the generally the object of ridicule. The most celebrated date is, of course, the first of what would become eight Impressionist exhibitions in Paris in 1874. It included works by, among others, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, Sisley, Degas, and Cézanne. Exhibited there was a work by Monet, *Impression, sunrise*, which gave the movement its name.[26] The roots of Impressionism, though, go deeper. And there are some important artists associated with it, like Manet, who did not take part in this first exhibition. The history of the movement has been well documented, as has the history of its most prominent collectors. What is of most interest here, then, is how the taste for Impressionism, and then Post-Impressionism, got from this point in the late nineteenth century when it was derided to the place of such esteem that it occupies today.

The Challenging Early Years

Not long before the first Impressionist exhibition, Manet had shocked the Salon des Refusés in 1863 with *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and then the Salon of 1865 with *Olympia.* Although he would always be associated with scandal, he had by 1870

[26] The term "Impressionists" was first used mockingly by journalist Lucien Leroy in an article, *L'Exposition des impressionnistes*, in *Charivari* about the 1874 exhibition. Édouard Manet later protested that the term originated in 1858 in discussions he had with Monet about art. See Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, p.13.

developed a solid reputation for his work. He received 1200 francs (£864) from the critic Théodore Duret for one of his canvases, and the following year the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel paid up to 3000 francs (£2005) for some of his canvases.[27] The other of the Impressionists, most of them aged about thirty by this time, did not do as well (with the exception of Degas). Pissarro sold just a few paintings, but he was fortunate in comparison with Sisley, Renoir, and Monet, all of whom were in dire financial straits. Help did come in 1871 from Durand-Ruel, who began to take an interest in these painters. He first bought a Monet, then followed with works by Renoir, Pissarro, and Degas. Manet, whom he had already been buying, received the most (see above), then came Degas at 800 francs (£531), Monet at 300 francs (£200), and Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley at 200 francs (£133) each.[28] Durand-Ruel, who championed their cause at his gallery on the Rue Laffitte, was able to interest some clients in Impressionism, such as the famous baritone Jean-Baptiste Faure and the fabric dealer Ernest Hoschedé. In the end, though, he lost money on his purchases and could not afford to buy any more paintings. The artists had depended on sales at the gallery and regular advances from him, but they were now forced to sell their work at extremely low prices. In 1873 a Monet still life got all of £31, while Pissarro in 1874 managed £38, Sisley £15.[29] Furthermore, the four Impressionist exhibitions held before 1880 failed to stimulate demand. The sale of Hoschedé's collection in 1878 saw a Manet reach a modest 315 francs (£212), while Monet was the next closest at only 60 francs (£41).

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[27] Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, pp.249-50. This was no great sum, however, especially compared with the prices fetched by one of the leading painters of the day, Meissonier. In about 1871-72, one of his paintings fetched 200,000 francs, bought by none other than Sir Richard Wallace. See Distel, *Impressionism: The First Collectors*, p.25.
[28] Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, p.250.
[29] Reitlinger, *The Economics of Taste*, vol. I, pp.394, 411, 452.

The years beginning around 1880 provided some hope, so much so that Duret, in his *Les peintres impressionistes*, could write: 'The public that laughs so loudly while looking at the Impressionists is in for an even bigger surprise: their paintings sell!'[30]

Renoir was commissioned to paint *Mme. Charpentier and her children*, the husband of whose sitter was a wealthy publisher. Renoir was paid well (1500 francs or £1035) and the painting was exhibited at the Salon of 1879—due mostly to the status of Madame Charpentier. As a result of the exposure, though, Renoir soon found himself in demand as a popular painter to the wealthy.

At about the same time, Durand-Ruel, buoyed by new loans from the bank l'Union générale, resumed buying Impressionist paintings. Although he paid the same prices as he had more than five years earlier, the painters could now count on him as a reliable buyer. Around this time, for example, he bought up most of Pissarro's paintings and watercolors to date. Durand-Ruel's funding dried up, however, when the bank collapsed in 1882, sending him into debt. He persevered, nonetheless, and organized one-man exhibitions of the work of Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley, but all met with disappointing results.

In 1884 the posthumous sale of Manet's works, more than 120 in total, exceeded all expectations and fetched 116,637 francs (£84,728). It was a sign that the market was beginning to change. Durand-Ruel had left for the United States a year earlier in order to cultivate a new market for the Impressionists, and by 1886 he had staged his first exhibition 'Impressionists of Paris', with the help of the American Art Association and dealer James F. Sutton, which opened just before the eighth and final Impressionist exhibition in Paris. The New York exhibition was a critical success, and even though not a commercial success, it led to another exhibition the following year,

[30] As cited in Distel, *Impressionism: The First Collectors*, Introduciton, p.7.

followed by an auction of the works involved. The prices fetched were not unlike those in France, but the exposure was invaluable and interest was beginning to grow.

Back in Paris, the dealer Georges Petit began to show the Impressionists in his gallery. Monet had a successful exhibition there in 1885; Petit sold some Monets in 1886 for as much as 1200 francs (£864). More success followed for Monet, who by 1891 exhibited his *Haystack* series, all of which were sold after only three days from 3000 to 4000 francs (£2278 to £3032) each. Around the same time Renoir's *Mme. Charpentier and her children* was shown at Petit's gallery, and he was given a one-man exhibition at Durand-Ruel's in 1892 that was very well received. Renoir was even commissioned for a painting by the French government. That same year Pissarro had a successful one-man exhibition, at which many paintings sold from 1500 to 6000 francs (£1126 to £4508). Sisley, however, still had not experienced success, nor had Cézanne and van Gogh, known popularly as the 'accursed ones.' Only one of van Gogh's paintings had managed to fetch even a modest price by the time of his death, *Red vines at Arles* for 400 francs (£292).[31]

The Growth of a Market and a Steady Rise in Value

Impressionism had arrived, the market was set in motion. What followed over the next hundred years was a succession of prominent and wealthy collectors, many of whose collections became the foundation for the world's greatest public collections, and a steady rise in value.

By the mid-1890s, the work of Manet, Monet, Renoir, Degas, and Pissarro was regularly fetching respectable prices. In addition, the work of Cézanne and van Gogh was beginning to achieve the same. Some prices for Monet and Renoir were, by the

[31] Reference for prices: Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, p.251.

end of the decade, approximately 2500 francs (£1900) and 5000 francs (£3750). Cézanne fetched 6750 francs (£5087) and van Gogh 1100 francs (£829).[32]

In Paris, more dealers besides Durand-Ruel and Petit began to sell Impressionism: Boussod and Valadon, Vollard, the Bernheim brothers, Rosenberg. And new collectors began to emerge, including Count Isaac de Camondo,[33] Count Armand Doria, François Depeaux, Etienne Moreau-Nélaton, Antonin Personnaz. The market grew abroad, as well. Britain had its collectors, such as Captain Henry Hill of Brighton who owned *Absinthe* by Degas as early as 1876, but by far the largest market was in the United States. Such were the prospects in the United States that Durand-Ruel set up a permanent gallery in New York, and soon other dealers were active in the Impressionist market, including James F. Sutton, who had assisted Durand-Ruel with his New York exhibition in 1886, and George A. Lucas, an American expatriate in Paris who acted as an agent for a number of American collectors. The first of the collectors included the painter Mary Cassatt, her brother Alexander, and Mr. and Mrs. H.O. Havemeyer, who were advised by Cassatt. The Havemeyers managed to form one of the finest early collections of Impressionism, which was posthumously donated to the Metropolitan Museum of art; among the fifty paintings in the bequest were: A *Matador Saluting* by Manet, *La Grenouillère* by Monet, *L'Estaque* by Cézanne, and *The Dancing Class* by Degas. The number of other collectors began to multiply quickly. William H. Fuller, Albert Spencer, Desmond Fitzgerald, Alden Wyman Kingman, Alexander Cochrane, W.H. Crocker are just some of the more prominent figures. Monet was the most popular painter among these American collectors, and many sold their former collections to acquire his work. Mr. and Mrs. Potter Palmer of Chicago cannot go unmentioned. They

[32] Reference for prices: Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, pp.251-52.

bought from Durand-Ruel and were influential in getting Impressionist paintings exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, thereby reaching a new wide audience and doubtless influencing the taste of many collectors to come.

The twentieth century saw an even greater increase in the amount of collectors and a steady rise in value. Right at the turn of the century, a Renoir fetched 22,000 francs (£20,861) and a Degas 22,850 francs (£21,667) at the sale of Count Doria's collection. The years between 1900 and 1932 broke record after record. In 1912 *Dancers at the bar* by Degas fetched 435,000 francs (£381,921), while the following year even Cézanne and van Gogh were commanding impressive prices: 35,200 francs (£22, 464) for van Gogh's *Still Life* and 56,000 francs (£35,784) for Cézanne's *Boy in a red waistcoat.* This period came to its peak between 1925 and 1930, when a large group of Renoir's sold for ten million francs (£1,580,643), a Cézanne for 528,000 francs (£83,926), and a van Gogh for 361,000 francs (£45,090). The Wall Street crash and the ensuing Great Depression had its effect on the market throughout the 1930s, but demand intensified following the war and prices resumed their upward climb.[34]

The first part of the twentieth century was the period of some of the greatest collectors of Impressionism, whose names are well known and whose collections formed some of the finest public collections of Impressionism in the world. There was Samuel Courtauld, who began collecting in 1922, and whose collection went to the Courtauld Institute, the National Gallery, and the Tate Gallery in London. Albert Barnes, beginning in the early years of century, opened his great collection to the public in 1924. There were numerous others, although perhaps not on the same scale.

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[33] The Camondo family were also prominent collectors of French ébénisterie.
[34] Reference for prices: Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, pp.251-253.

The market was truly worldwide, spreading as far as Russia (before the 1917 Revolution) with the great collectors Morozov and Shchukin.

The market from the 1950s to the present day has been one of continual growth, beginning in 1952 with the sale of a Cézanne still life for 33,000,000 francs (£133,302). Only ten years later Cézanne's *Grandes Baigneuses* was sold for 10,800,000 francs (£500,000). In 1968 Renoir's *Le Pont des Arts* fetched 10,800,000 francs (£1,550,000), and in 1970 Cézanne's Portrait of Louis-Auguste Cézanne was sold for approximately 10,000,000 francs (£2,055,891) to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. There seemed no limit to demand and to the prices collectors were willing to pay.[35]

But the 1980s proved the most extravagant by far, as for the first time an Impressionist or Post-Impressionist painting fetched the highest price of any painting sold. The painting to achieve the record was van Gogh's *Sunflowers* in 1987, which fetched £24,750,000 (only one hundred years before, a van Gogh could not even make £300). And the records continued. In 1987, van Gogh's *Irises* fetched £30,111,731, topped in 1990 by his *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* at £43,107,142 ($82.5 million).[36]

Prices have continued to rise and collectors, museums and dealers and private collectors alike, have continued to vie for paintings. The paintings in the following catalogue, for example, fetched between $1.5 and $24 million at auctions between 1997 and 1999. And as recently as May of 2001, Impressionist paintings have sold at auction for as high as $10 million.[37]

[35] Reference for prices: Sérullaz, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, p.255.
[36] Reference for prices: Watson, *From Manet to Manhattan*, Appendix A, p.485.
[37] Christie's New York, Impressionist and Modern Art sale, 9 May 2001.

Conclusion

So what will happen to this model of taste? With the growing democratization of the art market, as art continues its gradual withdrawal from its traditional domain of the privileged, the aristocratic, the very wealthy, will this model continue to be the one that collectors aspire to, or dream of? Or could it be that eighteenth-century ébénisterie and French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism have priced themselves so high that even the wealthiest collectors will look elsewhere?

The answer, of course, is unknown. Perhaps this model of taste is a passing fashion. The history of the market for Impressionism and Post-Impressionism is likely too new to give any real indication, however, as it has been active over the course of little more than a century. Possibly collectors will start gradually to turn elsewhere, and the market for and the taste for other kinds of painting will take over. It is difficult to determine when that will come, but if the history of taste for other types of art gives any indication, it probably will.

One needs only to look at the history of Louis XV and Louis XVI ébénisterie to understand the effects of fashion on the art market. During and following the French Revolution in 1789, the market for this furniture collapsed, as values and fashion changed. Pieces of the finest furniture were sold at a fraction of the prices the makers originally received for them. A commonly recounted story tells of Riesener during these years buying back much of his stock at vastly discounted prices (something that eventually led to his financial ruin). It was only some forty to fifty years later that French ébénisterie came back into vogue, due largely to the low prices at which it could be bought up by shrewd collectors.

Fashions come and go, and it is difficult to predict the points at which they will change. And it is just as difficult to predict, when fashions do change, what the next

must-have objects will be. However, there are certain qualities that will always remain important to the collector when choosing objects, qualities that form the very basis of the market value of all objects. Beauty and the skill with which objects are made, whether they be pieces of furniture or paintings, will always prove desirable. Rarity will prove even more so. But the added value, that all-important intangible additional quality, comes from the object's age, its history, its provenance. An object's connection with prominent figures, those who have in some way captured the imagination or made their mark on history, will, as Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild put it, 'stimulate the imagination'. This is what separates the very fine from the must-have, an intangible quality that leads to the most tangible desires.

Will taste change? It is most likely. When will it happen? Only time will tell. At the same time the very top collectors have been pursuing Louis XV and Louis XVI ébénisterie and French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, others have been amassing other kinds of objects. Those objects that are as beautiful and skillfully made, those that have had enough time to acquire the same desirable provenance, might some day become just as sought-after, reach the same record prices, and become the new model for the very highest taste. But for now, maybe there is no better model for the highest taste, no better example of the very finest of objects touched by the most celebrated of lives.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

1. A Louis XV Chinese Black and Gold Lacquer Commode by Bernard II van Risenburgh (B.V.R.B.).

2. A Louis XV *Vernis-Martin* Black and Gilt-Japanned Bureau Plat by Jacques Dubois.

3. A Pair of Louis XV Marquetry Encoignures by Jean-Pierre Latz.

4. A Louis XV Parquetry Secrétaire en Cabinet by Roger van der Cruse, known as Lacroix (R.V.L.C.).

5. A Royal Louis XVI Parquetry and Marquetry Commode by Jean-Henri Riesener.

6. A Louis XVI Bureau à Cylindre by Jean-François Leleu.

7. A Louis XVI Console Table with Sèvres Porcelain Plaques by Adam Weisweiler.

8. *Portrait de Manet (Manet à la palette)* by Édouard Manet.

9. *Place Saint-Lazare* by Camille Pissarro.

10. *Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune* by Paul Cézanne.

11. *Iris Mauves* by Claude Monet.

12. *Baigneuse debout* by Pierre-Auguste Renoir.

13. *Le Pont de Trinquetaille* by Vincent van Gogh.

1

A Louis XV Chinese Black and Gold Lacquer Commode

Bernard II van Risenburgh (B.V.R.B.) (after 1696-c.1766)

c.1745-49

The Languedoc marble top is waved and molded above two *bombé* drawers veneered *sans traverse* with a Chinese black and gold lacquer panel depicting a walled garden with pagodas and numerous figures. The panel is set within an asymmetrical scrolling foliate cabochon and C-scrolled frame and a conforming apron mount. The sides are similarly decorated, with the waved angles topped by rocaille and C-scroll mounts above chutes and a foliate-cast sabot.

35 in. (89 cm.) high; 58½ in. (148.5 cm.) wide; 28 in. (71 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Rothschild inv. No. AR162.

Literature

Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, *Guide*, Vienna, 1958, fig. 95.

Pradère, Alexandre, *French Furniture Makers: The Art of the Ébéniste from Louis XIV to the Revolution*, London, 1989, p.196.

González-Palacios, A., *Il Patrimonio Artistico del Quirinale, gli Arredi Francesi,* Milan, 1995, p.313.

Exhibited

Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, 1948-1999.

The eldest son of a Dutch ébéniste who had settled in Paris, Bernard II van Risenburgh became a master ébéniste in 1730 and used the stamp *B.V.R.B.* like his father (d.1738) before him and his son, Bernard III (c.1731-1800), after him. He worked almost exclusively for the *marchands-merciers* who obtained materials and commissions for him and delivered his furniture to his clients, with whom he

had almost no direct contact. B.V.R.B. produced furniture of the highest quality and construction, using materials in innovative ways, which soon won him the most eminent of clients, the Garde-Meuble Royal among them. His use of oriental lacquer and, later, Sèvres porcelain plaques won him much acclaim, and the burnishing and chasing of his gilt-bronze mounts is unique to his pieces and not found on the furniture of any other makers. Thus, the quality and craftsmanship has made B.V.R.B. one of the most highly regarded ébénistes of the Rococo period. His furniture has been sought after by discriminating collectors ever since.

This commode, almost certainly supplied under the direction of the *marchand-mercier* Thomas-Joachim Hébert, is a signature piece by B.V.R.B., with its distinctive drawer construction and gilt-bronze mounts. Such oriental lacquer pieces have always been the most sought-after and valuable of ébénisterie. The provenance suggests just how valuable and desired an object it is. Its possible relation to other pieces made by B.V.R.B. and delivered to the Dauphin at Versailles in 1745[38] and it place in the Rothschild collection for quite some time will have increased value even further. Indeed, at auction it fetched £1,431,500. Similar commodes by B.V.R.B. can today be found in the finest private and public collections, including the British Royal Collection and the Louvre (see comparative illustrations 1 and 2).

Photo: Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, Lot 205, p.387.

[38] Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, p.388.

2

A Louis XV *Vernis-Martin* Black and Gilt-Japanned Bureau Plat

Jacques Dubois (1694-1763)
c.1750-60

The black leather-lined top is shaped with a molded edge and foliate clasps at the angles above a waved frieze containing three drawers with molded edges divided by foliate C-scrolls, with dummy drawers on the reverse side. The sides are veneered with *vernis martin* and gilt-japanned panels of chinoiserie landscapes with temples and pagodas. The cabriole legs, headed by foliate and floral C-scrolls, with reeded chutes terminate in foliate sabots. The underside is stamped 'I DUBOIS' and 'JME'.

30½ in. (77.5 cm.) high; 57¼ in. (146 cm.) wide; 29 in. (74 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Rothschild inv. No. AR352.

Exhibited

Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, 1948-1999.

A master ébéniste from 1742, who later worked together with his son René (1737-99), Jacques Dubois shared many stylistic similarities with the van Risenburgh family. Real oriental lacquer and imitation lacquer (japanning, *vernis martin*), dynamic gilt-bronze mounts with swirling, asymmetrical rocailles, and chinoiserie decoration characterizes the work of both. Dubois produced luxury pieces likely sold through the *marchands-merciers*; although none of his clients are known exactly, Dubois certainly did not produce furniture for the royal family. He is known, however, to have supplied clients of significant standing, including Madame Infante, daughter of Louis XV.

This bureau plat follows a similar pattern of others produced by Dubois, with its twisting corner mounts, drawers separated by strong curves, and feet sleeved in gilt-bronze with foliate decoration.[39] He began supplying such furniture with oriental lacquer and *vernis martin* and chinoiserie decoration in the late 1740s, which proved very popular. An inventory of his furniture upon his death in 1763, listing several pieces of chinoiserie furniture, confirms the lasting popularity of such pieces.

Ébénisterie with chinoiserie and lacquer (and imitation lacquer like japanning) decoration, like the commode by B.V.R.B., have always been valued highly by collectors. The price this bureau plat fetched at auction, £265,500, confirms its desirability to today's collector. Pieces by Dubois are widely collected, featuring in such public collections as the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Louvre (see comparative illustration 3) and private collections such as that of Akram Ojjeh (see comparative illustration 4).

Photo: Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, Lot 204, p.381.

[39] Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.174.

3

A Pair of Louis XV Tulipwood, Amaranth, and Satiné Marquetry Encoignures

Jean-Pierre Latz (1691-1754)

c. 1750-54

The *Brèche d'Alep* marble top is waved above a convex bombé facade of two doors with *bois de bout* marquetry of circular floral design, inlaid on the reverse with an axe-head motif, opening to a compartment with a shelf, with central gilt-bronze band and foliate mounts terminating in a floral and rocaille decorated apron. The corners have gilt-bronze mounts and chutes of rocaille and volutes falling to feet of volute sabots. One encoignure is marked four times 'I.P. LATZ', the other bears the mark of Château d'Eu.

37in. (94 cm.) high; 33½ in. (85 cm.) wide; 23½ in. (60.5 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Duc de Penthièvre, Hotel Toulouse, Paris (now Banque de France), ground floor, Room of Kings, circa 1754, remaining until 1793.

By descent to his daughter Duchesse d'Orléans, 1753-1821.

By descent to his son Louis-Philippe Duc d'Orléans, 1773-1850, King of France 1830 to 1848, Château d'Eu, petit cabinet.

By descent to Duc de Vendôme, Belmont, Wimbledon; sold Hampton & Sons of London, 19 September 1927, lots 170 and 171.

André Vincent; sold Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 29 May 1933, lot 85.

Comte Moulins de Rochefort until 1968.

Wildenstein, New York.

Akram Ojjeh Collection; sold Sotheby's Monaco, 25-26 June 1979, lot 44.

Sir Charles Clore; sold Christie's Monaco, 6 December 1985, lot 51.

Literature

'In the Saleroom', *Connoisseur*, December 1927, No. 316, p.247.

Old Furniture, vol. II, October-December 1927, pp.69-70, illustrated.
Feulner, A., *Kunstgeschichte des Möbels,* 1927, p.450, fig. 399.
Theunissen, A., *Meubles et Sièges du XVIIIème siècle,* Paris, 1934, p.106.
Hawley, H., 'Jean-Pierre Latz, Cabinetmaker', *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art,* September-October 1970, pp.232-233.
Verlet, Pierre, *French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century,* Charlottesville and London, 1991, fig.96 (no page number).
Pradère, Alexandre, *French Furniture Makers: The Art of the Ébéniste from Louis XIV to the Revolution*, London, 1989, p.156, fig.130.

Discovered only within the last thirty years, Jean-Pierre Latz arrived in Paris from Cologne in 1719. He obtained the warrant of 'ébéniste privilégié du roi' before 1741, allowing him to work freely without becoming a master. The majority of his work consisted of clock cases, although other types of furniture have been successfully attributed to him. His clients included the Duc de Penthièvre, for whom these encoignures were originally produced; Madame Infante, daughter of Louis XV; Frederick II, King of Prussia; and August III, Elector of Saxony. Latz's work reflects the free-flowing rococo style at its height. The bombé forms of commodes and encoignures are accentuated by dynamic, scrolling gilt-bronze mounts. Marquetry panels of floral motifs in *bois de bout*, circular floral designs, and contrasting light and dark woods are typical, as in these encoignures.

Such fine and distinctive ébénisterie as these encoignures has always been in the highest demand, suggested by an impressive provenance that includes not only the Duc de Penthièvre and his descendents but also the famous dealers Wildenstein and the collectors Akram Ojjeh and Sir Charles Clore. At auction, these encoignures proved very attractive, fetching FFr 8,812,500 ($1,321,875). Other furniture by Latz can be found in private collections and in the public collections of Waddesdon Manor, Woburn Abbey, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the J. Paul Getty Museum. Pieces of similar style and decoration to these

encoignures can be seen in comparative illustrations 5 and 6. Comparative illustration 15 shows these encoignures in Akram Ojjeh's residence.
Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection,* Lot 40, p.134.

4

A Louis XV Sycamore and Tulipwood Parquetry Secrétaire en Cabinet

Roger van der Cruse, known as Lacroix (R.V.L.C.) (1728-99)
c.1770-75

The oval, eared Languedoc marble top with three-quarter gallery is above two tambour-shutters with floral trellis parquetry. The shutters enclose an open compartment above a blue leather-lined sliding writing surface with a fold-out and one drawer to the front, one to the right side, above three short drawers. The sides and back have conforming parquetry, the angles have rocaille and C-scroll foliate mounts. The cabriole legs are joined by an oval undertier with conforming parquetry with a cartouche and terminate in foliate scrolling sabots. The underside of the back is stamped twice 'R.V.L.C.' and 'JME'.

35 in. (89 cm.) high; 45½ in. (115 cm.) wide; 18½ in. (47 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Rothschild inv. No. AR161.

Exhibited

Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, 1948-1999.

Literature

Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, *Guide,* Vienna, 1958, fig. 113.

R.V.L.C., a master ébéniste from 1749, was the part of the most important dynasty of ébénistes in the eighteenth century. He married the daughter of the ébéniste Jeanne Progain, three of his sisters married ébénistes (one to Jean-François Oeben and later to Jean-Henri Riesener), and his son Pierre Roger became a master ébéniste in 1772. R.V.L.C. worked for his brother-in-law Jean-

François Oeben, with whom he shared stylistic similarities, such as certain geometric motifs, in the 1760s.[40] He sold directly to some private clients, supplied pieces to the *marchand-ébéniste* Pierre II Migeon (1701-58) and the *marchand-mercier* Poirer, and between 1769 and 1774 supplied furniture to the Garde-Meuble Royal through the *ébéniste du roi* Joubert (1689-1775). Among the other types of furniture R.V.L.C. produced were smaller pieces with signature marquetry and parquetry patterns, such as the check and trellis patterns on this secrétaire, for which he was particularly known.

While less grand pieces like this secrétaire en cabinet have never experienced the kind of demand as the commode by B.V.R.B. and some of the pieces that follow in this catalogue, they nonetheless remain highly desirable as fine pieces of ébénisterie. This is all the more true when the provenance includes the Rothschilds. At auction, this secrétaire en cabinet fetched £106,000. Other furniture by R.V.L.C. is featured in public and private collections, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Waddesdon Manor, Floors Castle, Scotland, and the Musée du Petit Palais, Paris. Pieces by R.V.L.C. with similar parquetry decoration to this secrétaire secrétaire en cabinet can be seen in comparative illustrations 7 and 8.

Photo: Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, Lot 203, p.378.

[40] Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.281.

5

A Royal Louis XVI Amaranth, Sycamore, and Mahogany Parquetry and Marquetry Commode from the Bibliothèque of King Louis XVI at Versailles

Jean-Henri Riesener (1734-1806)

1778

The molded, eared, breakfront Serancolin marble top rests above a breakfront facade with a lappeted band and three frieze-drawers with scrolling foliage. The central drawer with an interlaced 'L' cypher is above two long drawers decorated *sans traverse* to the center with an angled and lappeted panel with a marquetry vase with mask beside a basket of fruits and flowers. To each side are similar parquetry floral trellis panels trailed with gilt-bronze laurels above a shaped floral apron and angles headed by a patera above a volute with husk-trails. The conforming out-swept flowerhead-filled trellis sides are above foliate scrolling feet. The top of the carcass is stamped six times 'J.H.RIESENER'.

37½ in. (95 cm.) high; 65 in. (165 cm.) wide; 25 in. (63 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Commissioned in 1778 for the *cabinet de retraite* of King Louis XVI at the Château de Fontainebleau.

Moved in 1779 to the bibliothèque of King Louis XVI at the Château de Versailles.

Returned before 1784 to the Château de Fontainebleau.

Moved in 1784 back to the Château de Versailles, remaining until its sale during the Revolution on 27 June 1794 for 1,600 *livres* to Durand.

Possibly acquired in Paris by William Beckford; by descent to his daughter Susan Euphemia or acquired by her husband

Alexander-Douglas Hamilton, 10th Duke of Hamilton (d. 1852) for Hamilton Palace, Lanarkshire. By descent at Hamilton Palace to the 12th Duke of Hamilton. Sold at the Hamilton Palace sale, Christie's London, 17 June – 20 July 1882, lot 517 for 3,060 guineas to E. Joseph.

Rothschild inv. No. AR242.

Exhibited

Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, 1948-1999.

Literature

Inventory of the Furniture, Pictures, Articles of Vertu . . . at Hamilton Palace 1876, p.19.

1903 *Theresianumgasse* Inventory, p.128, No. 320.

1906 *Theresianumgasse* Inventory, p.251, No. 1267.

1934 *Theresianumgasse* Inventory, p.247, No. 96.

Schaffran, Prof. E., 'New Acquisitions by the Vienna Museum of Austrian Applied Art', *Connoisseur*, April 1955, p.187.

Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, *Guide*, Vienna, 1958, fig. 112.

Freyberger, R., 'Eighteenth Century French Furniture from Hamilton Palace', *Apollo*, December 1981, pp.406 and 409.

Verlet, Pierre, *Le Mobilier Royal Français*, Paris, vol. IV, pp. 85-87.

One of the few ébénistes to achieve fame in his own time, Jean-Henri Riesener emigrated from Westphalia in 1754 to be apprenticed to the ébéniste Jean-François Oeben (1721-63). By 1765, two years after Oeben's death, Riesener was managing the workshop; in 1767 he married Oeben's widow (the sister of RVLC) and took over the workshop, becoming a master ébéniste in 1768. Riesener recaptured the royal patronage that Oeben had enjoyed. He regularly supplied furniture to the Garde-Meuble Royal, when in 1774 the ébéniste Joubert relinquished his office of *ébéniste du roi* to Riesener. For the next ten years he supplied the Garde-Royal Meuble with furniture of the utmost luxury and ingenuity, virtually refurnishing the royal palaces of Louis XVI, as well as those of the royal princes and princesses. He became the favorite furniture maker of the Queen herself. Such was the demand for his pieces that he had to subcontract to other ébénistes, Weisweiler among them. By 1786 the high prices Riesener

asked for his furniture and a change of fashion led to his replacement by the ébéniste Roentgen (1743-1807). The fallout from the Revolution eventually led to Riesener's ruin; he bought back many of his pieces for a fraction of their previous value at the sales of the Crown, but he failed to find a market for such lavish furniture.

This commode has the most impeccable provenance. Property of King Louis XVI, it was similar to a commode he had commissioned for his *cabinet intérieur* at the château de Fontainebleau in 1776. Following the Revolution, it likely passed through the hands of the prominent British collector William Beckford, before being passed by descent to the Dukes of Hamilton. A part of the collection of Hamilton Palace, it was sold in the famous sale in 1882, acquired by the dealer Joseph who sold it on to the Rothschilds. Rarely does an object that has passed through the hands of not only of royalty but also so many celebrated collectors come to market. And when such an object does, it is fiercely contested indeed. The price it fetched at auction, a record £7,401,500, is confirmation enough of its desirability. Interestingly, its buyer was the Château de Versailles, who returned it to the place it first occupied in 1779.

Other furniture by Riesener can be found in many of the world's greatest private and public collections, including commodes of similar design at Waddesdon Manor (see comparative catalogue illustration 9)[41] and in the Frick Collection, New York (see comparative catalogue illustration 10). Additional examples of exceptional Riesener furniture from the sale of the Akram Ojjeh Collection can be seen in comparative illustrations 16-18 with further comparisons in illustrations 19-21.

Photo: Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, Lot 201, p.365.

[41] This royal commode is related to catalogue object 5 and was also sold at the Hamilton Palace sale in 1882. See Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, p.370

6

A Louis XVI Sycamore, Amaranth, and Tulipwood Parquetry and Marquetry Bureau à Cylindre

Jean-François Leleu (1729-1807)

c.1780

The rectangular *broccatello di Spagna* marble top with a pierced three-quarter gallery rests above a frieze with a scrolling laurel-band. The roll-top is decorated with a cube-parquetry panel with a flower medallion at its center and a green silk velvet-lined writing-slide, enclosing three compartments and four small drawers, with floral trail gilt-bronze mounts to the sides. Below is a blue silk-lined central drawer with a foliate gilt-bronze mount and a concealed drawer with a pair of *sans traverse* cube parquetry drawers to each side. The sides are inlaid conformingly and the reverse mahogany is veneered. The four fluted, turned, tapering legs terminate in foliate gilt-bronze bun feet. The left of the underside is stamped 'I.F LELEU'.

41¾ in. (106 cm.) high; 35¾ in. (91 cm.) wide; 19½ in. (49.5 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Possibly supplied to the Prince de Condé circa 1780.
Rothschild inv. No. AR570.

Exhibited

Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, 1948-1999.

Literature

1903 *Theresianumgasse* Inventory, p.18, No. 34.

Schaffran, Prof. E., 'New Acquisitions by the Vienna Museum of Austrian Applied Art', *Connoisseur*, April 1955, p.186.

Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, *Guide*, Vienna, 1958, fig. 110.

Verlet, Pierre, *Les Bronzes Dorés Français du XVIIIe Siècle*, Cahors, 1987, p.329, fig. 363.

Apprenticed to the workshop of Oeben, and passed over by Riesener as its leader following Oeben's death in 1763, Leleu became a master ébéniste in 1764. Setting up on his own, he became official ébéniste to the Prince de Condé between 1772 and 1777[42], during which period he also supplied the Château du Marais and the Château de Méréville for the Marquis de Laborde, the Court banker. He also supplied furniture to the Paris hôtel of the Duc d'Uzès. Many pieces stamped by Leleu were made by the ébéniste Charles-Antoine Stadler (dates unknown), who married Leleu's step-daughter in 1767. Leleu produced a range of pieces of furniture, including commodes, secrétaires, bureaus, and tables. He specialized in marquetry of various sorts: pictures of baskets of flowers and trophies, arabesques on striped sycamore grounds, and geometric designs.

Bureaux à cylindre such as this, with its very fine pictorial and geometric marquetry, have always been highly desirable, and the provenance would make it more so to any collector. Likely commissioned by the Prince de Condé for Chantilly, it was probably sold during the Revolution, later to become part of the Rothschild collection. It proved attractive at auction, fetching £441,500.

Furniture by Leleu can be found the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Wallace Collection, Waddesdon Manor (see comparative illustration 12) and in prominent private collections such as that of Akram Ojjeh (see comparative illustration 11).[43]

Photo: Christie's, *The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild*, Lot 206, p.393.

[42] Several of these pieces of furniture can now be found in the Wallace Collection, the Petit Trianon, and the Louvre.
[43] This commode fetched FFr 41,812,500 ($6,271,875) at the sale of the Akram Ojjeh Collection.

7

A Louis XVI Mahogany Console Table with Sèvres Porcelain Plaques

Adam Weisweiler (1744-1820)

c.1786

The rectangular white marble top rests above a gilt molded edge above a frieze with three drawers mounted with Sèvres porcelain plaques with borders in blue *oeil de perdrix* with gilt-bronze molded surrounds. The central apron features a basket of flowers, flanked by two drawers with floral motifs, the sides with conforming decoration. The corners, with gilt-bronze floral-engraved mounts, are above a gilt-bronze molded edge. The turned baluster legs with convex strips of gilt bronze are joined by a rectangular white marble undertier with a three-quarter pierced gallery above gilt molded edge, above a gilt-bronze-mounted frieze, on cone-shaped feet with sabots. The plaques are marked with the initials 'GI', for the painter and gilder Girard, and the letters 'ii' for the date 1786.

36 in. (91.5 cm.) high; 54 in. (137 cm.) wide; 20¼ in. (51.5 cm.) deep.

Provenance

Probably acquired by Lionel Nathaniel Rothschild (1808-1879) for 148 Piccadilly, London, W1, and for Tring Park, Hertfordshire; by descent to Victor, 3rd Lord Rothschild.

Victor de Rothschild Collection, sold Sotheby's London, 19 April 1937, lot 265, to Harris.

Sydney J. Lamon Collection, New York, sold Christie's London, 29 November 1973, lot 105.

Acquired for the Akram Ojjeh Collection in 1975 from the gallery Aveline.

Literature

Pradère, Alexandre, *French Furniture Makers: The Art of the Ébéniste from Louis XIV to the Revolution*, London, 1989, p.392, fig. 480.

Adam Weisweiler, a native of the Rhineland, became a master ébéniste in 1778. He had little direct contact with his clients, selling most of his work through the *marchand-merciers,* such as Daguerre, or through fellow ébénistes like Riesener and Benneman. Many of his clients, then, were those of Daguerre: Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette (whom he supplied several pieces after 1784) and many members of the French aristocracy, the King and Queen of Naples, the Russian Court, the Prince of Wales, the future George IV, and other members of the English aristocracy. Stylistically, Weisweiler's work bears strong similarities to the work of the ébéniste Martin Carlin (1730-85), a fact likely due to Daguerre, who provided both ébénistes with designs and materials, including porcelain plaques, such as on this console table.[44] Weisweiler worked with Riesener between 1778-85 and developed a partnership with Benneman after 1784. He withstood the Revolution financially, managing to sell through Daguerre's shop in London. He produced, commodes, secrétaires en cabinet, and small pieces of ladies' furniture (tables of various kinds, including console tables like this one). His decoration consists largely of oriental lacquer and chinoiserie, veneers of ebony and mahogany (marquetry is rarely found), the highest quality gilt-bronze mounts of various forms, and plaques of Wedgwood and Sèvres porcelain.

Ébénisterie mounted with Sèvres porcelain (and other ceramics like Wedgwood) were some of the costliest and most desirable pieces from the very beginning. This fine console table, with a provenance that includes two Rothschilds and Akram Ojjeh (comparative illustration 13 shows it in Akram Ojjeh's residence), is certainly just as desirable a piece to collectors today. Indeed, it fetched FFr 9,912,500 ($1,486,875) at auction.

Other furniture by Weisweiler can be found in many of the finest private collections, including the British and Swedish royal collections, and public

[44] Pradère, *French Furniture Makers,* p.390.

collections, including the Louvre, the Château de Versailles, the Wallace Collection, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (see comparative illustration 14). Another exceptional piece of furniture by Weisweiler (made in collaboration with Martin Carlin) from the same sale can be seen in comparative illustration 22,[45] followed by further comparisons in illustrations 23-24.

Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 55, p.183.

[45] This marquetry and pietra dura commode fetched a record price at auction of FFr 220 million ($34 million).

8

Portrait de Manet par lui-même, en buste (Manet à la palette)

Édouard Manet (1832-1883)

Oil on canvas

33 ⅝ x 28 in. (85.3 x 71 cm.)

Painted circa 1878

Provenance

Mme. Manet, Paris

Paechter, Berlin; acquired from Mme. Manet in December 1999.

Auguste Pellerin, Paris (circa 1910)

Marquise de Ganay, Paris

Jakob Goldschmidt, Berlin, (circa 1931); sold Sotheby's London, 15 October 1958, lot 1

Acquired at the above sale for the Loeb Collection

Literature[46]

Duret, T., *Histoire de Édouard Manet et son oeuvre*, Paris, 1902, p.256, No. 245, (illustrated in color, opposite p.146).

Proust, A., *Édouard Manet, Souvenirs*, Paris, 1913, p.71 (illustrated, pl. 17).

Waldmann, E., *Édouard Manet*, Berlin, 1923, p.99, No. 43 (illustrated).

Tabarant, A., *Manet, Histoire catalographique*, Paris, 1931, p. 349, No. 299.

Jamot, P., Wildenstein, G., and Bataille, M.L., *Manet*, Paris, 1932, vol. I, pp.156-157, No. 294 (illustrated, vol. 11, p.70, fig. 157).

Vollard, A., *Souvenirs d'un Marchand de Tableaux*, Paris, 1937, p. 74

Bex, M., *Manet*, London, 1948, p.88 (illustrated).

Richardson, J., *Édouard Manet, Paintings and Drawings*, London, 1958, p.129, No. 71 (illustrated).

"Seven Impressionist Paintings", *The Connoisseur*, December 1958, p.194, No. 2 (illustrated).

Schwarz, H., "Two Unknown Portraits of Manet," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, April 1959, p.248 (illustrated, fig. 1).

Rewald, J., *The History of Impressionism*, New York, 1961, p.404 (illustrated).

[46] This is only a selection of the numerous publications in which *Portrait de Manet* is cited.

Perruchot, H., *Édouard Manet*, New York, 1962, p.77 (illustrated).

Hamilton, G.H., "Is Manet still Modern?" *Art News Annual*, 1966, p.104 (illustrated in color).

Schneider, P., *The World of Manet*, New York, 1968, p.12 (illustrated in color).

Rouart, D. and Orienti, S., *Tour l'oeuvre peint de Manet*, Paris, 1970, p.110, No. 274 (illustrated; illustrated in color, pl. XLVIII).

Huyghe, R., *L'Impressionnisme*, Paris, 1971, p.108 (illustrated in color, p.109).

Rouart, D. and Wildenstein, D., Édouard Manet, *Catalogue raisonné*, Lausanne, 1975, vol. I, p.222, No. 276 (illustrated p.223).

Cahan, C.L., *Manet*, New York, 1980. p.15 (illustrated; illustrated in color, pl. XLIX).

The Frances and John L. Loeb Collection, London, 1982, No. 13 (illustrated in color).

Perutz, V., *Édouard Manet*, London. 1993, pl. 1 (illustrated in color).

Exhibited[47]

Berlin, Galerien Paul Cassirer, *Édouard Manet (aus der Sammlung Pellerin)*, April 1910.

Paris, Bernheim-Jeune, *Manet, trente-cinq tableaux de la Collection Pellerin*, June 1910, No. 16 (illustrated on the cover).

Munich, Moderne Galerie, *E. Manet (aus der Sammlung Pellerin)*, 1910, no. 23.

Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie, *Manet: 1832-1883*, June-October 1932, pp.53-54, No. 65b.

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Édouard Manet*, March-April 1937, p.37, No. 25 (illustrated in color as the frontispiece).

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Great Portraits from Impressionism to Modernism*, March 1938, pp.28-29, no. 21 (illustrated, pl. V).

San Francisco, Palace of Fine Arts, *Golden Gate International Exposition, Masterworks of Five Centuries*, February-December 1939, No. 151 (illustrated, pl. 82).

New York, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., *Allied Art for Allied Aid*, June 1940 (not in catalogue).

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Summer Loan Exhibition, Paintings from Private Collections*, July-September 1959, p.6, No. 63.

New York, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., *Impressionist Treasures from Private Collections in New York*, January 1966, p.24, No. 16 (illustrated).

[47] This is only a selection of the many in which *Portrait de Manet* has been exhibited.

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Summer Loan Exhibition, Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture from Private Collections,* July-September 1966, p.8, No. 86.

Philadelphia, Museum of Art, *Édouard Manet,* November-December 1966, p.158, No. 144 (illustrated). The exhibition traveled to Chicago, The Art Institute, January-February 1967.

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Portrait of the Artist,* January-March 1972, p.15, No. 23.

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Faces from the World of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism,* November-December 1972, No. 40 (illustrated).

Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, *Manet and Modem Paris,* December 1982-March 1983, p.30, No. 1 (illustrated in color).

Paris, Grand Palais, *Manet, 1832-1883,* April-August 1983, pp.405-407, No. 164 (illustrated in color, p.406). The exhibition traveled to New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, September-November 1983.

Always considering himself an independent painter belonging to no particular school, Manet refused to show at any of the eight Impressionist exhibitions. However, although he wished to follow the Old Masters (like Raphael and Giorgione and Titian, Hals and the Spanish School) and remain grounded in tradition, he became a kind of leader for the revolutionary Impressionists. He approved of the lighter color palette adopted by the Impressionists, but his own remained much darker, earthier. He wanted to be accepted by the Salon, but when rejected and instead allowed to exhibit in the Salon des Refusés in 1863, he unintentionally shocked the public and most critics alike with *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. From that time forward he was generally the object of much criticism and sensation (he soon went on to cause a scandal with *Olympia* in the Salon of 1865). In spite of this, he continued on to become the propagator and supporter of new directions in art, in favor of the avant-garde and the idea of modern art. He began to paint in the open air, influenced by the young Monet, but later returned to the studio. Eventually, Manet's work met with wider public acceptance and he earned a reputation for his painting as much for scandal.

Manet was one of the first Impressionists to realize some financial success for his work, while the other painters were still struggling. And the prices for Manet's work have, of course, been rising ever since. A work like this, whose provenance includes prominent dealers and collectors, and which has been cited in so many publications and exhibited by the most renowned dealers and museums around the world, is in today's market the most desirable of objects. The fact that this self-portrait is one of few that Manet ever painted makes it more desirable still. At auction it fetched $18,702,500.

Manet's work is part of some of greatest collection. This self-portrait, in particular, is related to other works in public collections, including another Manet self-portrait in the Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo (see comparative illustration 26) and a portrait of Manet by Henri Fantin-Latour in The Art Institute, Chicago (see comparative illustration 25).

Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, Lot 107, p.39.

9

Place Saint-Lazare

Camille Pissarro (1830-1903)
Oil on canvas
15 x 18½ in. (38 x 46 cm.)
Painted in Paris, 1893

Provenance

Lucien Pissarro, London.
Mrs. Chester Beatty, London.

Literature

Pissarro, L.-R. and Venturi, L., *Camille Pissarro, son art—son oeuvre,* Paris, 1939, vol. I, p. 198, No. 837; vol. II, pl. 171 (illustrated).

Brettell, R. and Pissarro, J., *The Impressionist and the City: Pissarro's Series Paintings,* exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1992, pp.xxiv and 57, No. 41 (illustrated in color, p. 57).

Exhibited

Paris, Galerie Durand-Ruel, *Camille Pissarro,* March 1894, No. 9.

Pissarro, in contrast to some of the other Impressionists, was more concerned with construction and form than with the changing effects of color and light. A great painter of landscapes, he was especially drawn to country scenes and the people who worked the land, counting among his influences Millet as well as Corot. He chose his subjects carefully and did not, like Monet and Renoir, set up his easel wherever a particular scene or light effect captured his attention. His interest in form and the solidity of things was shared by Cézanne, who often worked with him and to whom Pissarro introduced the ideas of Impressionism. Pissarro was the only painter to exhibit at all eight of the Impressionist exhibitions between 1874 and 1888, and he also had several works accepted by the Salon between 1859 and 1870 and, like Manet, by the Salon des Refusés in 1863. In 1870 he left for London, studying the work of Turner, later to return to France to

begin the most prolific period of his career from 1872 to 1884. He adopted the more structural approach of the Neo-Impressionists after 1881, only to abandon it by 1890. In 1893, after another visit to London, he began painting various series on single themes, including the station at Saint-Lazare. This painting falls into this period, when Pissarro set himself up in a hotel opposite the station on the square. In a departure from his earlier paintings of rural themes, he concentrated more modern themes, studying the activity of city life. He managed to produce what has been called 'the first serious study of traffic in the history of art'.[48]

While its provenance is not as extensive as some, although it was part of the collections of both Pissarro's son Lucien and Akram Ojjeh, *Place Saint-Lazare* remains as highly desirable as other works by Pissarro. It fetched $3,522,500 at auction.

Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 111, p.77.

[48] Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p. 78.

10
Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906)
Oil on canvas
31⅝ x 25⅝ in. (80.4 x 64.4 cm.)
Painted 1888-90

Provenance

Possibly Ambroise Vollard, Paris
Paul Cassirer, Berlin
Lucie Ceconi, Berlin
Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris
Moderne Galerie (Heinrich Thannhauser), Munich
H. Pollak, Frankfurt
Galerie Thannhauser, Lucerne and Paul Rosenberg, Paris
Adolph Lewisohn, New York
Samuel A. Lewisohn, New York
Wildenstein & Co., Inc., New York
Millicent Rogers, New York
Peter A. Salin, New York (acquired from the above in 1953)
M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York (acquired from the above in 1955)
Acquired from the above for the Loeb Collection on 3 January 1956

Literature[49]

Biermann, G., "Gemälde der Modernen Galerie Thannhauser in München", *Der Cicerone*, 1913, p.322, No. 15 (illustrated, p.320, pl. 15).

Meier-Graefe, J., *Cézanne und sein Kreis*, Munich, 1922, p.166.

Watson, F., "The Adolph Lewisohn Collection", *The Arts*, July 1926, p.34 (illustrated).

Bourgeois, S., *The Adolph Lewisohn Collection of Modern French Paintings and Sculpture*, New York, 1928, pp. vii and 180 (illustrated, p.181).

Wilenski, R.H., *French Painting*, Boston, 1931, p. 309.

[49] This is only a selection of the numerous publications in which *Madame Cézanne* is cited.

Venturi, L., *Cézanne, son art, son oeuvre*, Paris, 1936, vol. I, pp.188-189, No. 571 (illustrated, vol. II, pl. 183).

Lewisohn, S., "Personalities Past and Present", *Art News Annual*, 1939, p.69 (illustrated).

Sterling, C., and Salinger, M., *French Paintings, A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, 1967, vol. III (*XIX-XX Centuries*), p.111.

Orienti, S., *L'opera completa di Cézanne*, Milan, 1970, p.112, No. 571 (illustrated).

The Frances and John L. Loeb Collection, London, 1982, No. 26 (illustrated in color).

Rewald, J., *Cézanne, A Biography*, New York, 1986, p.196 (illustrated).

Rishel, J.J., "Madame Cézanne in a Yellow Chair", in exhibition catalogue *Cézanne*, Grand Palais, Paris, 1995-1996, p.400 (illustrated, fig. 1).

Rewald, J., *The Paintings of Paul Cézanne: A Catalogue Raisonné*, New York, 1996, vol. I, p.421, No. 651(illustrated, vol. II, p.220).

Exhibited[50]

Munich, Moderne Galerie (Heinrich Thannhauser), 1912, No. 4.

Paris, Quai Rive-Neuve, *Salon de Mai*, May 1912, No. 1 (illustrated).

New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *Summer Exhibition*, June-September 1930, No. 21.

New York, Durand-Ruel Galleries, *Paintings by Cézanne, Gauguin and Redon*, March-April 1932, No. 3.

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Great Portraits from Impressionism to Modernism*, March 1938, p.21, No. 5.

San Francisco, Palace of Fine Arts, *Golden Gate International Exhibition*, 1940, p.17, No. 239 (illustrated, p.80).

New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1945.

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Cézanne*, March-April 1947, p.56, No. 49 (illustrated, p.52).

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Six Masters of Post-Impressionism*, April-May 1948, p.17, No. 7 (illustrated, p.24).

Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, *Cézanne*, August-September 1954, No. 47 (illustrated, pl. VII). The exhibition traveled to London, Tate Gallery, September-October 1954.

[50] This is only a selection of the many in which *Madame Cézanne* has been exhibited.

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Summer Loan Exhibition*, July-September 1958, No. 29.
New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Cézanne*, November-December 1959, No. 35 (illustrated).
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *New York Collects: Paintings, Watercolors and Sculpture from Private Collections*, July-September 1968, p.8, No. 30.

Although Cézanne was closely involved with Impressionism, he remained outside of it in terms of approach. He believed the painting of the Impressionists lacked structure and he believed in the importance of drawing and composition, not only of tone and color. Similar to the Neo-Impressionists, Cézanne felt that color and drawing are dependent on each other. Like Monet, though, he too was interested in fleeting impressions. Cézanne sought to express the essence and the permanence of the subjects he painted. And in the end, he hoped to create, as he said, something solid and permanent out of Impressionism, like art in museums. His way of working was quite unlike Monet, for example, who painted rapidly; instead Cézanne built up his paintings very slowly. Beginning in his early period (from about 1860-1870) with dark, somber colors and heavy impasto with strong dark shadows, he later moved on to brighter colors and began to use stippling and a juxtaposition of brushstrokes, encouraged by his exposure to Impressionism and his close work with Pissarro. This marked his Impressionist period, from about 1872-1882, during which he exhibited at the Impressionist exhibition in 1874. Cézanne continued by exploring the use of planes and structured forms to try to capture the substance of things, not simply external appearances. He chose not to concentrate merely on the effects of light, which he believed could not be reproduced but only represented in terms of color. Cézanne later came to believe the Impressionist approach was too limited, not able to achieve the synthesis of color and design, tone and form that he sought. This marked his period of synthesis, from about 1883 to 1895, during which he moved towards a kind of cubism, representing objects in very geometrical forms.

In the last years of his life and work, 1896-1906, his work became even more structured and intellectual, anticipating the Cubism of Picasso that would shortly follow.

Madame Cézanne, painted in 1888-90, shows Cézanne's interest in achieving a synthesis of color and design, tone and form. It is related to other portraits of Madame Cézanne that hang in a number of prominent museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art (see comparative illustration 29) and The Art Institute, Chicago (see comparative illustration 30). Cézanne's paintings are, of course, some of the most sought-after by collectors and hang in the finest museums. The provenance of *Madame Cézanne* includes some of the most visible dealers and collectors, Vollard, Cassirer, Wildenstein, Knoedler, Loeb, etc. At auction, *Madame Cézanne* fetched $23,102,500. Another painting by Cézanne in the same sale, *Les toits de l'Estaque*, fetched $12,652,500,[51] while still another, *L'Oncle Dominique*, fetched $2,917,500.[52] Comparative illustration 37 shows *Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune* in the interior of John and Frances L. Loeb's New York apartment.

Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, Lot 115, p.61.

[51] Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, Lot 117, p.68.
[52] Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, Lot 118, p.74.

11

Iris Mauves

Claude Monet (1840-1926)

Oil on canvas

78¾ x 39½ in. (200 x 100.3 cm.)

Painted 1914-1917

Provenance

Michel Monet, Giverny

Heinz Berggruen, Paris

M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York (1956)

Acquired from the above for the Loeb Collection on 25 September 1956

Literature

New York, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., *Les Nymphéas, série de paysages d'eau*, October 1956

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Summer Loan Exhibition: Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture from Private Collections*, July-September 1966, p.11, No. 115

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *New York Collects: Paintings, Watercolors and Sculpture from Private Collections*, July-September 1968, p.16, No. 115

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Masterpieces in Bloom*, April-May, 1973, No. 40

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Monet's Years at Giverny: Beyond Impressionism*, April-July 1978, No. 61 (illustrated in color). The exhibition traveled to St. Louis, Art Museum, August-October 1978.

Exhibited

Moffett, C.S., *Monet's Waterlilies*, New York, 1978, pp.6-7 (illustrated, pl. 4)

Stuckey, C.F., "Blossoms and Blunders: Monet and the State, II", *Art in America*, September 1979, pp.117 and 124 (illustrated in color, fig. 20)

The Frances and John L. Loeb Collection, London, 1982, No. 35 (illustrated in color)

Wildenstein, D., *Claude Monet, Biographie et catalogue raisonné*, Lausanne, 1985, vol. IV (1899-1926, *Peintures*), p. 266, No. 1827 (illustrated, p. 267)

Monet is, of course, the most celebrated of the Impressionists. It was his *Impression, sunrise*, displayed at the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874, that gave its name its name to the movement. The 'father of Impression', he tried simply to paint directly from nature and to record his impressions of fleeting moments and effects. Light and its effect on form and color was his preoccupation, and he had to develop a skill of rapidly recording it on to the canvas before it changed. He made friends early on with Pissarro and Renoir, encouraging the latter to paint in the open air with him. He worked both in Paris and in Normandy and later made trips to London, where he met up with Pissarro and studied Constable and Turner. He had a particularly prolific period at Argenteuil from 1872 to 1878, where he refined his technique, using numerous small brushstrokes laid down next to one another and developing a subtle use of color. Not long after he was to paint the series of great masterpieces, such as the *Haystacks* and *The Cathedrals*, in which depicted the effects of different light on the color and form of the same objects. He returned to London in 1900 and again in 1904 to paint the famous landmarks around the Thames, traveled to Venice in 1908 and 1909 to capture its unique light on canvas, finally returning to Giverny to work on his last great series, the *Waterlillies*, inspired by the ponds of his garden.

Iris Mauves belongs to this last period of Monet's work and is one of twenty-one paintings of irises from the period. Other examples can be found in the Musée Marmottan, Paris (see comparative catalogue illustration 31) and one promised to Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (see comparative catalogue illustration 32). Monet's other works can, of course, be found in the greatest public and private collections. While *Iris Mauves* is one of his greatest, it is however a fine painting from Monet's much admired later period. It provenance, including the dealers Knoedler and the Loebs, only adds to its appeal. It fetched very respectable $3,852,500 at auction, compared with another Monet canvas,

Coucher de soleil à Lavacourt, which fetched $1,872,500 in the sale of the Akram Ojjeh Collection.[53]

Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, Lot 123, p.91.

[53] Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 115, p.90.

12

Baigneuse debout

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919)

Oil on canvas

32 x 20 in. (81.4 x 50.7 cm.)

Painted 1887

Provenance

J. Harris Whittemore, Naugatuck, Connecticut

Wildenstein & Co., Inc., New York

Mr. and Mrs. Ogden Phipps, New York

M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York

Acquired from the above for the Loeb Collection on 17 April 1956

Literature

Daulte, F., *Auguste Renoir, Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint*, Lausanne, 1971, vol. I (*Figures, 1860-1890*), No. 521(illustrated)

The Frances and John L. Loeb Collection, London, 1982, No. 18 (illustrated in color)

Exhibited

Minneapolis, Institute of Art, 1947 (on loan)

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Masterpieces from Museums and Private Collections*, November-December 1951, No. 46 (illustrated)

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Paintings from Private Collections, Summer Loan Exhibition*, July-September 1963, p.6, No.65

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Paintings from Private Collections, Summer Loan Exhibition*, July-September 1966, p.14, No. 151

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Renoir: In Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Renoir's Death*, March-May 1969, No. 24 (illustrated)

Chicago, The Art Institute, *Paintings by Renoir*, February-April 1973, No. 53 (illustrated)

New York, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., *Renoir, The Gentle Rebel*, October-November 1974, No. 34 (illustrated)

Although he also painted still life and landscape, Renoir was best known for his painting of people: portraits, nudes, people out of doors. He excelled at capturing the middle classes enjoying the simple pleasures of life and the carefree atmosphere they enjoyed. Children and women were particular interests of his, and he painted the female nude with much care and affection. Early on, in the 1860s, he sought to paint in a realistic manner, influenced by Diaz, Delacroix, and Courbet. Between 1864 and 1870 be exhibited at the Salon with some regularity. Soon, even before he met Monet, he began to use a lighter palette of colors under the encouragement of Diaz. After 1870 until about 1883 Renoir became quite close to Monet and his work began to show the influences of Impressionism. He began using the techniques of Impressionism, stippling and painting in the open air, in addition to the colors, now giving up earthier colors with the exception of black. It was during this period that he painted one of his masterpieces, *The Ball at the Moulin de la Galette* (1876), which is a kind of reinterpretation of French eighteenth-century painting and Watteau's *fêtes galantes*, in particular. He would draw as well on the work of Boucher and Fragonard. Not only did the color palette of these paintings appeal to him, but also the gaiety and lyricism. Renoir exhibited at the Impressionist exhibitions, shocking people with the nude *Woman in the sun*, with its patches of green and purple colors on the woman's flesh, at the second exhibition in 1876. He traveled extensively to Algeria, to Italy, where he studied the great Florentine painters and Raphael, and to the south of France at l'Estaque where he worked with Cézanne. After studying Ingres, he realized the limits of Impressionism and felt the need to study works in museums and develop a firmer line. He emerged with a more emphasized outline and a subdued color palette, seen in *Les Grandes Baigneuses* (1883-84), exhibited at the Salon of 1887. From about 1890 to 1897, his technique and drawing further refined, he painted mostly female nudes, using delicately blended and shaded colors that gave the paintings a pearly quality. The last period of his work and life was spent in the south of France where he painted

colorful, rich, sensual works, many female nudes among them, such as *Grande Baigneuse au chapeau* (c.1904-06) and *Women bathing* or *Nymphs* (c.1919).

Baigneuse debout, with its delicately blended colors and pearly finish, clearly belongs to Renoir's 'pearly' period. The figure shows the influence of his study in Italy (as the pose resembles Raphael's *Galatea*), while the color and lighting and the lyrical quality show the continued influence of French eighteenth-century painters. *Baigneuse debout* is related to other works, including those in comparative illustrations 33 and 34. Renoir, needless to say, is one of the most celebrated and collected Impressionists, whose paintings hang in the best private and public collections. The provenance, which includes the Loebs and the dealers Wildenstein and Knoedler, adds to the desirability of an already valuable canvas. At auction it fetched $4,292,500.

Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, Lot 119, p.79.

13

Le Pont de Trinquetaille

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890)

Oil on canvas

25½ x 31¾ in. (65 x 81cm.)

Painted in Arles, June-July 1888

Provenance

Mrs. Johanna van Gogh-Bonger, Amsterdam

Paul Cassirer, Berlin (1906)

Galerie Ambroise Vollard, Paris

Mr. and Mrs. Josef Redlich, Vienna

Galerie Hodebert, Paris

Galerie Etiènne Bignou, Paris

Mrs. R.A. Workman, London

The Lefevre Gallery (Alex. Reid & Lefevre, Ltd.), London.

M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York

Mrs. William A. Clark, New York (1934)

M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York

Mr. and Mrs. André Meyer, New York (1962); sold Sotheby's New York, 22 October 1980, lot 27

Acquired at the above sale for The Akram Ojjeh Collection

Literature

Jacobsen, R., *Onze Kunst*, 1904, p.4, pl. 7 (illustrated)

Coquiot, G., *Van Gogh*, Paris, 1923, p.312 (illustrated).

Meier-Graeffe, J., *Vincent van Gogh*, Munich, 1926, p. 76 (illustrated)

de la Faille, J.-B., *L'Oeuvre de Vincent van Gogh, catalogue raisonné*, Paris, 1928, vol. I, p.120, No. 426; vol. II, pl. CXX (illustrated)

Scherjon, W., and de Gruyter, J., *Vincent van Gogh's Great Period: Arles, St. Remy and Auvers-sur-Oise (Complete Catalogue)*, Amsterdam, 1937, p.78, No. 49 (illustrated)

de la Faille, J.-B., *Vincent van Gogh*, Paris, 1939, p.324, No. 452 (illustrated)

van Gogh, V., *The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh*, London, 1958, vol. II, pp.592-594 (letter 501a), and pp.597-598 (letter 503)

de la Faille, J.-B., *The Works of Vincent van Gogh: His Paintings and Drawings*, Amsterdam, 1970, pp.197 and 628, No. F426 (illustrated, p.197)

Lecaldano, P., *L'opera pittorica completa di Van Gogh*, Paris, 1971, vol. II, p.209, No. 516 (illustrated)

Hulsker, J., *The Complete van Gogh, Paintings, Drawings, Sketches*, Amsterdam, 1977, p.335, No. 1468 (illustrated; as *View of a River, Quay, and Bridge*)

Pickvance, R., *Van Gogh in Arles*, exhibition catalogue, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1984, p.137, fig. 38 (illustrated)

Feilchenfeldt, W., *Vincent van Gogh and Paul Cassirer, Berlin: The Reception of van Gogh in Germany from 1901 to 1914*, Amsterdam, 1988, p.93, No. F426 (illustrated)

Walther, I.F. and Metzger, R., *Vincent van Gogh: The Complete Paintings*, Cologne, 1993, vol. II, p.379 (illustrated in color).

Hulsker, J., *The New Complete Van Gogh, Paintings, Drawings, Sketches: Revised and enlarged edition of the Catalogue raisonné of the works of Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam, 1996, pp.324, 326 and 334, No. 1468 (illustrated, p. 335)

Exhibited

Paris, Pavillon de la Ville, *Salon des Artistes Indépendents*, March-April 1891, No. 248 (as Soleil couchant sur le Rhône)

Munich, Kunstaustellungsgebäude, *Secession*, Spring 1903, No. 236 (as *Die Rhônebrücke)*

Groningen, *Vincent van Gogh*, 1904

Berlin, Kunstsalon Paul Cassirer, *Vincent van Gogh*, Spring 1905, No. 30 (as *Sonnenuntergang an der Rhône*)

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, *Vincent van Gogh*, July-August 1905, No.109

Hamburg, Kunstsalon Paul Cassirer; Dresden, Kunstsalon Ernst Arnold; and Berlin, Kunstsalon Paul Cassirer, *Vincent van Gogh*, September-December 1905, No. 16 (as *Sonnenuntergang an der Rhône*)

Vienna, Kunstsalon H.O. Miethke, *Vincent van Gogh*, January 1906, No. 37 (as *Sonnenuntergang über der Rhône*)

Vienna, Internationale Kunstschau, *Secession*, May-October 1909, No. 5 (as *Sonnenuntergang über der Rhône*)

Paris, Exposition des peintres de l'école post-impressionniste, 1910

London, The Lefevre Gallery (Alex. Reid & Lefevre, Ltd.), *Exhibition of the Post-Impressionist Masters: Gauguin, van Gogh, Toulouse-Lautrec and representative pictures by Renoir*, October-November 1923, No. 19 (as *Bords du Rhone à Arles*)

New York, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., *A Century of French Paintings: An Exhibition Organized for the Benefit of the French Hospital of New York*, November-December 1928, No. 30 (illustrated)

San Francisco, The California Palace of the Legion of Honor, *Exhibition of French Paintings from the Fifteenth Century to the Present Day*, June-July 1934, p.62, No. 156 (as Arles: The Bridge of Trinquetaille; dated 1888-1889)

New York, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., *Van Gogh: Fourteen Masterpieces, Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the Home for the Destitute Blind*, March-April 1948, No. 2 (illustrated)

Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, *Exhibition of the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. André Meyer*, June-July 1962, p.26 (illustrated)

Beginning to draw and paint only in his mid-twenties in 1878, van Gogh was initially influenced by Millet, Maris, and Israëls. In the first part of the 1880s he lived in Holland and Belgium and completed numerous realistic pencil studies of workers and homely objects. He also completed a number of paintings in this time, including his early masterpiece *The Potatoeaters* in 1885. Experiments with color followed, coming from his admiration for Rubens and interest with its expressive qualities. In 1886, van Gogh moved to Paris and spent the next two years regularly associating with the Impressionists, something he felt vital the development of his painting. He also took an interest in the pointillist technique of Neo-Impressionism, in Symbolism and Gauguin, and in fashionable Japanese art, synthesizing all of these elements into his own work. It was at about this time that he began his 'bâtonnets' technique, which would develop over time. Craving a different kind of light, he moved in 1888 to Arles in Provence, where the fullness of his talent was realized. He lived there more than a year and produced nearly two hundred canvases, which now showed a new forcefulness, sometimes violence, and strong, bold colors. *Sunflowers* (1888) and *Café at evening* (1888) are just some of the great masterpieces van Gogh produced during this period. He was then admitted to an asylum at Saint-Rémy, where he spent the next year recovering and developing his technique, turning out works of intense form and color of with heavily impasted brushwork broken up into specks, dots, commas,

and lines. His work at this time had a tragic, almost hallucinatory quality; *Vincent's Room at Arles* (1889), *Starry night* (1888), and *Self Portrait with bandaged ear* (1889) are some examples. During the final period of his life and work, he came under the care of Dr. Gachet at Auvers-sur-Oise and achieved a relative calm, reflected in softening of color and more tranquil line in some of his work, *The Church at Auvers* (1890), for example. *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* (1890)[54] and *Self-Portrait* (1890) are other canvases from this time, although they are altogether less at ease. Indeed these were two of the last works van Gogh completed before taking his own life in the same year.

Le Pont de Trinquetaille, painted while van Gogh was at Saint-Rémy in 1888, is concerned chiefly with emotion and mood, using color and lighting subjectively to this end. The plunging perspective shows the influence of Japanese prints. It is related to other works of the same name (see comparative illustrations 35 and 36) and can be seen hung in Akram Ojjeh's residence in comparative illustration 21. Painted during van Gogh's great period, the canvas is highly valuable, while perhaps, due to the strong yellow color, less desirable than some. However, it has an illustrious provenance, which includes the dealers Cassirer, Vollard, Knoedler, as well as Ojjeh and other collectors. Van Gogh, of course, is avidly collected by public institutions and private collectors, and prices for his canvases consistently command the highest prices. *Le Pont de Trinquetaille* proved very desirable, fetching $15,402,500 at auction.

Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 112, p.81.

[54] As mentioned above, it fetched a record $82.5 million at auction in 1990.

CATALOGUE ILLUSTRATIONS

1

A Louis XV Chinese Black and Gold Lacquer Commode
by Bernard II van Risenburgh (B.V.R.B.).

2

A Louis XV *Vernis-Martin* Black and Gilt-Japanned Bureau Plat
by Jacques Dubois.

3

A Pair of Louis XV Marquetry Encoignures by Jean-Pierre Latz.

4

A Louis XV Parquetry Secrétaire en Cabinet
by Roger van der Cruse, known as Lacroix (R.V.L.C.).

5

A Royal Louis XVI Parquetry and Marquetry Commode
by Jean-Henri Riesener.

6

A Louis XVI Bureau à Cylindre by Jean-François Leleu.

7

A Louis XVI Console Table with Sèvres Porcelain Plaques by Adam Weisweiler.

Detail of central plaque.

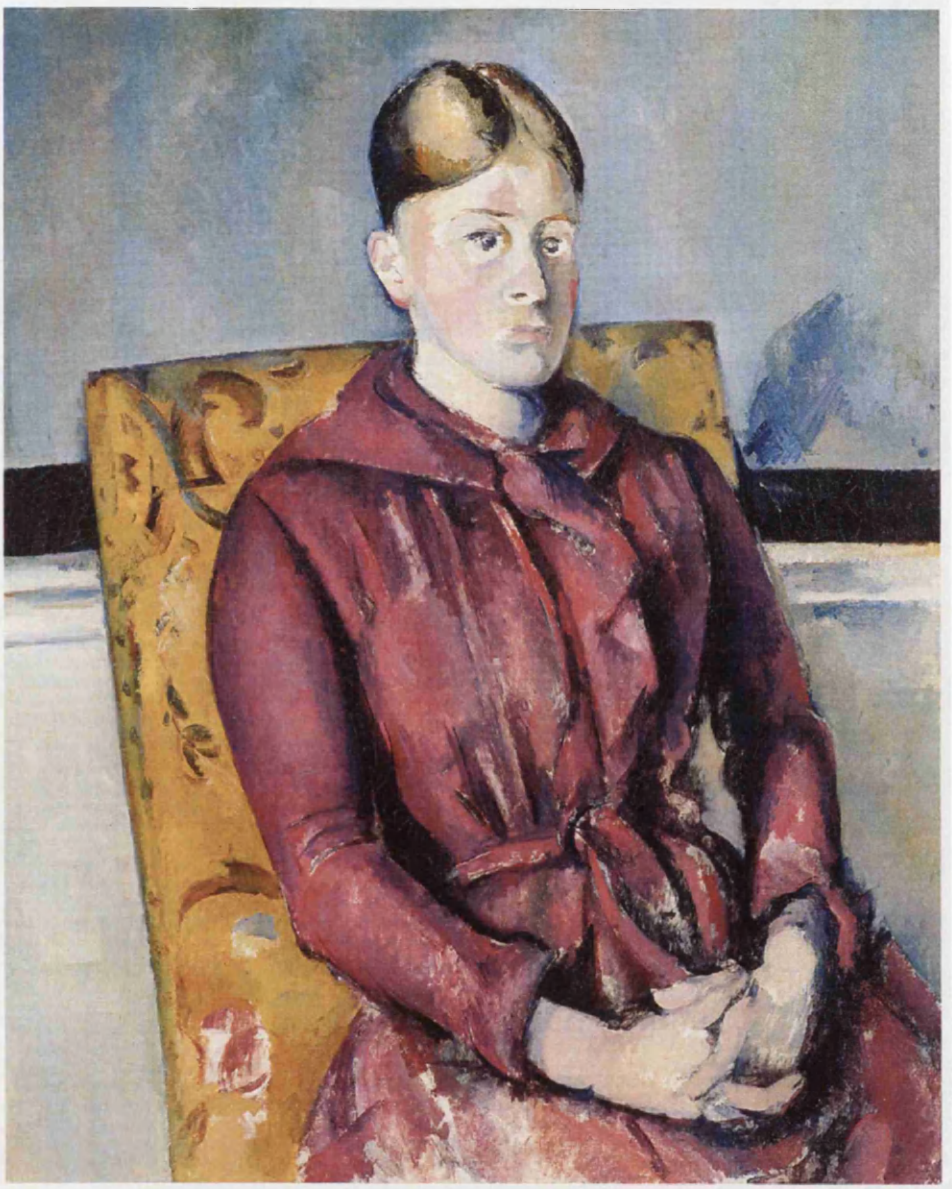
8

Portrait de Manet (Manet à la palette) by Édouard Manet.

9

Place Saint-Lazare by Camille Pissarro.

10



Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune by Paul Cézanne.

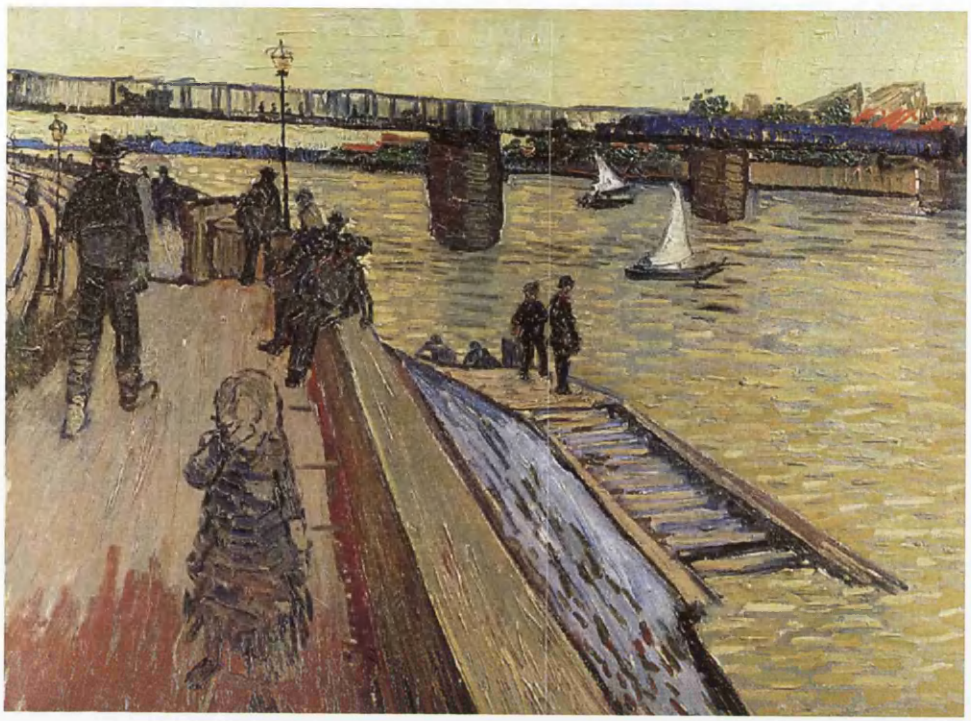
11

Iris Mauves by Claude Monet.

12

Baigneuse debout by Pierre-Auguste Renoir.

13



Le Pont de Trinquetaille by Vincent van Gogh.

COMPARATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate 1

A Louis XV Japanese Lacquer Commode by B.V.R.B.[1]
British Royal Collection.

Plate 2

A Louis XV Japanese Lacquer Commode by B.V.R.B.[2]
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

[1] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.182.
[2] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.195.

Plate 3

A Louis XV Japanese Lacquer Bureau Plat by Jacques Dubois.[3]
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Plate 4

A Louis XV Japanese Lacquer Bureau de pente by Jacques Dubois.[4]
Sale of Akram Ojjeh Collection.

[3] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.171.
[4] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, lot 51, p.172.

Plate 5

A Louis XV Secrétaire en pente and Encoignure by Jean-Pierre Latz.[5]
Private Collection.

Plate 6

A Louis XV Commode by Jean-Pierre Latz.[6]
Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon.

[5] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.152.
[6] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.161.

Plate 7

A Louis XV Secrétaire by R.V.L.C.[7]
Archives Galerie Grismondi, Paris.

Plate 8

A Louis XV Commode by R.V.L.C.[8]
Floors Castle, Kelso, Scotland. Duke of Roxburgh's Collection.

[7] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.287.
[8] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.284.

Plate 9

A Louis XVI Parquetry and Marquetry Secrétaire by Jean-Henri Riesener.[9]
Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire.

Plate 10

A Louis XVI Parquetry and Marquetry Secrétaire by Jean-Henri Riesener.[10]
Frick Collection, New York.

[9] Photo: de Bellaigue, *The James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor*, p.239.
[10] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.376.

Plate 11

A Louis XVI Parquetry and Marquetry Commode
by Jean-François Leleu.[11]
Sale of Akram Ojjeh Collection.

Plate 12

A Louis XVI Parquetry and Marquetry Commode by Jean-François Leleu.[12]
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

[11] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, lot 60, p.198.
[12] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.341.

Plate 13

Interior of Lionel Nathan Rothschild's London residence with Weisweiler Console (right side of photograph, below arch).[13]

Plate 14

A Louis XVI Secrétaire with Sèvres Porcelain Plaques and Wedgwood Medallions by Adam Weisweiler.[14] Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

[13] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.182.
[14] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, p.393.

Plate 15

Detail of interior of Akram Ojjeh's residence, with Latz encoignures and Weisweiler console.[15]

Plate 16

A Louis XVI Ebony and Lacquer Commode by Jean-Henri Riesener.[16] Sale of Akram Ojjeh Collection.

[15] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.130.
[16] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 35, p.109.

Plate 17

A Louis XVI Ebony and Lacquer Secrétaire by Jean-Henri Riesener.[17]
Sale of Akram Ojjeh Collection.

Plate 18

A Louis XVI Ebony and Lacquer Encoignure by Jean-Henri Riesener.[18]
Sale of Akram Ojjeh Collection.

[17] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 35, p.111.
[18] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 35, p.113.

Plate 19

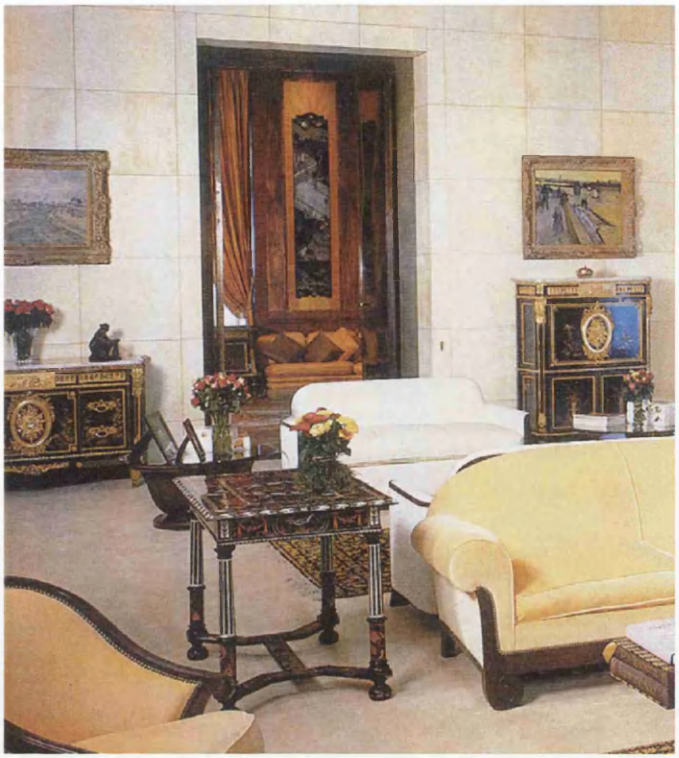
A Louis XVI Black Lacquer Secrétaire and Commode
by Jean-Henri Riesener.[19]
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Plate 20

A Louis XVI Encoignure by Jean-Henri Riesener.[20]
Wallace Collection, London.

[19] Photo: Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*, pp.386-387.
[20] Photo: Hughes, *The Wallace Collection Catalogue of Furniture*, p.897.

Plate 21



Detail of interior of Akram Ojjeh's residence, with suite of Riesener ebony and lacquer furniture and van Gogh's *Le Pont de Trinquetaille* (above secrétaire).[21]

Plate 22

A Louis XVI Ebony Marquetry and Pietra Dura Commode
by Martin Carlin and Adam Weisweiler.[22]
Sale of Akram Ojjeh Collection.

[21] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.6.
[22] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, Lot 30, p.89.

Plate 23

A Louis XVI Ebony Marquetry and Pietra Dura Commode
by Adam Weisweiler.[23]
British Royal Collection.

Plate 24

A Louis XVI Ebony Marquetry and Pietra Dura Secrétaire
by Martin Carlin and Adam Weisweiler.[24]
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

[23] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.92.
[24] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.90.

Plate 25

Portrait de Manet, 1867, by Henri Fantin-Latour.[1]
The Art Institute, Chicago.

Plate 26

Portrait de Manet par lui-même, circa 1878, by Edouard Manet.[2]
Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo.

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[1] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.40.
[2] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.40.

Plate 27

Place du Havre, Paris, 1893, by Camille Pissarro.[3]
The Art Institute of Chicago.

Plate 28

Place du Théâtre, Français, 1898, by Camille Pissarro.[4]
Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

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[3] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.78.
[4] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.78.

Plate 29

Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune, 1888-90, by Paul Cézanne.[5]
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Plate 30

Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune, 1888-90, by Paul Cézanne.[6]
The Art Institute, Chicago.

[5] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.62.
[6] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.63.

Plate 31

Iris jaunes, 1924-25, by Claude Monet.[7]
Musée Marmottan, Paris.

Plate 32

Le chemin au milieu des iris, 1914-17, by Claude Monet.[8]
Private Collection (promised to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

[7] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.93.
[8] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.93.

Plate 33

Baigneuse assise, 1883-84, by Pierre-Auguste Renoir.[9]
Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Plate 34

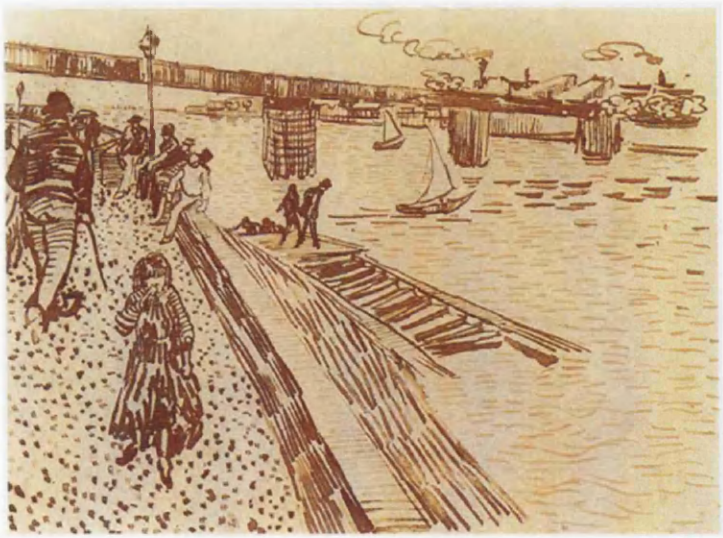
Les grandes baigneuses, 1884-87, by Pierre-Auguste Renoir.[10]
Museum of Art, Philadelphia.

[9] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.81.
[10] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.80.

Plate 35

Le Pont de Trinquetaille, 1888, by Vincent van Gogh.[11]
Sold, Christie's London, 29 June 1987, lot 78.

Plate 36



Le Pont de Trinquetaille, 1888, by Vincent van Gogh.[12]
Private Collection.

[11] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.84.
[12] Photo: Christie's, *The Akram Ojjeh Collection*, p.84.

Plate 37

Interior of John and Frances L. Loeb's New York apartment, with Cézanne's *Madame Cézanne au fauteuil jaune*.[13]

[13] Photo: Christie's, *The John and Frances L. Loeb Collection*, p.20.

GLOSSARY

Bois de bout: wood cut across the grain, with the grain used in marquetry to depict naturalistic foliage.

Bombé: a double-curved or swollen shape found in case furniture; popular in French and Continental furniture in the eighteenth century.

Bureau à cylindre: a writing desk with a quarter-cylinder roll-top, covering, when lowered, the drawer compartments and writing surface; the most famous bureau of the eighteenth century.

Bureau Plat: a flat-topped writing desk on legs with three or more drawers in the frieze.

Cabochon: in Rococo furniture, a convex cartouche form that has a carved surround on the knee of the leg of the piece of furniture.

Cartouche: based on the shape of a scroll, a concave or convex framed panel that is often decorated elaborately; at the height of its popularity in the Rococo period.

Chinoiserie: a European style of decoration, at times fanciful, influenced by Chinese originals that was highly popular during the later eighteenth century.

Commode: a chest of drawers that comes in a variety of forms. Originally used only in bedrooms to store clothing and subsequently moved into private rooms, it began to be used at the end of the eighteenth century in reception rooms for no functional purpose.

Console: a side table of a variety of shapes, usually with a marble top, designed to stand against the wall and thus undecorated on the back.

Encoignure: A comer cupboard, usually low, with either one or two doors, and sometimes topped with open corner shelves.

Ébénistes: furniture makers in France, beginning in the early seventeenth century, who were distinct from the *menuisiers* (ordinary furniture makers) in their technique of using highly decorative and luxurious veneers, originally made of ebony and later of hardwoods, precious metals, semi-precious stones, tortoiseshell, ivory, and horn. Ébénistes produced the most luxurious pieces of furniture for the top end of the market—the royal family and the nobility.

Gallery: a border of wood or metal around the top edge of a piece of furniture.

Garde-Meuble Royal: the administration that managed the furnishing of the French royal palaces.

Japanning: a European alternative to oriental lacquerwork that used many layers of varnish over a gesso base; decorations were usually outlined in gold or silver on a variety of background colors.

Marchands-merciers: dealers in France who were entitled to retail, but not produce themselves, specified goods, including imports; among other decorative objects, they dealt in furniture and worked closely with many ébénistes.

Marquetry: a decorative veneer (in floral, arabesque, or other pattern, or a figurative scene) applied to the carcass of furniture and composed of shaped pieces of wood or other suitable material, such as bone or ivory, forming a mosaic. Marquetry was introduced into France from the Low Countries in the early seventeenth century.

Oeil de perdrix: 'partridge eye' decoration on porcelain, used first and mostly at Sèvres, and consisting of a repetitive pattern of dots in gold or enamel color encircled by smaller dots; used as an alternative to other kinds of grounds; the same term is used for various types of lace grounds with prominent dots in the meshes.

Pietra Dura: a composition of semi-precious stones inlaid into the panels of furniture.

Rocaille: based on rock and shell forms from grotto decoration, dynamic asymmetrical shapes, some of which are rock-like, some smooth and auricular; one of the most important decorative forms of the Rococo period.

Sabot: the gilt-bronze shoe at the bottom of furniture legs.

Sans traverse: a kind of furniture construction where the drawer fronts are contiguous, lacking the intervening transverse rail, which obscures the underlying structure and heightens the effect of decorative integration.

Secrétaire: also called *secrétaire en pente*, a low desk with a sloping hinged front used as a writing surface.

Secrétaire à abattant: also called *secrétaire en annoire*, an upright desk with a flat-front; the upper section has a hinged fall-front used as a writing surface, the lower section has two doors or drawers.

Secrétaire en cabinet: a small upright desk that rests on a stand like a cabinet with a fall-front in the upper section.

Veneer: a very thin layer, usually of high-quality wood, that is affixed to the surface of a piece of furniture for decorative effect and to conceal less inferior or less decorative woods beneath.

Vernis Martin: a French imitation of oriental lacquer patented in 1730 by the Martin brothers; pictorial lacquer, sometimes in relief, and plain colored lacquer applied in a number of successive coats.

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