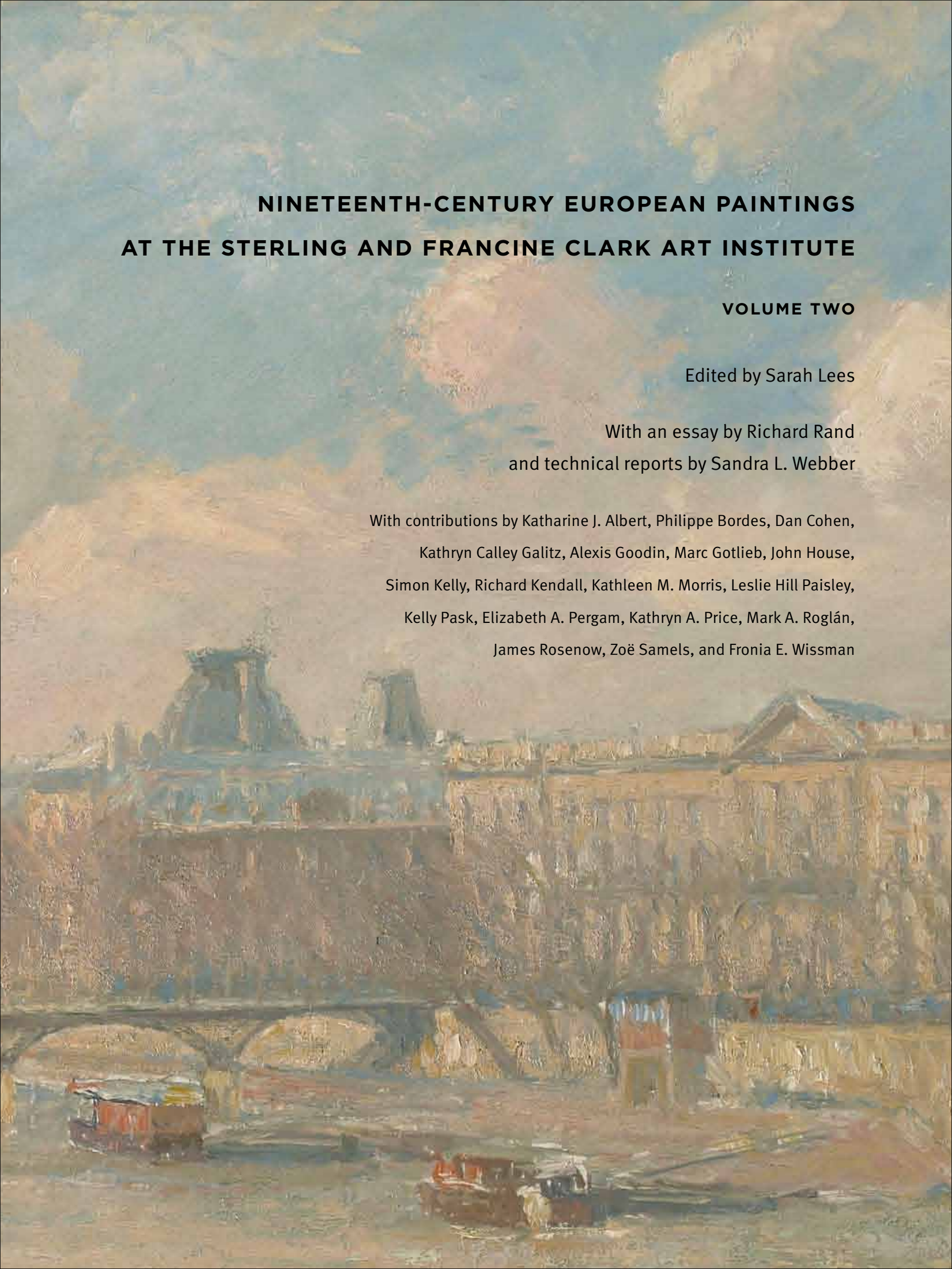

NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS AT THE STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE

VOLUME TWO

Edited by Sarah Lees

With an essay by Richard Rand
and technical reports by Sandra L. Webber

With contributions by Katharine J. Albert, Philippe Bordes, Dan Cohen, Kathryn Calley Galitz, Alexis Goodin, Marc Gotlieb, John House, Simon Kelly, Richard Kendall, Kathleen M. Morris, Leslie Hill Paisley, Kelly Pask, Elizabeth A. Pergam, Kathryn A. Price, Mark A. Roglán, James Rosenow, Zoë Samels, and Fronia E. Wissman

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TECHNICAL REPORT The paper support, along with a second sheet of paper, was wrapped around a mechanical wood-pulp board prior to execution. The cardboard support measures 47 x 37.5 cm. The paper shows through in many areas of the image and is particularly noticeable in the sky. It is difficult to determine whether the paper remains close to its original color or whether it has darkened significantly due to factors inherent in its manufacture. The second sheet of paper between the primary support and the cardboard backing may act as a barrier to the migration of acids from the mount. The paper contains metallic inclusions, visible in the sky, which have begun to oxidize. The mount remains planar, and the stretched paper is taut.

The media is totally unfixed and is in good condition. The rich surface of the pastel is built up with layers of fine strokes and hatchings. There are a few highlight areas in white that may be particularly vulnerable to loss as they sit on top of the surface of the previously applied pastel. The alkaline white pastel may protect the paper, where applied, and may cause the paper to age differentially, especially when exposed to light. LP

1. Boston and others 1984–85, pp. 31, 33n5.
2. In ibid., pp. 31–35, Alexandra Murphy lays out the debate surrounding the identity of the painting Millet exhibited at the 1850–51 Salon. This entry, as all of the Millet entries in this volume, is indebted to Murphy's uncontested knowledge in all matters having to do with the artist.
3. Ibid., p. 32.
4. For the work in a private collection, see Baltimore–Phoenix 2007–8, fig. 19.
5. Jean-François Millet to his friend Feuardent, 5 Dec. 1865; translation from Boston and others 1984–85, p. 251.
6. Murphy, in Christie's 1995, p. 69.
7. Many thanks to Simon Kelly for reminding me to go back to the sources: e-mail to author, 19 Aug. 2005.
8. Moreau-Nélaton 1921, vol. 2, p. 176.
9. See Baltimore–Phoenix 2007–8, p. 79nn97–99. Kelly draws on Chillaz 1997 for the text of these letters.
10. Moreau- Nélaton 1921, vol. 2, p. 176. Simon Kelly 2007, in Baltimore–Phoenix 2007–8, p. 65, identifies Moureaux as Millet's dealer.
11. Wheelwright 1876, pp. 263–64.

Claude Monet

French, 1840–1926

222 | Seascape, Storm 1866

Oil on canvas, 48.7 x 64.6 cm
Lower right: Claude Monet
1955.561

In contrast to the dominantly optimistic key of the other Monet canvases in the Clark collection, *Seascape, Storm* strikes a resoundingly somber note. Arguably among the severest works in the artist's entire oeuvre, it might also be considered Sterling and Francine Clark's most adventurous purchase. Uncharacteristically, the picture depends more on the play of shadow than the animating force of light, its black-green sea and vulnerable boat "dramatically heading in under a leaden sky" suggesting human and elemental peril.[1] Completed when the young Monet was struggling to establish a distinctive pictorial manner as well as a professional name, it reminds us of the breadth of his early achievement as a landscapist—and especially as a painter of the sea—in the mid-1860s.

The composition of *Seascape, Storm* is remarkable for its simplicity and its rectilinear character, exceptional even in Monet's wide repertoire of boat pictures. Near the center a solitary vessel sails directly towards us, its single mast creating a vertical division that effectively cuts the canvas in two. Countering this thrust is the luminous line of the horizon, some two-fifths of the way up the rectangle, which bisects the scene in the opposite direction even more decisively.[2] Otherwise the wide expanse is empty, its symmetrical spaces inflected only by the rhythms of sea and sky, and the localized forms of the fishing craft. Here again Monet's deliberation is in evidence, in the angle of the sail that echoes the clouds at upper left and in the repeated horizontals of the white surf. For all its minimalism, however, the arrangement is not without its tensions. The plainness of the seascape and the execution of much of the canvas with a palette knife stress the flatness of the design, yet the boat itself drives forcefully away from the background into the viewer's space. So potentially disruptive is this movement that the large foam-topped wave was necessary to contain it, leaving the narrative consequences of the scene unresolved. Are the fishermen fleeing the

storm, perhaps fearing for their safety? Given our implicit proximity to them, are we also under threat?

While such human crises are rarely associated with Monet's mature oeuvre, the underlying geometry of *Seascape, Storm* was to reappear in numerous variations over the next half-century, when trees and buttresses stood in for masts, and variously answered the horizon-like lines of riverbanks, boulevards, and lily ponds. A remarkable aspect of the picture, however, is the degree to which it was a product of its time: almost every feature of the subject and much of its handling can be traced to one of Monet's mentors or admired peers working on the Normandy coast at this period, in a historic conjunction of talents that immediately preceded the Impressionist enterprise. Enlightened by the teaching of Eugène Boudin (1824–1898) in the harbor town of Le Havre, where he had been brought up, Monet at first adopted the older man's sweeping skies, low horizons, and benign clusters of ships in a number of precocious works made between 1864 and 1866.[3] Certain of Boudin's paintings of this date, such as *Open Sea* (The Baltimore Museum of Art), provided a direct precedent for the eloquent spareness of *Seascape, Storm*, while others engaged with similarly agitated seas and ominous cloudscapes.[4] The actual execution of Boudin's canvases, however, was always comparatively restrained, as was his preference for the sedate, lateral movement of shipping and for the more elegant schooners and frigates that plied the English Channel, rather than the abrupt fishing boat favored by Monet. His second local teacher, Johan Barthold Jongkind (1819–1853), was even more influential, completing "the definitive education of my eye," as Monet put it.[5] Once again, we find models for the Clark scene in the Dutchman's pictures painted at Le Havre, Honfleur, and Antwerp, which were carried out in his studio from quickly rendered, outdoor sketches. A watercolor study such as *Commercial and Fishing Boats* (1865; Petit Palais, Paris) brings us closer to the informality of Monet's canvas, though—like Boudin—Jongkind continued to stress the artful arrangement of ships and estuaries, and to marginalize humbler vessels.[6]

The source of Monet's extraordinary application of paint in *Seascape, Storm*, one of just a handful of pictures from his career in which he used the palette knife, was the work of neither Boudin nor Jongkind, but probably another occasional companion on the channel coast, Gustave Courbet.[7] Several times during this decade, Courbet made summer visits to the area below Le Havre, using the dense textures produced

Fig. 222.1. Claude Monet, *The Entrance to the Port of Le Havre*, c. 1867–68. Oil on canvas, 50.2 x 61.3 cm. Norton Simon Art Foundation, Pasadena

by his palette knives to render its shores, breaking waves, and spectacular skies. By late 1865, Monet was close enough to Courbet to welcome him to his temporary studio in Paris and the following year they exhibited together and met on a number of occasions.[8] However theatrical Courbet's *The Sailboat (Seascape)* (cat. 95) appears to be beside Monet's composition, it too revolves around a modest, strongly centered fishing craft in distress, and relies on vigorous layering of paint to heighten its immediacy. Monet would certainly have seen some of the numerous works in this manner exhibited by Courbet, which more typically exploited low horizons and the vast, deserted spaces of nature. In a spirit of experiment and emulation, the younger artist seems to have combined the tension of certain Courbet themes with his radical simplicity, and decided to complete substantial areas of the Clark canvas with a palette knife, though details such as the mast and rigging were unquestionably added with a brush.[9] Further scrutiny suggests that some passages went through more than one stage as the work advanced, following the laying down of a lighter, warmer underlayer of color and the later addition of glaze-like touches to the principal wave.[10]

Almost every writer who has considered *Seascape, Storm* links it to another, more specific stimulus: the four large paintings of sea subjects begun by Édouard Manet in 1864, three of which were exhibited before 1865 and again in 1867.[11] While there is no reason to doubt that Monet was impressed by them, as many of his contemporaries certainly were, there is a need to define and perhaps narrow this influence in the context of the significantly smaller Clark canvas. As we

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have seen, most aspects of the motif and the unusual facture of *Seascape, Storm* can be accounted for in earlier or more local precedent, setting it somewhat apart from the Manet series. In addition, Manet's paintings all share an emphatic scale and a marked complexity, presenting a broadly brushed expanse of blue-green water and an arrangement of up to a dozen yachts, smoking tugboats, fishing craft, and distant naval vessels. Critical to each composition is its vertiginous vantage point, apparently on a cliff top or high masthead, which lifts the viewer over the ocean and excludes all but a narrow band of pale sky. Monet's encounter remained distinctly at sea level, though he may well have remembered the awkwardly advancing boat that is prominent in the foreground of two Manet scenes, such as *Steamboat Leaving Boulogne* (1864; The Art Institute of Chicago). What he also took notice of, it seems, were the broad planes of color in the older artist's canvases, and perhaps the air of menace that pervaded the paintings concerned with a recent naval engagement off the French coast.[12]

In Monet's *The Green Wave* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), a work often associated with the Clark picture, his debt to Manet is less oblique.[13] Larger and more conventionally brushed than *Seascape, Storm*, and including three distinct vessels, its surging, ominous sea allows only a glimpse of gray cloud above, bringing it closer to the marine narratives of Manet on several counts. The signature and the date 1865 on the New York canvas are generally understood to be later additions by Monet, but its relationship to *Seascape, Storm* remains problematic. While the two works have sometimes been separated by a year or more, they arguably emerged from the same phase of technical and expressive inquiry. Matters are further complicated, however, by Monet's *The Entrance to the Port of Le Havre* (fig. 222.1), another misleadingly postdated canvas, where the central boat in the busy harbor scene is the virtual twin of that in *Seascape, Storm*.[14] The likelihood is that all three works were painted between the fall of 1866 and the spring of 1867, when Monet lived for much of the time in Normandy and pursued a variety of practical and professional strategies, borrowing from his peers and from himself, and investigating an untypically solemn mode.[15] RK

PROVENANCE [Possibly Alexander Reid, Glasgow, sold to Bain];[16] Andrew Bain, Glasgow (by 1901); Étienne Moreau-Nélaton, Paris, sold to Durand-Ruel, 22 May 1906; [Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1906–12, sold to Frankfurter Kunstverein, 31 Aug. 1912];[17] Frankfurter Kunstverein (from 1912); possibly D. S. MacColl, Glasgow; [Fine Arts Associates, New York, sold to Knoedler, Oct. 1950]; [Knoedler, New York, sold to Clark, 7 Nov. 1950]; Robert Sterling Clark (1950–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Probably London 1889b, no. 12, as *Marine (Tempest)*;[18] possibly Glasgow 1898, no cat.;[19] Glasgow 1901, no. 1311, as *The Freshening Breeze*, lent by Andrew Bain; Saint Petersburg 1912, no. 440, lent by Durand-Ruel; Williamstown 1956a, no. 117, pl. 34; Northampton–Williamstown 1976–77, pp. 133–34, no. 89, ill.; Williamstown 1985c, no cat.; Williamstown 1988a, no cat.; Springfield 1988, p. 32, no. 8, ill.; Paris–New York 1994–95, pp. 240, 425–26, no. 129, fig. 302; Vienna 1996, pp. 43, 46, 215, no. 7, ill.; Chicago–Philadelphia–Amsterdam 2003–4, p. 203, pl. 96; London–Williamstown 2007, pp. 85–87, 92, 302, fig. 75; Edinburgh–Glasgow 2008–9, pp. 69, 122, 125, fig. 86 (exhibited in Edinburgh only); Ann Arbor–Dallas 2009–10, pp. 27–29, no. 13, ill.

REFERENCES MacColl 1902, p. 185, ill. opp. p. 162, as *Freshening Breeze*; Jean 1912, pp. 69, 83–84; Cooper 1954, pp. 64–65; Mount 1958, p. 385, fig. 5; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, no. 86, ill.; Isaacson 1967, pp. 82, 169, pl. 25; Wildenstein 1974–91, vol. 1, pp. 160–61, no. 86, ill.; Pickvance 1980, p. 705; Brooks 1981, pp. 60–61, no. 26, ill.; House 1986a, pp. 75, 238n7, pl. 113; Howard 1989, p. 51, ill.; Kendall 1989, p. 41, ill.; Kern et al. 1996, pp. 86–87, ill.; Wildenstein 1996, vol. 2, pp. 46–47, no. 86, ill. as *Stormy Seascape*; Fowle 2000, p. 99; Shimada and Sakagami 2001, vol. 1, p. 39, fig. 18; Treviso 2001–2, p. 26, ill.; Louisville and others 2002–4, p. 44, fig. 49, as *A Freshening Breeze*; Fowle 2006, p. 149, pl. 25, as *A Freshening Breeze*; Campbell 2006–9, vol. 1, pp. 321–22, fig. 85c; Williamstown–New York 2006–7, p. 104.

TECHNICAL REPORT The original support is assumed to be linen of moderate weave (11 x 16 threads/cm), although it is possible that there is a layer of paper over the canvas. There are either two glue linings or one glue lining with two layers of moderate-weight linen (22 threads/cm), with only one lining fabric extending to form the new tacking margins. The reason for the double lining was undoubtedly to provide a stiff support for the large complex tear that starts in the main sail and travels through the sky and ocean to its right, as well as a second tear in the upper right corner. The stretcher may be original, and the lining may date to shortly after 1900. The painting was cleaned in 1985 to remove patchy, discolored varnish, overpaint in the sky, and whitened retouchings along the tears. Scattered solvent damage was noted prior to cleaning, although the paint handling technique of this picture may also have produced thin mechanical abrasions. Under ultraviolet light, scattered areas of older varnish can be seen in the dark colors of the water and the boat. There are retouches along the tears and small retouches in the sky, especially above the main tear site, where paint may have been shattered when the canvas flexed when it was torn.

The ground layers appear to be off-white in color, with a thin red imprimatura. No underdrawing was discovered. Much of the image was either begun or finished using a palette knife, whose smooth-surfaced, thick-edged strokes are visible throughout the sky and the sea. Chatter marks indicate the knife had a tapered blade with a rounded tip. There seems to be a thick base of gray and white paint in the waves, which was then glazed using a dark transparent green. The gritty nature of this green can be seen where it passed less successfully over a thick white wave and wrinkled as the white paint below was not yet dry. The complex paint layering in the water and the presence of several vertical strokes seem unrelated to the final image. An X-radiograph did not reveal another image below the surface. The entire paint film technique looks fairly wet-into-wet. The boat was painted using brushes rather than the knife, with the masts and sails extending through the wet paint of the sky, and there are numerous brush bristles embedded throughout the surface.

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1. Mount 1958, p. 385. Mount also points out that the boat's sails are "partly reefed" in response to the approaching storm.
2. Strictly speaking, the horizon is a dark margin behind the line of light, indicating either shadowed sea or low-lying land beyond.
3. See, for example, W 22, 27, 37–41, 75, 77.
4. Schmit 1973, vol. 1, p. 85, no. 266; see also p. 97, no. 292.
5. Quoted in Thiébault-Sisson 1900: "C'est à lui [Jongkind] que je dois l'éducation définitive de mon oeil."
6. Hafting 1975, p. 168, no. 351. See also London–Williamstown 2007, pp. 85–87.
7. In House 1986a, p. 238n7, two other works from this period that were partly executed with a palette knife are cited as W 71 and 73. House points out that Monet was especially close to Courbet in 1866 and dates the Clark picture to that year. In addition, marks of the knife are evident in the application of clouds in *L'Hotel des Roches Noires, Trouville* (W 155).
8. For Monet's encounters with Courbet, see Wildenstein 1974–91, vol. 1, pp. 28, 31, 35, and 423 (letter 27) and Chu 1996, p. 266.
9. The distinctively smooth, flat strokes of the knife blade are visible in most areas of the paint surface, while a palette knife with a rounded point seems to have been used to apply the white foam. Most of the painting in the boat, however, suggests the softer action of a brush, while the rigging and other lines were painted with the point of a brush, some of it into still-wet color.

10. There are signs of over-painted forms in the sea below the boat and in the upper sail, where a pennant once flew; these changes are visible with the naked eye, and markedly so in raking light. Both the perilous, fast-moving subject and the nature of these technical modifications leave little doubt that the picture was executed over time in a studio, rather than on the spot.
11. RW vol. 1, 75–76, 78–79. The first three pictures are thought to have been shown at the Galerie Martinet in 1864 or 1865, as well as at Manet's 1867 exhibition on the Avenue de l'Alma. This latter exhibition opened in May, perhaps postdating the execution of *Seascape, Storm*. In 1866, Monet had been introduced to Manet and may have had additional contact with these works in his studio: see Wildenstein 1974–91, vol. 1, p. 32n227.
12. Two of Manet's pictures concerned the battle during the Civil War between the U.S. warships *Kearsage* and *Alabama*: see Rouart and Wildenstein 1975, vol. 1, p. 84, nos. 75 and 76.
13. W 73.
14. W 87. The picture carries the date 1870 and a dedication to Monet's friend Lafont, apparently added when it was given to the latter at the time of Monet's wedding. Though considerably more expansive in conception, the Norton Simon canvas is virtually the same size as *Seascape, Storm* and certain details—such as the principal wave—were virtually copied from one work to another, though the precedence is unclear.
15. The forceful form of Monet's signature in *Seascape, Storm*, with its pronounced, flowing horizontal bar and backward curling flourish to the vertical of the "t," is found on a number of works from 1866 and 1867, including the Norton Simon painting, but is generally replaced by a simpler style thereafter.
16. Douglas Cooper includes the Clark painting in a list of works that "may indeed have been bought from Reid." See Cooper 1954, pp. 64–65. Similarly, Frances Fowle also speculates that the painting "could conceivably have come from the exhibition of French paintings Reid held at La Société des Beaux Arts in December of 1898." See Fowle 2000, p. 99.
17. Provenance given in letter from Durand-Ruel, 4 Apr. 2005, in the Clark's curatorial file.
18. Frances Fowle states that the Clark painting was "almost certainly included in the 1889 Monet exhibition at the Goupil Gallery in London." See Edinburgh–Glasgow 2008–9, p. 69. The possible identification of this painting as number twelve of the catalogue is discussed in Fowle 2006, p. 149.
19. See Fowle 2000, p. 99, quoted in note 16.

223 | Street in Sainte-Adresse 1867

Oil on canvas, 80 x 59.2 cm
Lower left: Claude Monet
1955.523

During the summer of 1867, Monet lived and worked in the Normandy resort of Saint-Adresse, "a commune of 1554 inhabitants, situated four kilometers from Le Havre, in a small, lightly wooded valley," as it was described in the Joanne guide published the previous year.[1] He had spent much of his youth in the area and now stayed at a house on the Chemin des Phares in Sainte-Adresse, used during vacations by his aunt, where he toiled enthusiastically. On 25 June, a letter to Frédéric Bazille declared: "I've twenty or so canvases well underway, stunning seascapes, figures and gardens, something of everything in fact. Among my seascapes I'm painting the regattas at Le Havre with lots of people on the beach and the shipping lane covered with small sails. For the Salon I'm doing an enormous steamboat."[2] The canvases in question included some of his most confident and original landscapes to date, such as *The Beach at Sainte-Adresse* (The Art Institute of Chicago) and *Garden at Sainte-Adresse* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), both of them characterized by brilliant daylight and a limpidity of structure on a substantial scale.[3] At an unknown point in his visit, however, perhaps as the season declined, Monet's engagement with "something of everything" led him to a very different aspect of his surroundings. In *Street in Sainte-Adresse* he turned inland, tackling a rather unprepossessing cluster of buildings and walls, autumnal trees, and a modest thoroughfare close to the Chemin des Phares. Completing the transition, he substituted a vertical format for the horizontal canvases of his sea pictures, centering the composition on the dark spire of the nearby church and showing this curiously airless scene in dull, overcast weather.[4]

So extreme was Monet's change of priorities in *Street in Sainte-Adresse* that a number of hesitant attempts have been made to divine his motives. The reason for the long sojourn with his relatives was penury; by living cheaply and working hard, he hoped to make pictures that would please the dealers and collectors who had taken an interest in him, and to prepare ambitious works for public exhibition. In concentrating on "stunning seascapes" he also put himself at the mercy of the weather, but could scarcely