



**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

Nineteenth-Century European Paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute is published with the assistance of the Getty Foundation and support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



The Getty Foundation



Produced by the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute
225 South Street, Williamstown, Massachusetts 01267
www.clarkart.edu

Curtis R. Scott, Director of Publications
and Information Resources
Dan Cohen, Special Projects Editor
Katherine Pasco Frisina, Production Editor
Anne Roecklein, Managing Editor
Michael Agee, Photographer
Laurie Glover, Visual Resources
Julie Walsh, Program Assistant
Mari Yoko Hara and Michelle Noyer-Granacki,
Publications Interns

Designed by Susan Marsh
Composed in Meta by Matt Mayerchak
Copyedited by Sharon Herson
Bibliography edited by Sophia Wagner-Serrano
Index by Kathleen M. Friello
Proofread by June Cuffner
Production by The Production Department,
Whately, Massachusetts
Printed on 135 gsm Gardapat Kiara
Color separations and printing by Trifolio, Verona

© 2012 Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute
All rights reserved.

This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, including illustrations, in any form (beyond that copying permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law and except by reviewers for the public press), without written permission from the publishers.

Distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London
P. O. Box 209040, New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9040
www.yalebooks.com/art

Printed and bound in Italy
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

Nineteenth-century European paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute / 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. Rogl an, James Rosenow, Zo  Samels, Fronia E. Wissman.

volumes cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-935998-09-9 (clark hardcover : alk. paper) —

ISBN 978-0-300-17965-1 (yale hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Painting, European—19th century—Catalogs. 2. Painting—Massachusetts—Williamstown—Catalogs. 3. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute—Catalogs. I. Lees, Sarah, editor of compilation. II. Rand, Richard. III. Webber, Sandra L. IV. Title. V. Title: 19th-century European paintings at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

ND457.S74 2012

759.9409'0340747441—dc23

2012030510

Details:

TITLE PAGE: Camille Pissarro, *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf* (cat. 253)

OPPOSITE COPYRIGHT PAGE: Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Jane Avril* (cat. 331)

PRECEDING PAGE 474: Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Onions* (cat. 280)

PAGES 890–91: Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, *The Women of Amphisa* (cat. 3)



232

Adrien Moreau

French, 1843–1906

232 | Contemplation 1873

Oil on canvas, 65.1 x 38 cm

Lower right: ADRIEN-MOREAU. / 73

1955.1031

On a country path beside a pond stands a young woman dressed in the latest fashions, wearing a highly elaborate dress with clear echoes of the costume of the 1760s and 1770s, a nostalgic style popular a century later.¹ With her left hand on a fence, she pauses for a moment and looks down toward the water, while with her right hand, she raises the hem of her flounced dress to reveal a glimpse of her petticoat. Beyond the setting and her expression, the picture contains no obvious clue to a potential narrative. It is not known whether the title that the picture now bears, *Contemplation*, is its original one; if so, the hint is that the woman has paused for thought and reverie, and the viewer is invited to imagine where her thoughts might be straying. It is possible, however, that this is the canvas exhibited at the Salon in 1874 with the title *Waiting*, although no reviews have come to light of this painting, so its identity cannot be determined; with a title such as this, a potential romantic narrative would become more explicit.

The contrast between the figure, in her elaborate artificial costume, and her natural surroundings is striking; she has strayed far from her everyday habitat. The ducks on the pond seem to look up with interest at this apparition, as she looks down into their space, while at lower left a patch of brambles suggests a more uncomfortable encounter. A comparable contrast between the natural world and a fashionably dressed figure is set up in Heilbuth's *Woman with Flowers* (cat. 170), painted at about the same time; in Moreau's painting, though, there is no sign of human habitation in the background. The figure is surrounded by the lavishness of natural growth—a far cry from the artificial elaboration of her clothing and appearance.

This contrast is accentuated by the handling of paint. The plants and trees are notated in crisp, deft strokes that emphasize their tangled forms and contrasting textures without recourse to illusionistic detail, whereas the figure is treated with considerable delicacy, her clothing modeled in non-assertive

4. *Times* 1866, p. 10.
5. Colvin 1870, p. 4.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
8. Godwin 1866, p. 757.
9. For reproductions of *A Palm Fan, Apples, Beads, and A Sofa*, see Asleson 2000, pp. 128, 130–32.
10. Monkhouse 1885, p. 195. Ten years prior to Monkhouse, John Ruskin had compared Moore's technique with that of the smooth surfaces of Alma-Tadema. See Ruskin 1903–12, vol. 14, pp. 272–73.
11. Moore's first biographer and cataloguer, Alfred Lys Baldry, cites "purely personal" reasons for the artist's exclusion from official acceptance." See Baldry 1893, p. 23.
12. Wedmore 1893, p. 436.

touches quite unlike the busily active marks around her. Though relatively small in scale, this is clearly a highly finished canvas, of a type that would have found a ready outlet on the commercial art market, whether or not it appeared in any formal exhibition during the period. JH

PROVENANCE [N. Mitchell, London, sold to Clark, 24 Sept. 1935]; Robert Sterling Clark (1935–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Williamstown–Hartford 1974, no. 52, ill.; Williamstown 1979b, no cat.

REFERENCES None

TECHNICAL REPORT The support is a finely woven pre-primed canvas (25 threads/cm), with a darkened glue lining onto coarser fabric (16 thread/cm). The five-member stretcher may be original, and is cracked at the crossbar join. The lining is early enough to have prevented stretcher creases from forming and dates before the time of export, which occurred some time after 1935. While most of the tacking margins were removed, part of the right fold-over is now added to the surface dimension. All the impastos are moated from the pressure of lining the image face down, with cracked paint around the more serious depressions. Some higher paint strokes are melted from the heat used in the lining. A slight bulge occurs in the lining at the face of the sitter, and there are age cracks throughout the paint and ground. The present, thinly applied natural resin varnish is slightly yellowed. Inspection of the surface shows only small traces of an earlier varnish, and only a little solvent damage in the trees. The surface sheen varies with the paint brushwork.

The lower ground is an off-white commercial layer which extends to the cut edges of the original canvas. The artist may have also applied a thin white layer that, like the image, stops short of the edges in precise lines. This may suggest that the canvas was taped flat to a board while the artist painted. This upper layer has a diagonal striated texture to its application. There is no evidence of either underdrawing, except a long anomalous vertical line through the cheek of the woman, or of paint changes. Thin gray paint lines may lie below the final colors. It appears that the landscape was painted before the figure and then refined around the woman. Sgraffito lines delineate the thin tree branches and individual blades of grass. The hat ribbons appear to be done in black ink, and some thin dark tree lines may also be done in brown and black inks.

1. Observation by Professor Aileen Ribeiro; personal communication with the author.

233 | The Proposal 1878

Oil on canvas, 59.9 x 81.8 cm

Lower right: ADRIEN_MOREAU: 1878.

Gift of the Children of Mrs. E. Parmalee Prentice
1962.151

Genre scenes presented in period costume found a ready market, in France and in the United States, during the 1860s and 1870s. Such images might be treated in nostalgic terms or as quaint comedies, but, in both cases, what was presented was a clearly intelligible world in which everyone knew his or her place. Paintings of this sort were also opportunities for artists to demonstrate their skills in the reconstruction of historical costumes and attributes—in this case, the clothing of the reign of Louis XIII in the 1620s and 1630s. Alongside his historical genre scenes, Moreau specialized in picturesque scenes of peasant life, as well as contemporary fashionable genre subjects such as *Contemplation* (cat. 232).

Moreau's *The Proposal* offers elements of both romance and comedy. The viewer is invited to empathize with the young couple on the right—with his attentiveness or with her reaction as she turns away from him with seeming nonchalance to pluck a rose. At the same time, the expression of the older man seated at the table looking across to the young couple has a mixture of curiosity and prurience that introduces a somewhat different register of response. The setting is evidently very prosperous, and a substantial house can be glimpsed through the trees on the right.

It has been suggested that this might be the canvas exhibited as *The Silver Wedding* (*Les Noces d'argent*) at the Salon in 1879.¹ To the contrary, the description of this canvas in the review of the exhibition in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* corresponds closely to another painting by Moreau known from photographs.² Although the present picture is elaborate and highly finished, no evidence has come to light about its early exhibition history. JH

PROVENANCE John D. Rockefeller Sr., New York (until 1919, given to Prentice); Alta Rockefeller Prentice (Mrs. E. Parmalee Prentice), his daughter, New York and Williamstown (1919–d. 1962); Prentice heirs, by descent, given to the Clark; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1962.

EXHIBITIONS Williamstown–Hartford 1974, no. 51, ill.; Williamstown 1979b, no cat.