



**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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Details:

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

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

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.

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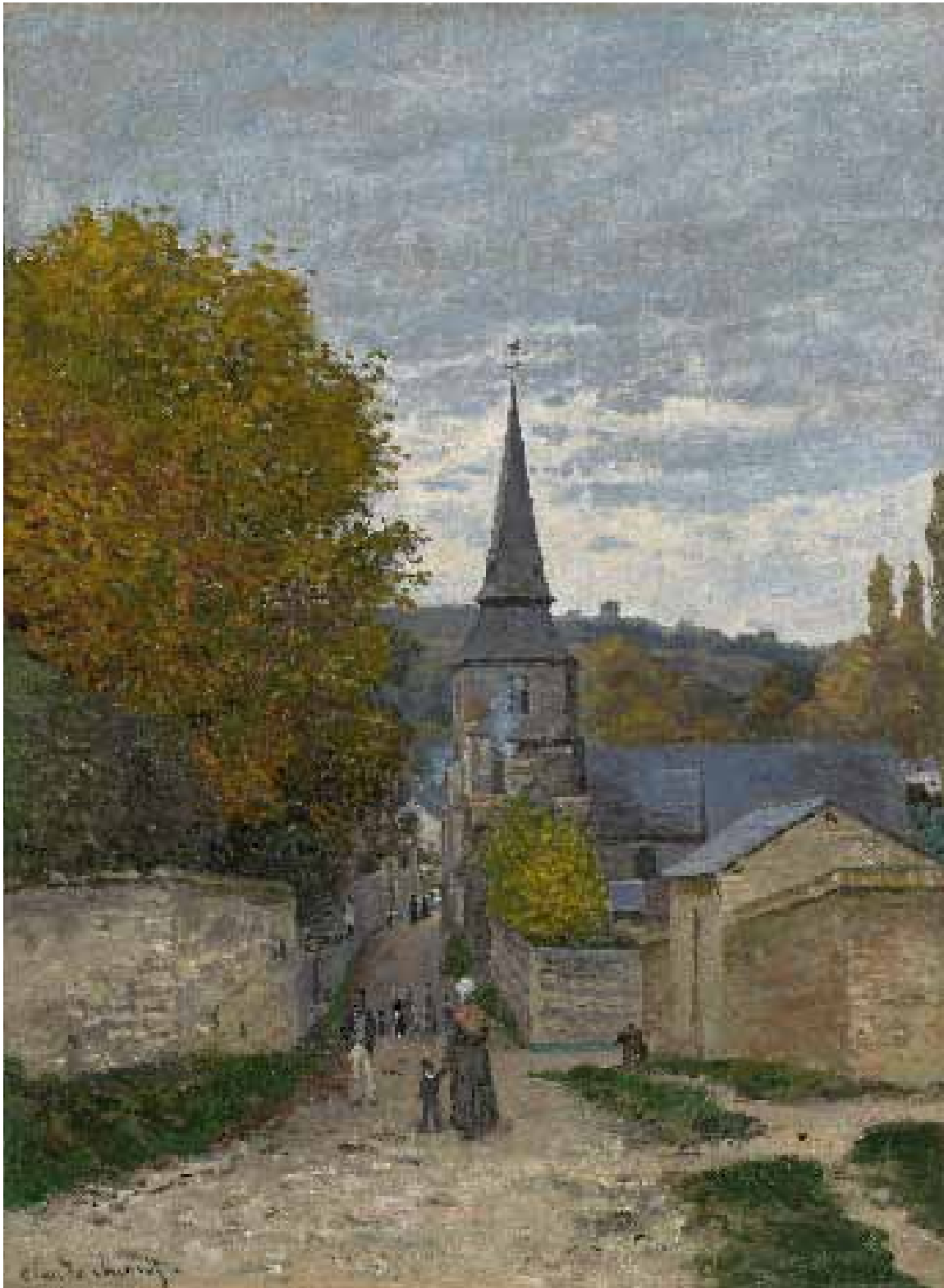
Oil on canvas, 80 x 59.2 cm

Lower left: Claude Monet

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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



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afford to be idle when the light was bad. On these occasions he may well have opted for more immediate local views and hoped to attract other kinds of patrons, though the suggestion that *Street in Sainte-Adresse* was itself intended for the Paris Salon is surely far-fetched.⁵ Personal considerations were also pressing. Monet's future wife, Camille Doncieux,

had yet to be acknowledged by his parents and was alone and heavily pregnant in Paris, giving birth to their son Jean in early August. Though he was clearly preoccupied during these months, the proposal that the young mother and child with their backs toward us in the Clark canvas were linked to his private crisis is almost certainly erroneous, in this instance based

on incorrect information about the picture's site and date.⁶ Coincidentally or otherwise, Monet's acquaintance Guy de Maupassant was to set his novel *Pierre et Jean*, which also hinged around a family crisis over a son born out of wedlock, in this very location some two decades later.

The primary attraction of the motif in *Street in Sainte-Adresse* for the twenty-six-year-old Monet may have been compositional, even technical. There is something defiant about his choice, as if the largely symmetrical arrangement of these buildings and the prosaic nature of the human traffic under oppressive light offered a challenge to his emerging skills. When he had embarked on a comparable subject three years earlier, in his two versions of the *Rue de la Bavolle at Honfleur* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Kunsthalle, Mannheim), bright sunshine threw the street into relief, intensifying its colors and heightening the tactility of rooftops and façades.⁷ In the Clark composition he explored the opposite possibility, restricting his palette to a range of cool tones and accepting the flattening of space that resulted. Much of Monet's energy was now directed at pattern and surface, in the alternation of dark patches of foliage with the pale road, modulations of brushwork from one wall to another, and the subtly shifting values of the sky. A limited suggestion of depth was created through changes of focus, notably in the distinction between the crisply defined edge of the steeple in the middle ground and the relative diffuseness of both distance and nearby road.⁸ The initial process of painting appears to have been rapid and direct, presumably carried out in the open air, though close examination suggests a more complex subsequent history (see Technical Report).

Two further elements should be considered in Monet's selection and handling of this scene. The first is his decision to juxtapose the man-made and the natural—the latter in the controlled form of trees and gardens—a theme played out in three grander canvases undertaken in Paris the previous spring and one he was to exploit repeatedly after the end of the decade.⁹ In *Street in Sainte-Adresse* the effect seems quaint, until we learn from Joanne that the streets of the town were “very irregularly built, noisy, dirty, as disagreeable to the sense of smell as to sight and during the warm days of summer half stifling with thick swirls of loathsome dust.”¹⁰ The church itself was so undistinguished that it barely merited a mention and was to be demolished a decade later.¹¹ The scene, in

other words, was commonplace and squalid rather than charming, offering only the most banal of social contexts and picturesque detail to a local painter like Monet. It was thus consistent with his recent pictures of harbors, farmyards, and working boats—such as the roughly contemporary *Seascape, Storm* (cat. 222)—and with a number of anonymous cottages and lanes in the next decade, the successful realization of which required the full resources of his pictorial ingenuity. In this sense, the second unexplored feature of the Clark canvas—the perspective of the street itself—became crucial to its success. Dipping erratically downward and away from the viewer, and finally bending awkwardly out of sight, the street presented Monet with several challenges, among them the “irregular” structures and unpaved roads deplored by Joanne. Compositionally, however, it brought animation to this humble local motif, cutting into the flatness and suggesting complexity beyond. It also offered a severe test of Monet's practical mastery, which was here stretched to the limit by the challenge of converging orthogonals and shifting planes, and perhaps discouraged him from similar intricacies in the future.¹² Though he would often return to the central perspective and the receding road, it was colleagues such as Paul Cézanne and Camille Pissarro who were to apply themselves successfully to such multiple levels, overlapping structures, and their pictorial consequences in succeeding years.¹³ RK

PROVENANCE Browne, Paris; [Étienne Bignou, Paris]; [probably Galerien Thannhauser (Justin K. Thannhauser), Berlin, by 1928]; Josef Stransky, New York (by 1931–d. 1936);¹⁴ Estate of Josef Stransky (1936—at least 1945); [Wildenstein, New York]; André Meyer, New York; [Knoedler, New York, sold to Clark, 5 May 1952, as *Rue à Fécamp*]; Robert Sterling Clark (1952–1955); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Berlin 1928, no. 22, ill., as *Strasse in Fécamp*; London 1936a, no. 8, as *Rue à Fécamp*; New York 1945, no. 11, ill., as *Rue à Fécamp*, lent by Josef Stransky Estate; New York 1950, no cat.; Williamstown 1956a, no. 119, pl. 36, as *Rue à Fécamp*; New York 1967, no. 24, as *Street in Fécamp*; Chicago 1975, p. 72, no. 18, ill., as *Street in Fécamp*; Williamstown 1985c, no cat.; Manchester and others 1991–92, pp. 194, 197, 229, no. 94, ill.; Tokyo–Nagoya–Hiroshima 1994, p. 96, no. 7, ill.; London–Boston 1995–96, pp. 184–85, no. 60, ill.; San Francisco–Raleigh–Cleveland 2006–7, pp. 43, 64–65, no. 7, ill.

REFERENCES Flint 1931, pp. 88, 92, ill., as *Rue à Fécamp*; Cott 1933, p. 152, as *Rue à Fécamp*; Malingue 1943, pp. 22,

43, 145, ill., as *Rue à Fécamp*; Comstock 1950, p. 47, ill., as *Rue à Fécamp*; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, no. 88, ill.; Mount 1966, pp. 181, 410; Champa 1973, p. 14, fig. 15, as *Street in Fécamp*; Wildenstein 1974–91, vol. 1, pp. 164–65, no. 98, ill.; Tucker 1995, p. 26, pl. 35; Wildenstein 1996, vol. 2, pp. 51–52, no. 98, ill., as *Street in Sainte-Adresse*; Shimada and Sakagami 2001, vol. 1, fig. 23; Kendall 2006, p. 134, pl. 21.

TECHNICAL REPORT The support is a coarse, medium-weight linen (approximately 13 threads/cm), glue-lined to a finer canvas (19 threads/cm) and mounted to a six-member mortise-and-tenon stretcher. All four tacking margins (each 1.3 cm wide) are now incorporated as part of the surface dimension. The lining is probably no older than the early twentieth century. The vertical threads are more emphasized on the surface, possibly due to the lining process. Very wide traction cracks throughout the surface are particularly noticeable in the sky, where a deep pavement-like network has formed. Large portions of the image, including nearly all of the foreground walls and building façades, have been reworked in oil paint, which partially fills in some of these traction cracks. The overpaint also adjusts colors and details along the horizon, the steeple, the tree to the right of the bell tower, and parts of the roadway. The pigments in these overpainted areas are more finely ground than the underlying colors, suggesting a later date and possibly a restorer's work. There are also age cracks running up through the reworkings from the paint below, however, which suggests that they have considerable age. It is therefore possible that Monet, rather than a restorer, reworked the image. There are old flake losses at the edges, which were filled prior to a 1979 treatment, and the paint at the extreme edges is being disrupted by the gum adhesive on the brown paper tape. There are no old varnish residues and the present Acryloid B-72 coating does not yet fluoresce, although small retouches from the 1979 treatment are distinguishable.

The ground appears to be an off-white color, and is likely a commercially applied layer. There was no underdrawing detected with either infrared equipment or microscope examination. The paint is applied in a controlled manner, having low, evenly distributed impastos throughout the surface. Brushes ranging from 0.6 to 1.3 cm in width were employed, which left scattered white bristles in the paint. In the original paint layer, some of the sky brushstrokes were painted around the steeple, but trees and horizon foliage extend out over the sky color, possibly suggesting the painting sequence. Although most of the lower paint layer was applied wet-into-wet, some highlights were added after the paint had set in the trees and on the green in the foreground. The X-radiograph shows dark traction cracks in the sky, and alterations to the image in the group of sheds on the right. The figure of the foremost walking man was once as large as the woman, and was originally painted in a reserve space. The more distant figures were not recorded by the X-radiograph.

1. Joanne 1866, p. 105: "commune de 1554 hab., située à 4 kil. du Havre, dans un petit vallon un peu boisé."
2. Claude Monet to Frédéric Bazille, 25 June 1867, in Wildenstein 1974–91, vol. 1, pp. 423–24, letter 33; translation from Kendall 1989, p. 24. Monet's address and his account of this stay are in Wildenstein 1974–91, vol. 1, pp. 423–24, letters 33–38.
3. W 92 and W 95.
4. Since at least the 1920s, the picture was known as *Street in Fécamp*; its correct location and the identification of the principal building as the church of Sainte-Adresse were established beyond doubt in the 1979–80 correspondence between John Brooks, Associate Director of the Clark, and the mayors of the respective French towns. Some earlier documentary images of the church were discovered at the same time. The same spire appears to be distantly visible in another, smaller Monet canvas of the town from this period (W 97).
5. Manchester and others 1991–92, p. 194. Monet's frustration with changing weather and the resulting need to find new motifs was a frequent refrain in his letters.
6. Charles Merrill Mount believed that the picture showed the church at Octeville, where Camille and Jean lived briefly in 1869. See Mount 1966, pp. 180–81, 410.
7. W 33 and W 34.
8. Though this area was much affected by the modifications discussed in the Technical Report, the silhouette of the steeple seems always to have been sharp.
9. W 83–85.
10. Joanne 1866, p. 105: "de maisons très-irrégulièrement bâties, bruyant, malpropre, aussi désagréable à l'odorat qu'à la vue, et par les chaudes journées de l'été, à demi étouffé dans d'épais tourbillons d'une poussière infecte."
11. Information supplied by the mayor of Sainte-Adresse indicates that the church was demolished in 1878. See the correspondence referred to in note 4 above.
12. A simple analysis of the depiction of these buildings shows that, unless they were highly eccentric structures, their orthogonals were not made to converge correctly. A curiosity of the picture's history is that it was loosely "copied" by Maurice Utrillo in a horizontal painting of c. 1936 entitled *Church of Eragny*. See Pétridiès 1959–74, vol. 3, pp. 158–59, no. 1714.
13. Such subjects became a virtual obsession with Cézanne between 1867 and 1873; see, for example, Rewald 1996, nos. 131, 133–34, 185, 187–98, 202. For comparable works by Pissarro, see PDR 112, 121, 127, 145, 181.
14. Cott 1933, p. 147, stated that the Stransky collection would be on loan to the Worcester Art Museum for eighteen months, from winter 1933 to 1934.