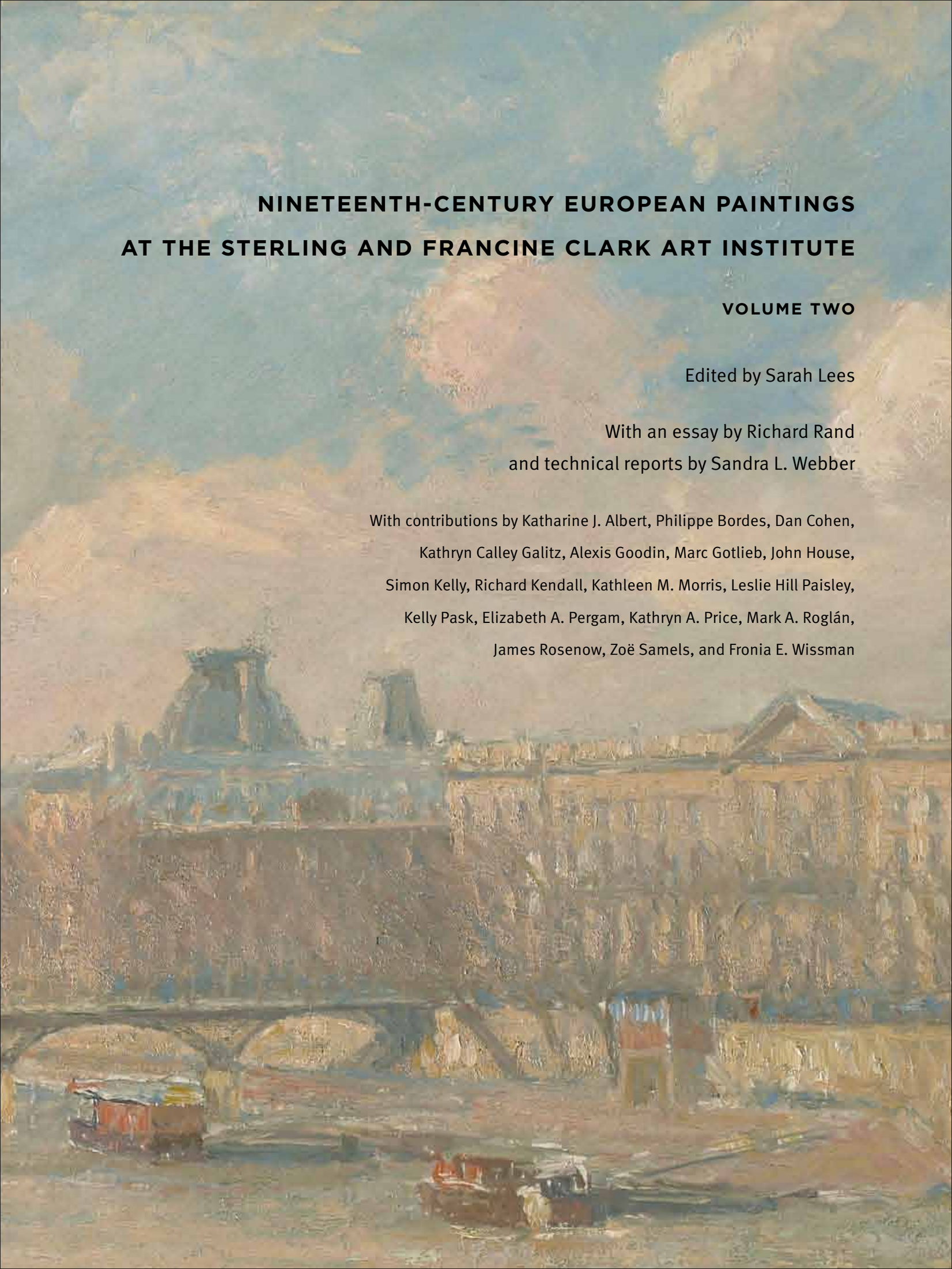

NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS AT THE STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE

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


ART WORKS.
arts.gov

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

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Production by The Production Department,
Whately, Massachusetts
Printed on 135 gsm Gardapat Kiara
Color separations and printing by Trifolio, Verona

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. Roglán, James Rosenow, Zoë 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 Amphissa* (cat. 3)

1. Rivière 1877; reprinted in Berson 1996, vol. 1, pp. 182–83: "beaux paysages, si calmes et si pleins de cette espèce de religiosité campagnarde qui couvre d'une teinte mélancolique les champs de verdure."
2. See Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93.
3. Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. xv.
4. See Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 1, pp. 238–39, and vol. 4, p. 64.
5. Camille Pissarro to Lucien Pissarro, 19 Apr. 1895; reprinted in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 4, p. 64: "tableaux très travaillés."
6. Camille Pissarro to Lucien Pissarro, 26 May and 1 June 1895; reprinted in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 4 pp. 75, 78: "très emballé"; "l'insaisissable nuance des effets"; "une unité superbe que j'ai tant cherchée."
7. Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. 3. See also Pissarro 1990, p. 14.
8. Camille Pissarro to Lucien Pissarro, 20 Jan. 1896; reprinted in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 4, p. 153: "une très belle vue sur le port."
9. For Pissarro's persistent eye problems, see Marmor and Ravin 2009, pp. 149–51.
10. Camille Pissarro to Lucien Pissarro, 2 Oct. 1896; reprinted in Bailly-Herzberg, vol. 4, p. 266: "beaux comme Venise."
11. The role of the timber stacks in the painting's perspective is somewhat unclear. Given the horizontal form of the ship and quayside, it appears that the viewer confronts the scene centrally and directly. Placed at the center of this grid-like arrangement, the timber—if stacked at right angles to the ship—would normally be expected to align vertically in the pictorial design.
12. For Pissarro and Anarchism, see Williamstown–San Francisco 2011–12.

253 | **The Louvre from the Pont Neuf** 1902

Oil on canvas, 60.8 x 92.5 cm
Lower left: C. Pissarro. 1902
1955.558

"Since I've been in Paris, unable to go out, I've been able to work from my window incessantly; I've had winter effects that charmed me in their finesse; the view of the Louvre on the Seine is an absolutely exquisite and captivating subject."[1] Written in December 1902, the year he signed and dated *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf*, these remarks are characteristic of many made by Pissarro during his long professional life.[2] Here is his commitment to sustained labor and the frustration he felt when prevented from working in the open air; his delight in light, color, and atmosphere, and the "effects" associated with the seasons; and Pissarro's still evolving appetite—shared with Monet, Sisley, and others at the fin de siècle—for a sustained encounter with one site or motif. The Clark painting is the sumptuous outcome of these and other preoccupations, its surface patiently woven from countless touches of the brush, each touch the result of a new perception of the scene at a particular moment in the year and of the developing challenge of his composition. "Finesse" perfectly describes the refinement of the surface, in which milky whites and ochers, and hints of pink and steel blue, are subtly juxtaposed throughout this tapestry-like expanse. One of more than forty variants on his "view of the Louvre on the Seine" made during several sojourns in Paris between 1900 and 1903, it also belongs firmly with Pissarro's commitment to the "series"—as he frequently called them—at the end of his career.[3]

Useful though this approach to *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf* can be, it overlooks as many aspects of the picture as it describes. Prominent among the issues raised by such late works are the changing, even historically contradictory, priorities of Pissarro's art in this final phase. His identity as a painter was first defined in the 1860s when he emerged as an obscure follower of Corot and Daubigny, exhibiting "rudimentary" canvases of country life with some of the "roughness of the Spaniards," in the words of the young Odilon Redon.[4] Preferring to work in the open air, Pissarro also took issue with the mannered studio procedures of the day and the exaggerated levels of respect for art in the great museums, reportedly calling for the burning down of the Louvre itself.[5] A stalwart of the Impressionist group in the 1870s and 1880s, he was to broaden his sensitivity to the landscape and develop a more supple and informed technique, but it was not until his sixties that he found material success, notably in the cycles based on French cities that he painted with the encouragement of his dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel. Yet another shift is represented by the sequence to which *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf* belongs, whose serene spaces and delicate tones have suggested to one commentator an "aesthetic caress" of the nation's capital.[6] Where the angry young Pissarro once imagined the Louvre in flames, his older self could now see this same building as "absolutely exquisite."

In an immediate sense, Pissarro's paintings of Rouen and Paris form part of a rich, almost volup-

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tuous, late flowering of certain major strands within Impressionism. As with Sisley at Moret-sur-Loing and Monet in front of Rouen Cathedral, Pissarro brought the experience of several decades of remorseless observation and bravura paint-handling to a single, gently emerging task. Some of the accounts of Pissarro working on his series pictures emphasize this element of continuity, as he still chafed against fluctuations in the weather and longed to "set up my easel outdoors, after a winter of confinement."[7] Another witness recalls how he began each work by establishing "the harmony between the sky on one hand, and earth and water on the other,"[8] and Pissarro himself evoked his attempts "to render as well as possible this silvery atmosphere of Paris," a phrase that might have been coined for the Clark canvas.[9] Some reports point to specific developments in his practice at this period: Pissarro remarked to his son Ludovic-Rodolphe that even one modest canvas might require "six or seven sessions" and indicated on another occasion his willingness to rework half-finished paintings from previous visits to the city.[10] This cumulative process, in which he advanced over time from the establishment of a general tonal structure to the local, often highly detailed refinement of a scene, is evident in *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf*, where broad brush marks were allowed to dry in certain areas before more precise strokes were superimposed upon them. In place of the rawness and rapidity once associated with Impressionism, Pissarro had clearly embraced deliberation.

This carefully pondered attitude to the Paris series began with his choice of site. In 1899, Pissarro rented premises overlooking the garden of the Tuileries, at the opposite end of the Louvre, where he opted to paint the lawns, trees, and sandy walkways beneath his windows. A few of these compositions included the central courtyard of the celebrated museum, but it was not until his next project that he tackled the even grander public face it presented to the city. Early in 1900, Pissarro took an apartment on a short street leading from the Place Dauphine, situated at the extreme western tip of the Île de la Cité, close to the Pont Neuf.[11] From here, he could look over the corner of the raised terrace on the bridge itself and across the Seine to the fragile form of the Pont des Arts in the distance, with the imposing length of the Louvre façade spread out beyond. Altering his angle of view remarkably little, Pissarro painted canvas after canvas of this scene, returning to explore its panoramic challenges in both spring and winter conditions.

In Pissarro's vision of the city represented by the Clark picture, it is possible to see the Louvre as merely "part of the fabric" of Paris.[12] It remains difficult, however, not to understand this image as a personal reckoning of some kind. As with any landscape painting, what is excluded must be weighed against what

is emphasized or partly suppressed. In their masterful study of the series canvases, Richard Brettell and Joachim Pissarro point out that the artist disregarded most of the modern and commercial features visible from his apartment, such as the Samaritaine department store on the right bank and the Hôtel des Monnaies (part of the national mint) to his left.[13] While it might be argued that contemporary reality is very evident in his other metropolitan sequences of these years, and that vestiges even appear in the straggling sightseers and tourist boats in the Clark vista, the tranquility of the Louvre pictures still remains surprising at this date. During the 1890s, Pissarro had been wounded by family tragedy and outraged by the events of the Dreyfus case, all unfolding against the corruption, excess, and turbulence evoked in the novel entitled *Paris*, published in 1898 by his friend Émile Zola.[14] Now working quietly at the Place Dauphine, such human concerns seem to have retreated as the elderly artist brooded on the site of his youthful struggles, on the great art collection with which he had finally come to terms, and on the span of history summarized in the former royal palace of the Louvre.[15] Completed in the year that Zola died, *The Louvre from the Pont Neuf* has been well described as "curiously anti-modern," while allowing the viewer to "reflect on the subject of painting itself" in the hands of an admired master, who was thoughtfully recapitulating his own life's achievement.[16] RK

PROVENANCE Pieter Van der Velde, Le Havre (until c. 1917);[17] [Paul Rosenberg, Paris, by 1917];[18] Marquis C. de Rochecouste, Paris, sold to Wisselingh, 1929; [E. J. van Wisselingh & Co., Amsterdam, 1929–37, sold to A. Raiss];[19] A. Raiss, from 1937; Mrs. Grossi, Cairo; Virginia R. Popper, New York, sold to Knoedler, 25 Feb. 1950; [Knoedler, New York, sold to Clark, 31 Mar. 1950]; Robert Sterling Clark (1950–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

EXHIBITIONS Amsterdam 1929, no. 42; Rotterdam 1930, no. 57, ill., as *De Pont Neuf te Parijs*; London 1930c, no cat., lent by Wisselingh;[20] Amsterdam 1932, no. 86, ill., as *Le Pont Neuf à Paris*; Amsterdam 1933, no. 23, as *Le Pont Neuf à Paris*; Ottawa–Toronto–Montreal 1934, not in cat. (not exhibited in Ottawa);[21] Brussels 1935, no. 60, ill., as *Le Pont Neuf à Paris*, lent by Wisselingh; Amsterdam 1936, no. 40, ill.; Williamstown 1956a, no. 121, pl. 38; New York 1967, no. 30; Williamstown 1980a, no cat.; Williamstown 1987–88, no cat.; Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. 133, no. 97, ill., as *The Raised Terrace of the Pont-Neuf*.

REFERENCES Landau 1930, p. 64, ill., as *Le Pont Neuf, Paris*; L'Impressionnisme 1935, pp. 15, 26–27, ill.; Pissarro and Venturi 1939, vol. 1, p. 250, no. 1219, vol. 2, pl. 239, no. 1219, ill., as *Terre-plein du Pont-Neuf*; Courthion 1957, p. 55, ill., as *The Louvre and the Pont Neuf*; Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute 1963, no. 95, ill.; Young 1967, p. 382; Hamilton 1970, p. 102, pl. 90; Willis 1973, vol. 3, ill. on cover; Hamilton 1984, p. 223, fig. 85; Stevens 1992, p. 278, fig. 1; Erickson 2005, pp. 232–34; Pissarro and Durand-Ruel Snollaerts 2005, vol. 3, p. 868, no. 1419, as *The Louvre, Morning Sunlight (Second Series)*; Williamstown–New York 2006–7, p. 104.

TECHNICAL REPORT The original support is a fine-weight linen having a weave of 28 threads/cm. In 2009, a heavy double glue-paste lining was removed due to air pockets that had formed between the artist's fabric and the two lining fabrics. The six-member mortise-and-tenon stretcher is a replacement from the time of the glue linings. During treatment, the canvas reverse showed marks indicating the original stretcher had been narrower and had a single crossbar. Old disturbed paint in the upper left sky and small losses in the lower right corner may have been the reason for the earlier lining. Once the linings were removed, three marks were recorded on the reverse, including a stamp for the color merchant P. Contet in Paris. The painting was contact-lined using a lightweight Belgian linen and Beva 371, and minor inpainting was added to the surface, which had been cleaned in 1981.

Very little of the ground layer is visible due to the thick paint application. The prominent verticals of the canvas weave can be seen in the lower right where the paint skips along the tops of threads. A simple layout in charcoal is visible under infrared light. Dark lines can also be seen in numerous areas, and close examination of the building reveals lines visible to the naked eye, lying below thinner paint passages. Under magnification, charcoal particles can be seen sprinkled at the edges of paint strokes, where the brush picked up the loose charcoal medium. Although the paint is thick, the impastos are not particularly high, and all are in good condition. Most of the surface is constructed with thick, paste-like strokes, except for several detail areas, which are more fluidly painted, including the small foreground figures and the right-most boat. Nearly all the paint is applied wet-into-wet with stiff brushes, except for some of the tree branches at the left of the image, which were painted after the lower layers had set. Some purplish blue strokes in the foreground have a grittier consistency, as if the artist added some powered pigment to this color.

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1. Camille Pissarro to Julius Elias, 17 Dec. 1902, in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 5, p. 294, letter 1977: "Depuis que je suis à Paris, ne pouvant sortir, j'ai pu travailler de ma fenêtre avec rage; j'ai eu des effets d'hiver qui m'ont charmé par leur finesse; la vue du Louvre sur la Seine est un thème tout à fait exquis et captivant."
2. It is unclear whether the Clark picture was completed during Pissarro's stay in Paris in early 1902, or when he returned in November and December of that same year.
3. For Pissarro's references to his series from this site, see,

for example, Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 5, p. 165. Alongside his panoramic views of the subject, Pissarro also painted a sequence of smaller canvases at this same site, concentrating on the raised terrace of the Pont Neuf (visible at left in the present work) with its statue of Henri IV: see also note 15 below.

4. Cited in Shikes and Harper 1980, p. 75.
5. Doran 2001, p. 91.
6. Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. xxxii.
7. Camille Pissarro to Lucien Pissarro, 1 Apr. 1902, in Bailly-Herzberg, vol. 5, p. 231, letter 1892: "planter mon chevalet en plein air, après un hiver de claustration." While painting this series, Pissarro was encouraged to stay indoors by the eye problems that continued to trouble him.
8. La Villehervé 1904; translation from Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. xlix.
9. Camille Pissarro to Henry Duhem, 21 Mar. 1902, in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 5, p. 226, letter 1887: "rendre le mieux possible cette atmosphère argentée de Paris."
10. Camille Pissarro to Ludovic-Rodolphe Pissarro, 28 June 1903, in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 5, p. 347, letter 2028: "six ou sept séances". On his reworking half-finished paintings, see Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 5, p. 271.
11. Formerly considered part of the Place Dauphine itself, this street has been renamed rue Henri Robert. Pissarro's apartment was at no. 28, on the north side.
12. Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. xxxii.
13. Ibid., pp. xxi–xxxii.
14. In this decade, Pissarro's eldest son Lucien suffered a stroke and his third son, Félix, died.
15. Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. xxix, Brettell indicates that numerous references to the Old Masters during this period suggest that the artist made regular visits to the nearby Louvre. A muted continuation of Pissarro's political concerns may be implied in the parallel series of canvases made at the Place Dauphine that feature the statue of Henri IV, the king who established religious tolerance in France.
16. Dallas–Philadelphia–London 1992–93, p. xxix.
17. Rodolphe Walter states that Van der Velde sold some paintings from his collection "after the war of 1914–18," and that at his death in Feb. 1922, he owned fourteen Pissarro paintings, but he does not specifically mention this work; see Walter 1968, p. 204.
18. According to information in the Paul Rosenberg Archives, this painting had been acquired by 1917, based on a list of works photographed (The Paul Rosenberg Archives, a gift of Elaine and Alexandre Rosenberg. The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York).
19. According to Pissarro and Durand-Ruel Snollaerts 2005, vol. 3, p. 868.
20. See Landau 1930, p. 64.
21. According to Amsterdam 1936, the present work was included in the last two venues of the exhibition, though it is not listed in the catalogue.

Ivan Pavlovich Pokitonow

Russian, 1851–1923

254 | **Landscape** 1887

Oil on panel, 10.9 x 26.7 cm
Lower right: I Pokitonow. 1887
1955.830

This miniature landscape is the work of Russian-born artist Ivan Pavlovich Pokitonow. Self-taught, he first showed work in a Geneva gallery in 1872, to much critical acclaim. Although he returned to his hometown, Matrionovka, in the Chersonesus Province (now Kherson, Ukraine), after this exhibition to run the family business, he continued to paint landscapes and images of everyday life in rural Russia, generally on the same diminutive scale as the Clark picture. In 1877, he moved to Paris to further his artistic ambitions, working in the studio of painter and printmaker Eugène Carrière (1849–1906). Pokitonow also belonged to numerous artistic societies and exhibited routinely at the Paris Salon.[1]

This painting is typical of many Pokitonow landscapes, with its delicate brushwork and luminous surface. Under the wide expanse of a cloud-strewn sky, the artist depicts a verdant meadow that gently rises to meet the horizon. A church with one towering steeple is prominent left of center; to the right sits a large farmhouse. Both buildings are partially obscured by fruit and fir trees. Shrubs and trees are scattered on either side of the meadow in the foreground. A winding footpath can be traced from the lower left of the panel through the center of the painting. Two figures, easily overlooked, walk along this path, one in the meadow, the other near a clump of trees at the horizon.

Passages of the panel, such as the clouds in the sky and the grass of the field, are quickly worked, with loose, relatively broad brushstrokes, reminiscent of the handling of Barbizon painters like Camille Corot. The branches of the trees in the field and the towering deciduous trees to the left of the church, behind a long gray wall, however, are articulated with a much finer brush. In the lower right corner, one detects brushwork so delicate it might be mistaken for the work of a very fine pen. Indeed, parts of the preliminary sketch made in pen have been left visible in the final painting.[2] The small panel contains a pleasing mixture of crisp painting and loose brushwork. The church and its steeple