



**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,  
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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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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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> The small panel contains a pleasing mixture of crisp painting and loose brushwork. The church and its steeple





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are precisely rendered, sharply in focus, in contrast to the gauzy handling of the trees just before the monument. The dexterity of Pokitonow's hand is apparent in this fluid combination of brushwork, as well as in the fact that very little of the painting is reworked.

Robert Sterling Clark first encountered this work when it was on view at the American Art Association's Anderson Galleries, the day before it was auctioned. Working with William Holston, the American representative for Durand-Ruel in New York, Clark set a bidding limit for this work at \$100, describing it as "a tiny nice bright landscape" in his diary.<sup>3</sup> Clark and Holston were successful in securing both the Pokitonow landscape and Claude Monet's *Cliffs at Étretat* (cat. 226), which was offered at the same sale. AG

**PROVENANCE** Mrs. William Stursberg (until 1933, sale, American Art Association, New York, 26 Oct. 1933, no. 3, as *Miniature Landscape*, sold to Durand-Ruel as agent for Clark); [Durand-Ruel, New York, sold to Clark, 30 Oct. 1933]; Robert Sterling Clark (1933–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1955.

**EXHIBITIONS** Williamstown 1988–89, no cat.

**REFERENCES** None

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The support is a mahogany panel 0.2 cm thick, with a commercially attached original cradle. The grain runs vertically, and the panel has been cut along the top edge where the tapers are missing on the fixed wood cradle members. The support was likely cut down from a larger panel whose short dimension was probably the stan-

dard size of 27 cm. There is a very slight warp, as well as vertical banding, associated with the restrictions inherent in the cradle's fixed bars. In reflected light, irregular diagonal marks, perhaps from planing, can be seen in the lower left quadrant. The lower right corner of the wood is chipped, and the top and lower edges have small gouges from framing nails. There is frame abrasion, gold leaf is deposited on all edges, and paper is stuck to the left edge. The paint layer has never been cleaned and is in very good condition. There are some small lumps below the paint in the left sky, perhaps debris picked up while the artist was painting. The natural resin varnish is shiny and yellowed, with strings of undissolved resin in the coating.

The commercially prepared ground is a cream to beige color. The underdrawing seems to be comprised of lines and washes, possibly executed in black ink, some changes to which are visible in the center foreground and along the horizon beneath the foliage. Possible preliminary lines for the buildings and principal trees may be visible using infrared reflectography, and some wispy lines of tree branches were left as part of the final image. The painting technique is wet-into-wet, with thin to low-level impastos in trees and buildings. Some very small sable brushes were employed for the vegetation details.

1. The biographical information on Pokitonow comes from Olivier Bertrand, who is preparing a catalogue raisonné on the artist; also Gosudarstvennyi russkii muzei 2000, p. 368.
2. See Technical Report.
3. RSC Diary, 25 Oct. 1933.