



**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](http://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](http://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 Amphis* (cat. 3)



250

---

**250 | Boulevard Rochechouart** 1880

Pastel on light blue wove paper

59.9 x 73.5 cm

Lower left: C. Pissarro. 80

1996.5

Described as “among the most memorable Impressionist images of Paris,” this pastel is also of considerable significance in the history of Pissarro’s own career.<sup>1</sup> *Boulevard Rochechouart* is one of some nine works in the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute that were included in the original Impressionist exhibitions, held in Paris between 1874 and 1886.<sup>2</sup> Appearing at the sixth group show in the spring of 1881, it formed part of Pissarro’s display of twenty-eight recent pictures, most of which addressed the rural themes that were already associated with his name.<sup>3</sup> *Boule-*

*vard Rochechouart*, with its unequivocally urban subject, was thus a conspicuous exception.<sup>4</sup> Also novel was the technical emphasis of Pissarro’s installation: with just a handful of oil paintings, the presentation was dominated by works on paper, including fifteen executed in gouache and two in pastel. The Impressionist collective had always welcomed work in a wide range of media, embracing suites of etchings, engravings, and drawings; studies in watercolor, distemper, and *essence*; and the results of a recent enthusiasm for fan designs on silk. Pastels by Edgar Degas, Mary Cassatt, Gustave Caillebotte, and others had also been featured regularly, and Pissarro himself showed three pastel portraits in 1879.<sup>5</sup> His decision to unveil *Boulevard Rochechouart* in 1881, therefore, both extended and departed from a number of established practices, and attracted attention in several registers.

By this date, many critics had come to terms with Pissarro’s distinctive qualities as an artist, typically

referring to the “sincerity” and “truth” of his pictures, which often reminded them of Millet.<sup>6</sup> In his review of the 1881 show, Joris-Karl Huysmans enthusiastically saluted Pissarro’s recent progress, noting that one canvas showed a mastery of “the terrible difficulties of full daylight and the open air . . . the true countryside has finally emerged from this assemblage of chemical colors.”<sup>7</sup> Even Huysmans, however, had doubts about the pastel now in the Clark. Though convinced that Pissarro was “a marvelous colorist,” the writer suggested that there were times when he “faltered,” singling out “among others, a pastel of the Boulevard Rochechouart, in which the artist’s eye has again failed to capture the shading and the nuances, and is constrained to put into brutal practice the theory that light is yellow and shade is violet.”<sup>8</sup> Pissarro’s use of color, in this and other works on show, was repeatedly singled out as strange or provocative. Another largely sympathetic voice, that of Gustave Geffroy, protested that in Pissarro’s studies of peasants, the “implacable light” with “tones elevated to an extreme . . . could become monotonous,” adding, “I can only regret seeing the *Boulevard Rochechouart* covered with violet and lilac patches, the significance of which escapes me completely.”<sup>9</sup> Others were more derisive: “So when has Mon. Pissarro seen the Boulevard Rochechouart all violet and yellow?” asked the obscure Enjoiras,<sup>10</sup> while André Michel claimed that Pissarro depicted the scene when “a bunch of drunken dyers had spilled large puddles of dirty water, strongly tinted with lilac, across the road, spattering passers-by, trees and even the roofs of the houses. He resolved to paint this horrible spectacle and did it unmercifully.”<sup>11</sup>

Today, even the mildest of these reproaches can be difficult to reconcile with *Boulevard Rochechouart*. Technical examination indicates that neither the paper nor the pastel colors themselves have deteriorated significantly, confronting us with much the same image as that seen by the exhibition visitors in 1881.<sup>12</sup> Pissarro’s application of pale blue—there is little violet in evidence—on the frosty boulevard, echoed in the ultramarine of the rooftops and a strip of wall at left, is among several noteworthy features of the picture, but is hardly without precedent in Impressionist art at this date. Both Degas and Monet, for example, had previously exhibited works that explored the brilliant hues of urban and rural subjects, while Pissarro himself—though typically less audacious—had experimented with new chromatic systems in such innovative creations as *The Artist’s Palette with a Landscape* (cat. 249).<sup>13</sup>

For both admirers and skeptics, *Boulevard Rochechouart* seems to have presented these innovations too brazenly and perhaps in too disconcerting a context. Scrutiny of the pastel reveals the roles of not just blue and yellow, but of almost every color in the spectrum. Strokes of orange-ocher and deep salmon, for example, are found throughout the surface of the street and reappear in the buildings at right, often in company with a cuprous green. Elsewhere, notes of purple, leaf green, and gold add to the rainbow-like effect, with remarkably few passages of mixed, neutral tones—such as brown or gray—to subdue them. Though at least one area was more densely worked, Pissarro left most of his hues fresh and unblended, and it was arguably this openness in the use of color that most upset his contemporaries.<sup>14</sup> Such crisp ribbons of pastel laid bare a new aesthetic and spelled out a constructive or synthetic—rather than a descriptive—application of the palette. When André Michel saw puddles of tinted water in the picture, he understood their hues literally, as if this were “local” color that recorded the artist’s direct perceptions. Paradoxically, some of the same critics appeared willing to accept such license in other circumstances, especially in a rural, atmospheric scene where “the assemblage of chemical colors” might be appropriate to “full daylight and the open air.” When these individuals unleashed their satire on *Boulevard Rochechouart*, it seems that they were responding not just to Pissarro’s vivid technique, but to its application in an aggressively modern street scene, the first such image that he had exhibited.

The sudden appearance of the unashamedly urban *Boulevard Rochechouart* at this moment in Pissarro’s career has no documented explanation. Its significance in launching one of the major preoccupations of his maturity, however complete with a compositional format that would be explored until his final years, can hardly be exaggerated. Since his move to Pontoise in 1866, Pissarro had lived outside Paris and directed his art almost entirely at provincial and rustic imagery. Occasional departures from this pattern included views of suburban London and the bustling public spaces of Pontoise, but there were no equivalents of Renoir’s busy metropolitan streets, Monet’s flag-decked festivals and railway stations, or Degas’s *Place de la Concorde* (c. 1875; State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg).<sup>15</sup> But through much of this period, Pissarro managed to cling to a succession of tiny pieds-à-terre in the capital, where he stayed



Fig. 250.1. Camille Pissarro, *The Outer Boulevards, Snow*, 1879. Oil on canvas, 54 x 65 cm. Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris

during visits and showed his work to prospective buyers. All these premises were in the vicinity of Montmartre, either slightly northwest or immediately south of the Boulevard Rochechouart, a major thoroughfare where he had also lodged briefly in the late 1860s.<sup>16</sup> Yet during the early Impressionist years, the sights that surrounded him on these sojourns in Paris failed to prompt an artistic response until shortly before the creation of *Boulevard Rochechouart, Snowy Weather* (private collection), seems to mark a first step, though as a composition it is closed and crowded where the Clark picture is spacious, and its foreground figures only hint at the bustle of the later scene.<sup>17</sup> Subsequently, *The Outer Boulevards, Snow* (fig. 250.1) continued to exploit the diagonal perspective so beloved of Impressionist landscapes, but went further toward the panoramic sweep and blond tonality of the 1880 pastel.<sup>18</sup>

Pissarro's extraordinary leap from these two modest forays to the sheer expansiveness of *Boulevard Rochechouart* may have been encouraged by several factors. Between 1879 and 1880, he enjoyed an

extended collaboration with Degas and Cassatt, two of the most metropolitan of his colleagues who also lived not far from the site depicted in the pastel.<sup>19</sup> Working side-by-side on prints for the projected album *Le Jour et la Nuit*, they evidently spurred each other toward practical and conceptual innovation at several levels. When all three participated in the Impressionist exhibition of 1879, they joined a larger circle of colleagues who delighted in new kinds of composition and spatial conceits, dazzling effects of color, and seductive approaches to the cityscape. Hung beside Cassatt's light-infused pastels of the theater and Degas's vertiginous *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando* (The National Gallery, London),<sup>20</sup> Pissarro would have encountered Gustave Caillebotte's spectacular *Rue Halévy, Seen from the Sixth Floor* (private collection, Dallas),<sup>21</sup> and Monet's *Rue Montorgueil, Celebration of 30 June* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris),<sup>22</sup> both showing distant pedestrians on a Paris street glimpsed from an elevated vantage point.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps emboldened by his friends, Pissarro clearly established himself and his pastels in a room above the Boulevard Rochechouart, close to the junctions with the Boulevard de Clichy and the rue des Martyrs.<sup>24</sup> Looking down from a second- or third-story window, he drafted out this panorama seen from an unfamiliar viewpoint with surprising confidence and few second thoughts, opting for the blunt, central axis favored by Caillebotte and Monet, rather than his own oblique *Outer Boulevards, Snow*.<sup>25</sup> In his carefully applied skeins of color, Pissarro was able to assert considerable control over the atmosphere and setting, into which figures and vehicles were firmly introduced. Here, decades of improvised drawing served him well, emphasizing "simplicity, for the essential lines," as he wrote around this time, even inclining "towards caricature" rather than the dreaded "prettiness."<sup>26</sup> Acutely observed pedestrians are shown wrapped against the cold, with mothers and children walking past shop windows at left, while a truncated omnibus embodies the mobility of the age. As he worked directly on paper with limited possibilities for revision, Pissarro produced a tense, sparkling image that clearly gratified him. Signing and dating this large work, and preparing it for exhibition, he contributed to a growing tendency among the Impressionists to elevate drawing "to the status of painting."<sup>27</sup> At the same time, Pissarro unwittingly launched the majestic sequence of views of Rouen and Paris that were to stake his claim as an artist of the modern city. RK

**PROVENANCE** The artist, sold to Durand-Ruel, Paris, 14 Jan. 1881; [Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1881–1920, sold to François, 21 Apr. 1920];<sup>28</sup> Marc François, Paris (1920–35, his sale, Drouot, Paris, 20 Mar. 1935, no. 10, ill., as *Le Boulevard de Clichy en 1880; effet de soleil d'hiver*); [Alex Reid & Lefevre, London]; Commander and Mrs. Colin Balfour, Southampton (until 1996, sold to Libby Howie and John Pillar, as agents for the Clark); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1996.

**EXHIBITIONS** Paris 1881, no. 90, as *Boulevard Rochechouart*, lent by Durand-Ruel; Paris 1883d, no. 30; Vienna 1903, no. 68, as *Boulevard Clichy*; Budapest 1903, no. 25;<sup>29</sup> Paris 1921, no. 57; London 1937, no. 23, pl. 14, as *Boulevard de Clichy, Effet de Soleil d'Hiver*; Oxford–Manchester–Glasgow 1986, pp. 18, 89–90, no. 51, fig. 6, ill. on back cover, as *Le Boulevard de Clichy, effet de soleil d'hiver*; Williamstown 2004b, no cat.; Williamstown 2005–6b, no cat.; Williamstown 2007b, no cat.; Ferrara–Williamstown 2009–10, not in cat. (exhibited in Williamstown only).

**REFERENCES** Enjoiras 1881, p. 3; Geffroy 1881, p. 3; Michel 1881, p. 3; Vernay 1881, p. 2; Huysmans 1881, p. 235–36; Duret 1923, p. 77, ill., as *Platz in Rouen*; Pissarro and Venturi 1939, vol. 1, p. 293, no. 1545, vol. 2, pl. 297, as *Le Boulevard de Clichy, effet de soleil d'hiver*; Washington–San Francisco 1986, pp. 346, 355, fig. 12, as *Boulevard Rochechouart*; Wadley 1991, pp. 176–77, no. 47, ill., and ill. on cover; Pissarro 1993, pp. 260–61, fig. 309, as *Boulevard de Clichy, Winter, Sunlight Effect*; Berson 1996, vol. 1, pp. 340, 342, 351, 359, 370, vol. 2, pp. 184, 195, no. VI-90, ill., as *Boulevard Rochechouart*; *Antiques* 1997, p. 529, pl. 13; Lloyd and Pissarro 1997, pp. 25, 27, ill.; Washington–San Francisco–Brooklyn 1998–99, pp. 47, 49, fig. 7; Ganz 2004, pp. 119–20, fig. 12; Rand 2005, p. 293, fig. 2.

**TECHNICAL REPORT** The pastel was executed on a pale blue-gray, medium-weight wove paper. The support retains tack holes in all four corners, possibly indicating that the pastel was executed while tacked to a drawing board. This support was later adhered overall to a machine-made wood-pulp or Kraft paper larger than the dimensions of the paper. The edges of the lining paper were previously wrapped around and adhered to a Masonite support. The pastel had been mounted off-center, causing the left edge to extend beyond the edge of the mount. This caused some edge tears and small breaks, which are visible when the work is out of its frame. The Masonite support was replaced with a paper honeycomb panel in 1996, but the pastel remains mounted to the lining paper. The uneven tension of the previous mount may be responsible for slight diagonal distortion in the corners. The medium is in very good condition, as is the paper. The paper color appears to be close to its original state. While fixative may have been used during execution of the pastel, there are large areas of unfixed pastel in the foreground. There may be old areas of smudged media in the center of the image. LP

1. Wadley 1991, p. 176.
2. In addition to proofs and certain prints, such as Degas's *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Etruscan Gallery* (1997.11), the other works represented were Degas's *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (1955.45), Morisot's *The Bath* (cat. 235), and the following pictures by Renoir: *Self-Portrait, A Box at the Theater, Sleeping Girl, and Bay of Naples, Evening* (cats. 266, 275–76, 281).
3. See Berson 1996, vol. 2, pp. 183–84, nos. 63–89.
4. In 1881, Pissarro spelled out the Parisian locale in his choice of title: *Boulevard Rochechouart*. By the early twentieth century, the title had become *Platz in Rouen* in Duret 1923, and *Boulevard de Clichy, Effet de soleil d'hiver* in London 1937. When the pastel was acquired by the Clark, it was known as *Boulevard de Clichy, Effect of Winter Sunlight*, but Pissarro's original title has now been restored. Strictly speaking, when he made the pastel Pissarro was situated in a building at the western extremity of the Boulevard Rochechouart, though almost his entire view consisted of the Boulevard de Clichy.
5. See Berson 1996, vol. 2, p. 119, nos. 201–3.
6. Cardon 1881; reprinted in Berson 1996, vol. 1, p. 332: "sincérité et . . . vérité." Huysmans 1881, p. 236, noted that "the human figure, in the work of M. Pissarro, takes on the gestures and appearance of those in Millet" ("la figure humaine, dans l'oeuvre de M. Pissarro, prend le geste et l'allure des Millet").
7. Huysmans 1881, p. 234: "les terribles difficultés du grand jour et du plein air . . . la vraie campagne est enfin sortie de ces assemblages de couleurs chimiques."
8. *Ibid.*, p. 235–36: "merveilleux coloriste"; "d'autres hésitent"; "entre autres un pastel du boulevard Rochechouart où l'oeil de l'artiste n'a plus saisi les dégradations et les nuances, et s'est borné à mettre brutalement en pratique la théorie que la lumière est jaune et l'ombre violette." In his review of the 1880 exhibition, Huysmans had written at length about the "indigomania" ("l'indigomanie") of the Impressionists, linking it to defects of the eye as well as to new ideas about light and perception; see *ibid.*, p. 93.
9. Geffroy 1881, p. 3; reprinted in Berson 1996, vol. 1, p. 342: "lumière implacable"; "les tons poussés à leur paroxysme comportent une certaine monotonie"; "Je ne puis que regretter de voir le *Boulevard Rochechouart* couvert de taches violettes et lilas dont la signification m'échappe absolument."
10. Enjoiras 1881, p. 3; reprinted in Berson 1996, vol. 1, p. 340: "Quand donc M. Pissarro a-t-il vu le boulevard Rochechouart tout violet et tout jaune?"
11. Michel 1881, p. 3; reprinted in Berson 1996, vol. 1, p. 359: "une bande de teinturiers ivres répandait sur la chaussée de grandes flaques d'eau sale fortement teintée de lilas, en éclaboussaient les passants, les arbres et jusqu'au toit des maisons. Il a voulu peindre cet horrible spectacle, et il l'a fait cruellement."

12. See Technical Report. Certain violet pigments are known to be fugitive.
13. See, among many examples, W 311, 347, 357, 511, 613, and 628.
14. The black and yellow carriage in the center distance was clearly introduced after a similar form had been obliterated slightly to its left.
15. L 368.
16. See the chronologies of the artist's life in Bailly-Herzberg 1980–91, vol. 1, pp. 28–37. He is listed at 108 Boulevard Rochechouart in 1866 and 1868.
17. PDR 619.
18. PDR 618.
19. Cassatt's apartment was on the rue Trudaine, immediately south of the Boulevard Rochechouart, while Degas spent most of his life in apartments and studios within a few streets of this spot.
20. L 522.
21. B 100.
22. W 469.
23. Another work that may have informed Pissarro's composition was Guillaumin's *Quai de la gare, Snow Effect*, now in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, which presents a central perspective, numerous pedestrians and carriages, and a receding line of buildings at right, all bathed in a warm, wintry light. Though executed about 1874, it was shown in the 1880 Impressionist exhibition.
24. The site and much of the view is still identifiable, though the building from which Pissarro worked has been replaced by a modern structure.
25. It is clear that on this occasion the artist made the unexpected decision to represent just a small part of his visual field. As if using binoculars or opera glasses, he effectively "zoomed in" on the cluster of trees, pedestrians, and omnibuses that were, in fact, at a considerable distance from him.
26. Camille Pissarro to Lucien Pissarro, 5 July 1883; translation from Lloyd and Pissarro 1997, p. 26.
27. Lloyd and Pissarro 1997, p. 27.
28. Provenance given in letter from Durand-Ruel, 4 Apr. 2005. See the Clark's curatorial file.
29. Information on 1883 and 1903 exhibitions from letter from Durand-Ruel, 4 Apr. 2005. See the Clark's curatorial file.

---

**251 | Landscape at Saint-Charles, near Gisors, Sunset** 1891

Oil on canvas, 81 x 65 cm  
 Lower left: C. Pissarro. 1891  
 1955-524

The final phase of Pissarro's withdrawal from Neo-Impressionism, after several productive and sometimes acrimonious years of involvement with the movement, is well exemplified in *Landscape at Saint-Charles*. After meeting Paul Signac and Georges Seurat in 1885, he discovered that they shared a fascination with the effects of juxtaposed colors, such as that already expressed in his *Artist's Palette* (cat. 249). Pissarro soon refined his techniques toward the more systematic approaches of his new friends, leaving behind the Impressionist stroke in favor of the Pointillist dot, and revised his palette according to stricter criteria. Their aim, he explained to the skeptical dealer Paul Durand-Ruel in 1886, was "to seek a modern synthesis of methods based on science, that is, based on M. Chevreul's theory of color and on the experiments of Maxwell and the measurements of N. O. Rood. To substitute optical mixture for mixture of pigments. In other words: the breaking up of tones into their constituents. For optical mixture stirs up more intense luminosities than does mixture of pigments."<sup>1</sup>

By the spring of 1886, when Seurat unveiled his controversial mural-sized *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte* (The Art Institute of Chicago) at the eighth Impressionist exhibition, Pissarro was able to display a number of ambitious canvases in his own variant of the novel procedure.<sup>2</sup> Many former colleagues were shocked by this apparent act of desertion, and Pissarro found it necessary to defend himself and, on occasion, to confront his adversaries. In 1887, his faith seemed to be still unshaken and he could say of the critic Joris-Karl Huysmans, "In a few years he will adore the dot!"<sup>3</sup> His patrons remained unconvinced, however, and Pissarro's long-standing difficulties in selling work were further exacerbated by this latest, seemingly incomprehensible, shift in style. Now based in the distant rural town of Éragny-sur-Epte, where living was cheaper, he struggled with real financial hardship and also with his conflicted enthusiasms. A letter of September 1888 shows that Pissarro was beginning to waver: "How can one combine the purity and simplicity of the dot with the fullness, suppleness, liberty,