



**American Federation of Arts**

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: 212.988.7700

**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS FEATURES RARELY SEEN COLLECTION OF  
FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST PAINTINGS TO TOUR 7 CITIES BEGINNING NOVEMBER  
2002**

***MILLET TO MATISSE: NINETEENTH- AND TWENTIETH CENTURY FRENCH PAINTING  
FROM KELVINGROVE ART GALLERY, GLASGOW***

*Millet to Matisse: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century French Painting from Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow*, a rich overview of French painting from a period of extraordinary creativity, will open at the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky in November 2002. The exhibition will then travel to the Frick Art & Historical Center, the Joslyn Art Museum, the Albuquerque Museum, the Musée du Québec, the Kalamazoo Institute of the Arts, and the Oklahoma City Museum of Art.

The exhibition is organized by the American Federation of Arts and Glasgow Museums. Selected by guest curator Vivien Hamilton, Curator of Art at Glasgow Museums, the sixty-four paintings are arranged thematically in the exhibition. They offer an overview of developments in French painting at the fin de siècle and provide a glimpse into the culture of late nineteenth-century Glasgow. Comprised primarily of gifts and bequests, Kelvingrove's collection reflects the shifting trends in the dealing and collecting of French art in western Scotland during an economically and culturally fertile period. Nineteenth-century Glasgow prospered as a center of trade and industry. As the city grew increasingly cosmopolitan, an emerging affluent class began to purchase contemporary French art from a growing number of local dealers. By presenting paintings collected over a seventy-year period within a single region, the exhibition offers a fresh perspective on both well-known and less-familiar artists, as well as the world of the enthusiastic Glaswegian art collectors.

According to AFA director Julia Brown, "Kelvingrove Art Gallery contains one of the preeminent collections of French painting. The exhibition will provide a unique opportunity for a comprehensive view of developments in French painting from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries through examples by some of the most renowned artists of the period. We are delighted to be collaborating with Glasgow Museums and look forward to bringing this highly regarded collection to American and Canadian audiences."

The exhibition's earliest paintings include works by painters associated with realism, including **Jean-François Millet's** powerfully rendered *Going to Work* (ca. 1850-51), **Jules Breton's** idealized views of the rural poor, and still lifes by **Gustave Courbet** and **François Bonvin**. Even as avant-garde artists began to move toward abstraction, realism continued as a dominant style in France as evidenced by three elegant flower studies by **Henri Fantin-Latour** from the 1870s and **Jules-Bastien Lepage's** sentimental *Poor Fauvette* (1881). **Camille Corot**, around whom the Barbizon School gathered, is well represented by three disparate works: *The Woodcutter* (1865-70), an atmospheric landscape, *Mademoiselle de Foudras* (1872), a seductive portrait, and *Pastorale* (1873), a late, allegorical scene. The exhibition also includes works by other Barbizon painters such as **Théodore Rousseau's** dense, highly charged landscape, *The Edge of the Forest of Clairbois Fontainebleau* (ca. 1836-39). The landscapes of Corot and the Barbizon School are often considered precursors to the impressionists' investigations of the French countryside, as **Camille Pissarro's** early *The Banks of the Marre* (1864) suggests.

A highlight of the exhibition is **Vincent van Gogh's** enigmatic and expressive *Portrait of Alexander Reid* (1887). The kinetic rhythms and sparkling colors of the portrait reveal the artist on the cusp of his last great period. The portrait also provides visual proof of the direct link between artists of the French avant-garde and the city of Glasgow, and underscores the role of Glaswegian dealers and collectors in the creation of Kelvingrove's collection. Reid, the most prominent dealer of Impressionist painting in Glasgow, was friendly

with both Vincent van Gogh and his brother Theo, also an art dealer, and briefly shared lodgings with the brothers in Paris. Reid later contributed a substantial number of works, through gifts and bequests to the Kelvingrove collection.

*Millet to Matisse* also includes **Claude Monet's** vibrant *View of Ventimiglia* (1884) and two landscapes by **Alfred Sisley**. Three late works by **Auguste Renoir** demonstrate the persistence of Impressionism into the first decade of the twentieth century. Complementing the remarkable selection of Impressionist works are paintings associated with pointillism, a neo-Impressionist technique developed by **Georges Seurat**. In addition to Seurat's brooding *Boy Sitting in a Meadow* (ca. 1882–83) and two landscapes, the exhibition contains works by his Impressionist colleague **Paul Signac**. A painting by **Paul Gauguin**, *Ostre Anlaeg Park, Copenhagen* (1885) prefigures the artist's primitivizing style that flowered in the South Sea Islands in the 1890s. Its inclusion in the collection exemplifies the sophistication of Glasgow collectors who made astute purchases in early phases of significant artists' careers.

Glasgow collectors also acquired important works by the Parisian avant-garde from the turn of the century. A **Pierre Bonnard** landscape and four intimate interiors by **Edouard Vuillard**, including the complex *Interior—The Drawing Room* (1901) represent the Nabis. **André Derain**, a close friend of Matisse and one of the leading members of the Fauves, is represented by *Blackfriars Bridge, London*, (ca. 1906), a waterside view of London. These works—along with a remarkable early **Pablo Picasso**, *The Flower Seller* (1901), and paintings by **Georges Braque**, **Louis Marcoussis**, **Albert Marquet**, **Mary Cassatt**, **Georges Roualt**, and **Henri Matisse** (*Head of a Young Girl*, *The Pink Tablecloth*)—present the range of directions pursued by painters working in Paris before 1930. Their innovations would influence the form and content of twentieth century painting for nearly 50 years.

#### **TOUR ITINERARY**

The Speed Art Museum November 6, 2002–February 2, 2003  
Louisville, Kentucky

The Frick Art & Historical Center March 2–May 25, 2003  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Joslyn Art Museum June 21–September 14, 2003  
Omaha, Nebraska

The Albuquerque Museum October 8, 2003–January 4, 2004  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Musée du Québec January 29–May 2, 2004  
Québec City, Québec

Kalamazoo Institute of the Arts May 19–August 15, 2004  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Oklahoma City Museum of Art September 8– December 5, 2004  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

#### **PUBLICATION**

Accompanying the exhibition is a fully illustrated catalogue with extended entries on each work by guest curator Vivien Hamilton and additional essays by noted historians. The introduction by Hugh Stevenson, Curator of the Glasgow Museums, focuses on the early history of the city's art collection and the place of French art within it. Art historian Frances Fowle discusses the taste for French art in the west of Scotland; Irene Maver, lecturer in Scottish history at the University of Glasgow, comments on the social and political life and the economic environment in Glasgow; and Belinda Thomson, an expert on post-impressionism, provides an overview of French painting in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. 208 pages, 11 x 9 5/8 in., 115 colorplates, 35 black-and-white comparative illustrations, softcover \$45.00, hardcover \$55.00. Co-published by Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Yale University Press.

**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS**

Over the course of its ninety-three-year history, the American Federation of Arts (AFA) has earned a reputation for initiating and developing art exhibitions of exceptional quality and scholarship that are presented in museums across the country and around the world. The AFA also provides educational and professional programs that serve the needs of the museum community. Through these programs, the AFA is able to fulfill its mission to bring great works of art to an extended audience and strengthen the ability of museums to enrich the public's experience and understanding of the visual arts. Please visit the AFA's website at [www.afaweb.org](http://www.afaweb.org).