

MANET AND THE SEA

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MANET AND THE SEA

This is the first major exhibition to explore the seascapes of Manet and his contemporaries such as French Impressionists Monet, Renoir, and Morisot, Realist French painters such as Courbet and Romantic artists like Delacroix. In addition the works of several seventeenth century Dutch marine painters are also exhibited. Innovation and experimentation in painting techniques as well as the advent of seaside tourism in nineteenth century France are addressed in this fascinating exhibition. The show consists of approximately one hundred works of art from sixty public and private collections.

A Note to Teachers on the Use of this Teacher Packet:

Enclosed are teaching materials related to the exhibition. These materials may be used in your classroom before, after, or instead of visiting the exhibition. With your expertise, these materials may be adapted to suit any age group.

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Biography of Edouard Manet

Early Life and Education

Edouard Manet was born into a prosperous family on January 23, 1832, in Paris, France. He was the oldest son of Auguste Manet, a government official, and Eugénie Desirée Manet, (formerly Fournier), the daughter of a diplomat. He had two younger brothers Eugene (born in 1833) and Gustave (born in 1835).

Edouard was not a particularly well-behaved student and was so outspoken that he even contradicted his teachers. His classmate and friend Antonin Proust, (who later became the French minister of culture), wrote of the following incident in his memoirs:

Manet was about fifteen years old when he read the philosopher Diderot's essays of art criticism *Les Salons* (1759-1779) as part of a history class. According to Proust, Manet objected to Diderot's criticism of artists for portraying hats "*that were condemned to become outmoded.*" Manet said "*that is extremely stupid. One has to be in step with one's time, produce what one sees without worrying about fashion.*"

Manet doodled and sketched caricatures of his fellow students in the margins of his notebooks. His maternal uncle, Captain Edouard Fournier, noticed Edouard's talent at drawing and encouraged him by frequently taking Edouard and his brother Eugene to art museums.

Edouard's father served as a judge and he wanted his son to study law, but Edouard was not a particularly good student, so he thought he would become a sailor. After he failed the test to get into the French naval officers' school, he worked on a small ship in order to learn more about sailing before retaking the navy's entrance exam.

In December of 1848, when he was just sixteen years old, Manet began a training voyage on board *Le Havre et Guadeloupe*, a three-masted ship that sailed from France to Brazil. During the voyage Edouard's drawing ability gained recognition. Manet described this in a letter to his mother in 1849: "*I have to tell you that I developed a reputation during the crossing. All the ships' officers and all the instructors asked me to make caricatures of them. Even the captain asked for one, as his Christmas present.*"

It was during this time that Manet really began to understand the relationship between the ship and the surrounding sea and sky. He was said to have described the experience to another artist as follows: *“I learned a lot on my voyage to Brazil. I spent countless nights watching the play of light and shadow in the ship’s wake. During the day, I stood on the upper deck gazing at the horizon. That’s how I learned to construct a sky.”*

When he returned to Paris in 1849, Manet failed the naval academy’s entrance exam again. His parents agreed to let Edouard follow his dream of studying to become an artist. After first objecting to his son’s choice of where to study art, Manet’s father eventually allowed Edouard to work in the studio of one of the more innovative French artists of the time, Thomas Couture. Edouard spent six years studying with this **genre** and history painter.

Like most artists of the nineteenth century, a large portion of Manet’s education took place in museums. He spent countless hours in the Louvre copying paintings by famous artists including the work of Titian, Tintoretto, Rubens, and Boucher among others. He also visited the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, as well as taking the “**grand tour**” of great art in Florence and Venice. In 1856, Manet saw the work of Velasquez that was on loan to Vienna from Madrid, and Velasquez became a great influence on his work.

Spanish Influences

Spanish art and culture became extremely popular in France during the late 19th century, and French novelists, poets, artists, and composers helped make Spain fashionable. Two main styles of writing and art that inspired French artists during this period were **Romanticism** and **Realism**, and both styles of painting were inspired by the art of Spain. Manet was particularly drawn to Realism as it presented a stark contrast to the traditional art of classical Greece and Italy that dominated the academic French painting of the nineteenth century.

Manet’s portrait of a man singing and playing a guitar entitled The Spanish Singer was his first painting accepted into the annual **Salon**, (major French exhibition), in 1861. He continued to paint Spanish themes before he ever went to Spain, but stopped painting

them shortly after his return from traveling to Spain in 1865. Even though he no longer painted Spanish subjects, he incorporated the styles of Spanish artists such as Goya and Velasquez in his own work. In reference to his favorite Spanish artist he wrote that *“What captivated me most about Spain, what alone was worth the trip, was Velasquez. He is the painter’s painter....The sight of these masterpieces gave me great hope and confidence.”*

Dutch Influences

In addition to Velasquez and other Spanish artists, Manet was also greatly influenced by the Dutch artists of the 17th century. He was particularly inspired by the Frans Hals’ work he saw during a trip to Holland in 1872. The rapid brushstrokes of Hals convinced Manet to try the Impressionist’s method of painting directly from life. Manet also noted that Hals’ style reminded him of Spain. *“I cannot get it out of my head, that Frans Hals must have been of Spanish descent. There would be nothing surprising about that. He was from Mechelen”*. (Spain occupied the city of Mechelen in the 16th century.) Manet managed to blend the art of Velasquez and Hals in his painting The Spanish Singer. This painting received praise from the critics and the public when it was exhibited in 1861. It was an early success for Manet who later had little praise from the official Salon.

Manet’s Friends

Along with Spanish and Dutch masters of the past, Manet was influenced by classical Italian and French painters of the past and contemporary French artists. Manet was close friends with many of the most influential artists, writers, and musicians in nineteenth century France. They influenced each other’s work and often supported one another in gaining public recognition.

He met several of these friends during his time studying the old masters in the Louvre; they included the painters Henri Fantin-Latour, Edgar Degas, and Berthe Morisot. Other contemporary painters that Manet admired included the landscape painters Gustave Courbet, Camille Corot, and Johan Barthold Jongkind.

Writers such as Charles Baudelaire, Emile Zola, Stephane Mallarmé, and others published work about Manet and his painting. They often praised Manet's unique style of painting when others were cruel in their critical reviews of Manet.

Manet's Family

Manet met his future wife when he was seventeen and she was nineteen in 1849. Suzanne Leenhoff was a talented pianist who came to Manet's house to give piano lessons to his younger brothers.

Three years later, Suzanne gave birth to a son named Léon-Edouard in 1852 and many people believe that Manet was the father. Manet kept this secret as he never seemed to tell anyone that Léon - Edouard was his son. Suzanne was also secretive about Léon's origins as she often referred to him as her younger brother. Manet eventually married Suzanne in 1863 and Léon continued to live with them and he called Manet "*godfather*". Léon often posed for Manet; once as a Spanish pageboy holding a sword at age nine.

Manet's Subject Matter

Manet painted everything from portraits to still-lives to seascapes. He was particularly interested in painting the human figure in costumes, contemporary dress, and nude. He painted many exquisite and intimate still-lives, many of which include beautiful flowers. Many of his best known works include figures and still-lives in scenes of contemporary life. He also enjoyed painting animals, including horses and cats. He wasn't particularly interested in traditional landscapes except as a background for portraiture, but he loved to paint the sea.

As a lifelong resident of Paris, Manet was particularly drawn to scenes of daily life in the city; both interiors and exteriors. While he often sketched or did watercolors **en plein air** (outside, directly from life), he usually did his finished oil paintings in his studio.

Manet was most interested in capturing moments of contemporary life in his work. While he frequently borrowed classical compositions from the old masters, he wanted his work to depict the modern French life around him.

Manet's Style

Manet had a unique style of painting that really set him apart from other artists of his time. While Manet's subject matter was often shocking to the public, in some ways his style of painting was even more unacceptable to the traditional academic art world of his day. Manet's technique of paring down the elements of the painting to the basic contrasts of dark and light, and flat background and simplified foreground, disturbed many nineteenth century critics. He painted every part of the painting with equal care and didn't emphasize one thing over another. This was in marked contrast to traditional artists who had specific narratives which gave more weight to certain areas of their painting. Ultimately, it is Manet's style that makes him a revolutionary painter who influenced the future of western art and inspired the modern artists who followed Manet's path.

Manet combined elements of classical painting, contemporary **Impressionism**, traditional Japanese woodcuts, and Spanish masters to forge his unique style. He blended the dramatic contrasts of light and shadow, popular in 17th century Dutch paintings by Rembrandt and others, with the quick brushstrokes of the Impressionists. Manet borrowed the flat backgrounds, use of velvety blacks and unusual perspectives and compositions from Japanese art to depict scenes from contemporary French society. Essentially everything that Manet admired from classical antiquity and Italian Renaissance art to the work of his French peers became part of an entirely modern style of painting.

While Manet's work was both highly praised and vehemently protested by others during his lifetime, it is not entirely clear how Manet felt about it. He certainly held himself and his art in high regard, but he seemed somewhat unconscious of how far he had come from the art of the past. He desperately wanted to achieve success in the art world of his day and was surprised by the fact that many of his paintings were rejected by the official Salon. Since Manet was conscious of all his allusions to the past, he failed to understand why the judges and public found his art unacceptable. Dismayed by his lack of success in the Salon, Manet created his own private show of fifty of his pictures in 1867. In the accompanying exhibition

catalog, Manet wrote about himself in the third person: *“It is sincerity that gives these works a character that makes them resemble a protest, albeit that the painter’s only aim was to render an impression.”*

Manet’s Legacy

Manet died on April 20, 1883 at the age of 51. While it is impossible to know exactly how Manet felt about his work, it is certain that his work had a tremendous impact on his fellow nineteenth century French artists and continues to exert influence on artists today. He lived at a pivotal time in the history of art and consciously or not, Manet’s ingenuity provided a turning point for all the modern art that followed in its wake.

Biographical Notes on Additional Artists in the Exhibition

- **Eugene Boudin (1824-1898)** French
The son of a mariner, Eugene Boudin grew up in the French coastal city of Le Havre. He gained recognition with his early cloud pastels exhibited in the Salon of 1859. Boudin's paintings of atmospheric landscapes and depictions of tourist activities at seaside resorts influenced younger Impressionist artists.
- **Eva Gonzales (1849-1883)** French
Eva, Manet's only student, created over one hundred works of art before her premature death at the age of thirty-four. Most of her paintings depict women and children in domestic settings, but she also did several landscapes and seascapes.
- **Gustave Courbet (1819-1877)** French
Courbet painted everything from landscapes and modern life to figures and seascapes. Courbet was the father of Realism in French painting and he specialized in painting ordinary people. His later work included numerous seascapes which influenced other artists who painted the sea with him. These artists included Boudin, Monet, and Whistler who inspired Manet's paintings of the sea.
- **Ferdinand-Victor-Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863)** French
Delacroix was considered the leader of Romanticism in French painting. The Romantic style of painting was subjective and dramatic. Romantic painters were frequently drawn to heroic narrative subjects from history and religion. Realist painters were more concerned with giving an objective view of ordinary people and modern daily life.
- **Pierre-Julien Gilbert (1783-1860)** French
Gilbert held the post of official painter of the French Navy. He and other official painters were commissioned to create hundreds of paintings documenting the history of French naval battles.

- **Louis-Gabriel-Eugene Isabey** (1803-1886) French
Early in his life, Isabey was an officer in the French Navy and his drawings were used by Gilbert and other official Navy painters. Later, Isabey became a famous marine painter and taught other important artists such as Boudin.
- **Johan Barthold Jongkind** (1819-1891) born in the Netherlands
Jongkind was the key figure who introduced the long tradition of Dutch seascapes to nineteenth century French artists. Jongkind often worked directly from life, (*en plein air*), and frequently Monet painted with him at the seaside.
- **Léopold LeGuen** (1828-1895) French
LeGuen was a traditional marine painter with a Romantic style.
- **Berthe Morisot** (1840-1926) French
Morisot and Manet were close friends who influenced and admired each others work. Morisot married Manet's brother Eugene and became Edouard's sister-in-law. Morisot was less formal and traditional than Manet in her style, and this led to her close association and frequent exhibitions with other Impressionists.
- **Claude Monet** (1840-1926) French
Monet spent his childhood in Le Havre, a city on the coast of Normandy. He continued to paint the ocean, as well as other bodies of water throughout his long life. He influenced and was influenced by Jongkind, Boudin and Manet.
- **Auguste Renoir** (1841-1919) French
Renoir only painted a few marine paintings, but they were innovative in their experimentation. In some of his seascapes he used *impasto* (thick textured layers of paint) and many colors to create exciting, almost abstract images of the ocean.

- **Willem van de Velde the Younger** (1633 -1707)
Dutch, (active in Amsterdam and London)
This artist was considered to be the best seventeenth-century Dutch marine painter. His dramatic use of light and shadow and bold compositions inspired marine painters for centuries.
- **Lieve Verschuier** (c. 1630-1686) Dutch
Verschuier's marine paintings depicted daily life and technology.
- **James McNeill Whistler** (1834-1903) American, (active in England)
Whistler spent time in France and painted *en plein air* with Courbet. Whistler and Manet were both interested in seascapes, Japanese prints, and naval battles.

MANET SLIDE SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION:

These slides represent only a small sample of the wide range of work in the exhibition. There are works by over a dozen different artists in the show. Hopefully the following carefully selected slides will encourage you to learn more about *Manet and The Sea*.

1. **Léopold LeGuen, (1828-1895), *Naval Combat Between “The Rights of Man” and the English Vessel “Indefatigable” and the Frigate “Amazon”, January 17, 1797*, 1853, oil on canvas, Musee des Beaux-Arts**



Manet’s paintings of the sea were strongly influenced by the use of composition, light, shadow, and color in seventeenth century Dutch marine painting, and by the paintings of his nineteenth century French contemporaries.

There was a long tradition of painting naval battles by official painters who specialized in this genre. In this painting, the artist Léopold LeGuen emphasized the dramatic elements and details in a specific naval battle scene.

Questions:

- Describe the scene; what words or phrases would you use?
- List some details in the painting; are there a lot of them?
- List the different colors; how many can you find?

- How did the artist make it look dramatic?
- What contrasting elements can you find in the painting?
- How did the artist highlight the horizon line?
- Can you tell which side is winning this sea battle? How?

2. **Edouard Manet,(1832-1883), *The Battle of the U.S.S. “Kearsarge” & the C.S.S. “Alabama”*, 1864, oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art**

** Optional: Use this same script and set of questions with the poster*



This is Manet’s first seascape and it depicts a real event that Manet read about in newspapers and illustrated journals. The naval battle occurred on June 19, 1864, between the U.S. naval ship *Kearsarge* and the Confederate raider *Alabama*. Despite the fact that this was an American Civil War battle, it was of particular interest to the French as it occurred off the coast of northern France near Cherbourg. Although Manet did not witness the actual event, he painted a realistic painting, and later went on to see and paint the *Kearsarge* from life when it was in the harbor near Bolougne.

Manet was not the first artist to paint this battle scene and it is possible that an earlier depiction of the same event by the naval painter Henri Durand-

Brager inspired Manet to attempt the same subject. Durand-Brager's version attracted a lot of favorable attention and public notice. Many people saw and commented on Manet's painting when it was exhibited in the window of a print shop in Paris in July, 1864. Most people assumed that Manet had witnessed the actual battle and was painting from life and from memory rather than from his imagination and other images and written accounts of the battle.

Questions:

- Why do you think that people assumed that Manet was painting from life?
- *If using slides*, compare and contrast this painting with the painting by LeGuen.
- How are they similar? What is different in the two paintings?
- What percentage of the painting depicts the sea and how much is sky?
- Where is the horizon line? Is it easy to see?
- Is it clear exactly what is going on? Why?
- Where would you need to be to see this scene?
- How does the painting make you feel? Do you think Manet wanted you to have a strong emotional reaction to the scene, why or why not?

When Manet exhibited this painting at the Paris Salon, it was received with both praise and criticism. One critic wrote:

“Untroubled by the vulgar bourgeois laws of perspective, M. Manet conceives the clever idea of giving us a vertical section of the ocean, so that we may read the physiognomy of the fishes for their impressions of the conflict taking place above their heads,”

Another critic described Manet's canvas as:

“First and foremost a magnificent piece of marine painting.”

- Which critic do you agree with? What arguments would you present to prove your position?

Optional activity: Break students up into two sides and let them debate their case.

- Is this how you would have portrayed this scene?
If not, what would you have done differently?

3. **Eugene Boudin, (1824-1898), *Beach at Trouville*, 1863 oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1983**



Boudin began painting fashionable vacationers at the beach in 1860, and by the time this painting was made, his beach scenes were very popular. Since he grew up near the sea and was the son of a sea captain, he was very familiar with the subject. Vacationing at the seaside became popular in France after railroads were built linking Paris to the coast.

Manet and Boudin knew and admired each other's work, but it is unclear whether they ever met each other. Boudin gained fame as an artist who painted directly from life and captured the light and atmosphere of particular moments in his landscapes. Boudin created some of the first truly impressionist landscapes which influenced Manet and others.

Questions:

- How is this painting similar to and different from the two battle scenes?
- What is the subject matter of this seascape?
- What are the people doing in this scene?
- How are these vacationers different from modern people on a beach?

Do you think that Boudin painted this from direct observation? Why?

4. **Edouard Manet, *The Beach at Boulogne*, 1868, oil on canvas, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Collection of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Mellon**



Manet and his family made many visits to the new seaside resorts. While there Manet made many sketches and paintings. Like Boudin's earlier painting, Manet's scene describes the leisure activities of vacationers at the seaside. At first glance the two paintings appear to have been done on location. Modern x-ray technology reveals that Manet actually repainted large portions of his picture suggesting that much of it was from memory and sketches as opposed to Boudin's which was probably done on location. Most of the figures in Manet's painting are directly related to drawings in his sketchbook.

Notice the cart at the water's edge on the left; it is called a bathing machine and was used to transport swimmers into the water in privacy. Once the cart was in the water, a person would step down a makeshift step-ladder into the ocean. The purpose of the bathing machine was to preserve the modesty of the discreet nineteenth century people who were unaccustomed to revealing their bare arms and legs in public.

Questions:

Compare and Contrast:

How is this painting similar to the painting by Boudin?

In what ways is it different? Discuss the following aspects:

- Compare the activities of the tourists on the beach in each painting.
- Describe the weather in the two paintings.
- How are the two compositions similar? How are they different?

5. Edouard Manet, *Moonlight, Boulogne*, 1868, oil on canvas Musee d'Orsay, Paris. Bequest of Comte Isaac de Camondo, 1911



This painting was one of Manet's favorites. He thought it captured reality in an "honest" way. It may have been painted from Manet's hotel window, directly from life, as well as from several quick watercolor studies and pencil drawings of Boulogne found in his sketchbook.

The subject was a specific French harbor scene at night, but it looks similar to earlier seventeenth century Dutch paintings. Manet went to Holland several times including a couple of visits before he painted this scene.

Note the ways in which Manet used contrasts of light and dark to create a dramatic image. Look at how well balanced the various objects are in the composition as well as the way in which Manet created the illusion of space in the painting.

Questions:

- What makes this painting different from all the others you saw so far?
- What similarities does it have to the others?
- How many different light sources can you see? Describe each of them.
- Why do you think Manet liked this painting so much?
- What can you see in the foreground? What is in the middle ground?
- Describe the background.

- How does this painting relate to the following famous Manet quote:
“Look for the grand light and grand shadow, the rest will come of itself, and often doesn’t amount to much anyway”?

6. James Abbott McNeill Whistler, (1834-1903),
Crepuscule in Flesh Colour and Green: Valparaiso, 1866, oil on canvas,
Tate, London. Presented by W. Graham Robertson



Whistler and Manet influenced one another for over twenty years, enjoying competitive admiration for each other’s work. Whistler was particularly inspired by Manet’s painting, *The Battle of the U.S.S. “Kearsarge” & the C.S.S. “Alabama”* of 1864. The journalistic aspect of this painting of an actual event was of particular interest to Whistler.

In 1866, Whistler sailed from his home in London, England to Valparaiso, Chile. He was on a mission to deliver torpedoes to destroy the Spanish Pacific fleet which was at war with Peru and Peruvian allied countries including Bolivia, Ecuador, and Chile. American, English, and French governments sent ships to help stop the Spaniards from destroying Valparaiso. Unfortunately, the American, English, and French were unable to prevent the attack as they were not officially at war with Spain. Later in life, Whistler remembered the scene:

“There was the beautiful bay with its curving shores, the town of Valparaiso on one side, on the other the long line of hills. And there, just at the entrance of the

bay, was the Spanish fleet, and in between, the English fleet and the French fleet and the American fleet and the Russian fleet...And when morning came, with great circles and sweeps, they sailed out into the open sea, until the Spanish fleet alone remained."

The Spanish proceeded to bombard the defenseless port of Valparaiso for over two hours. Whistler witnessed this violence from a hilltop situated a safe distance from the action.

Questions:

- Which Manet works that we have seen so far are similar to this? Why?
- Can you tell what time of day it is in Whistler's painting?
- What words would you use to describe the mood of this painting?
- How does he create this feeling? (color, light and shadow, etc.)

7. **Claude Monet, ((1840-1926), *Garden at Sainte-Adresse*, 1867, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, special contributions and funds given or bequeathed by friends of the Museum**



People have confused Monet with Manet from the time the two artists were alive until now. The two artists were both friends and friendly competitors who influenced each other throughout their careers. Monet was one of the first artists

to convince Manet to try painting outdoors, and Manet called Monet “the Raphael of water”. Manet provided financial support to the younger and less prosperous Monet. In addition to the similarity of their names, the two French painters were often drawn to similar subjects such as the sea.

Monet grew up by the sea in the coastal town Le Havre. When he was a child he often enjoyed playing on the beach. In this painting Monet has chosen to paint a scene from his stay at his Aunt’s villa by the sea. The man sitting on the chair on the right is Monet’s father and the others are also family members. They are relaxing in the bright sunshine in a garden overlooking the sea.

Questions:

- How is this painting different from all the others that you have seen so far?
- In what ways is it similar?
- How did Monet convey the weather and time of day?
- Does this painting seem quiet and still? Why, or why not?
- What would be challenging or difficult about painting this scene from life?

Whistler used long brushstrokes of thin paint to make his painting.

- Describe Monet’s use of brushstrokes.
- What details do you see in this painting? Are there a lot of them?

8. Berthe Morisot, (1841-1895), *The Harbor at Lorient*, 1869, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection



Berthe Morisot and Edouard Manet were close friends who admired and influenced each other's work. Morisot married Manet's brother Eugene and Manet painted several portraits of Morisot. Though Morisot, who was a pivotal participant and organizer of Impressionist exhibits helped Manet to appreciate painting outdoors (*en plein air*), Manet never formally associated himself with the Impressionists, preferring to show his work in the traditional Salon exhibitions.

This painting was probably Morisot's first seascape. She painted it during a visit to her sister who had recently married a naval officer stationed in the French coastal town of Lorient. Morisot tried to capture the "*figure in the outdoor light*" in this fresh, informal painting of her sister Edma seated on the wall by the harbor. Manet liked this painting so much, that Berthe gave it to him as a present

Note the painter's broad use of white and her rapid brushwork. There is an airy feel to the painting due to her light, loose style of painting.

Questions:

- Did Morisot paint the same aspect of the sea as the others? Where is this?
You see many aspects of the sea in the show- open sea, harbor, shoreline.
Many of the other paintings you have seen have used primarily horizontal lines. What kinds of lines does Morisot use?
- Does this painting seem to go back in space? Compare to Manet and Boudin.
Note: Artists use diagonal lines to help create the illusion of space and horizontal lines may be used to convey a flatter space.
- What is the overall feeling or mood of the painting?
- How does Morisot's style of painting relate to the subject matter?
- What colors does Morisot use? How do they differ from Manet's use of color?

9. **Gustave Courbet, (1819-1877), *Waves*, 1869, oil on canvas,**
Philadelphia Museum of Art.
Gift of John G. Johnson for the W.P. Wilstach Collection



Unlike Monet and others who grew up with the sea, Courbet was already twenty-one years old when he saw the ocean for the first time, but he was immediately drawn to its beauty and power. He described his first experience with obvious excitement,

“We finally saw the sea, the horizonless sea – how odd for a mountain dweller. We saw the beautiful boats that sail on it. It is too inviting, one feels carried away, one would love to see the whole world.”

Courbet is the oldest of the artists represented in this slide packet and he influenced many younger artists including Manet, Monet, Renoir and Whistler among others. Courbet was particularly influenced by the French Revolution in 1848, and this is reflected in his realistic paintings of contemporary life. Courbet identified emotionally with his subjects even when they were not portraits. Here we can see the evidence of his interest in humanity’s relationship to nature.

Questions:

- What words would you use to describe the scene in this painting?
- How does Courbet organize the composition of the painting? Look at the proportions and how much of the painting is devoted to each element.
- How does Courbet include human beings in this scene?

- Try covering up the boat in this picture, does it feel the same?
- What happens to your sense of scale?
- How does this affect our emotional connection to the sea?

10. **Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), *Sunset at Sea*, 1879, oil on canvas,**
Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts



Born in 1841, Renoir and Morisot were the two youngest artists in this group, and they were influenced by Manet and Courbet. Renoir's use of color was also inspired by an even older painter, Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863).

In this almost abstract painting of the sea at sunset, Renoir took obvious pleasure in depicting color, light, and movement with quick, bold brushstrokes. While Renoir doesn't depict a historic scene or specific narrative, he has clearly captured a unique moment in time.

Questions:

- Can you tell where the water stops and the sky starts?
- Have a student point it out – what makes it easy or hard to figure out?
- Can you find a boat?
- Describe the brushstrokes Renoir uses for the sky and for the water.

- How are they similar to one another?
- How are they different? Can you sense how Renoir painted this? How?
- Do you think that Renoir painted this directly from life? Why or why not?
- What emotions do you feel when you look at this seascape?
- How does Renoir convey feeling?

11. Edouard Manet(1832-1883), *The Escape of Rochefort*, 1880-1881, oil on canvas, Musee d'Orsay, Paris



In this last slide, we see Manet's last seascape, done just a few years before he died. The painting depicts an actual event that took place six years before Manet painted it. Henri Rochefort, a notorious political journalist and social critic, and five other men escaped from a prison colony on New Caledonia. They rowed a small

whaleboat out to an Australian clipper ship which is barely visible at the top of the canvas. He painted two versions of this same subject.

This final painting is reminiscent of Manet's first sea painting in its choice of a current historical event that captured the public's imagination. The two paintings are similar, but this last image is even more daring and bold in its lack of specificity.

Questions:

- What time of day do you think Manet is portraying? Why?
- What is the sea like; is it rough or calm? How does Manet indicate this?

After Manet's death, the writer Edmond Bazire wrote this about the painting:
"The Escape, on the open sea, the boat tragically alone in its mysterious infinitude"

- What would make Bazire feel this way as he looked at the painting?
- Does it make you feel the same way? Why or why not?

Go back and compare this painting to *The "Kearsarge" and "Alabama"*.

- What is similar and what is different?
- Does one seem more emotional than the other? Why?

Closing Reflections:

Now that you have seen several works by Manet and others, why do you think artists might wish to paint the sea? Would you like to paint the sea?

Writing Activity -(K- 5th grade)

Objectives

1. To engage students in looking, thinking and discussing art.
2. To use as a pre-visit, post-visit or independent activity for the Manet and the Sea exhibition.
3. To think about the importance of setting, descriptive adjectives, plot development and point of view in creating a narrative.

Procedure

1. Ask students to silently look at the poster of Edouard Manet's *The Battle of the U.S.S. "Kearsarge" and the C.S.S. "Alabama"*, 1864. Encourage them to study the image for several minutes or more.
2. Ask them to share words that they think of while the teacher writes them on a board in front of the class. Try to generate a list of ten or more descriptive words.
3. Have the students imagine that they are in the painting. Ask a series of leading questions such as:
 - What do you see?
 - How do you feel?
 - What do you hear?
 - Where are you?
 - What are you doing?
4. Ask the students to try and imagine what happened before this moment, what is happening in the painting, and what might occur later.
5. Incorporating the words and ideas that they have generated above, have the students compose a narrative (young children may do this collectively with the teacher). Younger children may choose to dramatize their story while older students may prefer to write individual stories or poems.

Writing Activity (6th-12th)

Objectives

1. To engage students in observing, and thinking and writing about art.
2. To use as a pre-visit, post-visit or independent activity for the Manet and the Sea exhibition.
3. To think about the importance of setting, descriptive adjectives, plot development and point of view in creating a narrative.

Procedure

1. Ask students to silently look at the poster of Edouard Manet's *The Battle of the U.S.S. "Kearsarge" and the C.S.S. "Alabama"*, 1864. Encourage them to study the image for several minutes or more.
2. Ask them to write a list of five to ten words that they think of as they continue to look at the painting. You may suggest that they use descriptive adjectives.
3. Have the students imagine that they are in the painting. Possibilities include pretending to be a newspaper reporter or participant in the action. Ask them to think about where they are in the composition and what it feels like to be there.
4. Ask the students to try and imagine what happened before this moment, what is happening in the painting, and what might occur later. They may want to jot down some notes.
5. Incorporating the words and ideas that they have generated above, have the students compose a narrative poem, newspaper article, or short story about the painting.
6. Ask the students to share their stories with the class by reading them aloud.

Analysis and Discussion

Analyze the process and writings by asking them what was difficult about the project? Does Manet give us a lot of clear information and details? Is it confusing to figure out what is actually happening in the picture? How does a work of art express a subjective point of view? How can a painting or writing convey an objective viewpoint?

Drawing Activity (K-12th)

Objectives

1. For students to observe, discuss and make art.
2. To make a seascape using oil pastels.
3. To blend and layer colors to create new colors.
4. To vary types of marks in creating an image.

Procedure

1. Ask students to **Look** carefully at the poster of Edouard Manet's *The Battle of the U.S.S. "Kearsarge" and the C.S.S. "Alabama"*, 1864.
Optional: Compare to other paintings of seascape images.
Ask **questions** about what they see:
 - What colors do you see in the painting? What colors in the ocean?
 - Can you see any brushstrokes? Describe them, (younger children may want to mimic movements of the waves with their hands).
 - What is in the foreground (front), middleground, background?
2. Have students choose a seascape to work from.
3. Sketch seascape lightly in pencil. Work large and fill the whole page. Don't use small details as they will not work well with oil pastels. The teacher may suggest including sky, water, boats, etc.
4. Practice using oil pastels on scrap paper. The teacher may do a short demo on color mixing with age appropriate color theory.
5. Use oil pastels to create seascape. Remind children to think about varying size and direction of marks as well as layering and overlapping colors. Fill the entire page with colors and use black and white too.

Analysis and Discussion

1. Hang finished pieces up where the class can see them. Give everyone time to look at each other's work.
2. Ask children to describe and self-evaluate their work. What do they like about it? Is there anything they want to change or add? This evaluation can be oral and/or written depending on age.
Optional: Apply earlier questions, (see #1 above), to students work

Supplies

- Oil pastels – red, yellow, blue, black and white, etc.
- White drawing paper – 12" x 18" or available size
- #2 or HB pencils, erasers, scrap paper
- Seascape images from books, magazines, old calendars, etc.

ART VOCABULARY TERMS

en plein air French for “in the open air”, it refers to artists painting outside directly from life.

Genre This term is often used in conjunction with another word to mean **category** or **type**. In the context of nineteenth century art, **genre painting** refers to scenes of everyday life.

grand tour French for “great tour”, it describes the tour of Europe that young people who could afford to took to study art and architecture.

Salon French for “hall “ or “place” where fashionable people came to enjoy the arts during the nineteenth century. The *Salon* also came to refer to the official annual exhibitions held in Paris. In order to gain recognition and success, artists generally needed to exhibit and win awards for their work in these juried shows.

Impressionism This is the term used to describe the styles of a group of artists who broke away from the official traditional academic style of painting. The nineteenth century academic artists were known for their careful, realistic paintings which were done inside their studios from preliminary drawing studies. The Impressionists, also called the “independents”, often worked outdoors and tended to use brighter colors, thicker paint, and visible brushstrokes.

Realism This term is used to refer to the style of mid-19th century art in which figures and scenes from everyday life are depicted in a realistic, objective manner.

Romanticism Romanticism is the opposite of Realism – a style of art, (including music and literature), that is highly subjective and emotionally expressive.

RESOURCES

Cachin, Françoise, (translated from the French by Rachel Kaplan), *Manet The Influence of the Modern*, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, and Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, 1994

Exhibition Catalog:

Degener, David and Wilson-Bareau, Juliet (with nine additional writers contributing), *Manet and the Sea*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2003

Néret, Gilles, (translated by Chris Miller), *Edouard Manet The First of the Moderns*, Taschen, Germany, 2003

Nochlin, Linda, *Realism*, Penguin Books, New York, 1977

Stuckey, Charles F. and Scott, William P., *Berthe Morisot Impressionist*, Hudson Hills Press for Mount Holyoke College Art Museum and the National Gallery of Art, New York, 1987

A Good Series of Books for Students:

Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists, Children's Book Press, San Francisco, California – series includes books on **Manet, Monet, Whistler, Delacroix, Renoir**, among others

General Reference Books:

Stokstad, Marilyn, *Art History*, Prentice Hall, Inc., and Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1995,

Yenawine, Philip, *Key Art Terms for Beginners*, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, 1995