

JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER
(1834–1903)

PAUL CÉZANNE
(1839–1906)

CLAUDE MONET
(1840–1926)

AUGUSTE RODIN
(1840–1917)

MARY CASSATT
(1844–1926)

HENRI ROUSSEAU
(1844–1910)

PAUL GAUGUIN
(1848–1903)

VINCENT VAN GOGH
(1853–1890)

GEORGES SEURAT
(1859–1891)

GUSTAV KLIMT
(1862–1918)

EDVARD MUNCH
(1863–1944)

HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC
(1864–1901)

VASILY KANDINSKY
(1866–1944)

HENRI MATISSE
(1869–1954)

KAZIMIR MALEVICH
(1878–1935)

PAUL KLEE
(1879–1940)

ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER
(1880–1938)

FRANZ MARC
(1880–1916)

PABLO PICASSO
(1881–1973)

EDWARD HOPPER
(1882–1967)

MARC CHAGALL
(1887–1985)

MARCEL DUCHAMP
(1887–1968)

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE
(1887–1986)

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO
(1888–1978)

1830/40s

1850/60s

1870/80s

TIMELINE

EGON SCHIELE
(1890–1918)

MAX ERNST
(1891–1976)

JOAN MIRÓ
(1893–1983)

RENÉ MAGRITTE
(1898–1967)

HENRY MOORE
(1898–1986)

MARK ROTHKO
(1903–1970)

SALVADOR DALÍ
(1904–1989)

FRIDA KAHLO
(1907–1954)

FRANCIS BACON
(1909–1992)

LOUISE BOURGEOIS
(1911–2010)

JACKSON POLLOCK
(1912–1956)

JOSEPH BEUYS
(1921–1986)

LUCIAN FREUD
(1922–2011)

ROY LICHTENSTEIN
(1923–1997)

CY TWOMBLY
(1928–2011)

ANDY WARHOL
(1928–1987)

JASPER JOHNS
(*1930)

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE
(1930–2002)

GERHARD RICHTER
(*1932)

DAVID HOCKNEY
(*1937)

CHUCK CLOSE
(*1940)

ANSELM KIEFER
(*1945)

JEFF KOONS
(*1955)

JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT
(1960–1988)

DAMIEN HIRST
(*1965)

MATTHEW BARNEY
(*1967)

1890/1910s

1910/20s

1930/40s

1950/60s



50 MODERN ARTISTS

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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PRESTEL

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01

JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER

James McNeill Whistler is considered the first major American artist to earn an international reputation. He played an important part in popularizing Impressionism in Great Britain and North America. Whistler interpreted the Impressionist style in an original way, linking it with elements of Symbolism.



JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER

- 1834 Born on July 11 in Lowell, Massachusetts
- 1843 Moves with his family to St. Petersburg, Russia
- 1851–54 Attends the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York
- 1855 Moves to Paris
- 1859 Moves to London
- 1878 Sues Ruskin for libel; begins his first experiments in lithography
- 1879 Declares bankruptcy; sells his London property and possessions
- 1880 Departs for Venice
- 1885 Presents the “Ten O’Clock” lecture in Princess Hall, London
- 1890 Publishes *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*
- 1903 Dies on July 17 in London

Born in Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1834, Whistler spent part of his childhood in St. Petersburg, Russia. He lived in Europe from 1855, mostly in England, but sometimes in France, where, like many Impressionists, he enrolled at the studio of Charles Gleyre. Most influential on him, however, were his encounters with realist painter Gustave Courbet and the avant-garde artists close to him, including Édouard Manet and Edgar Degas.

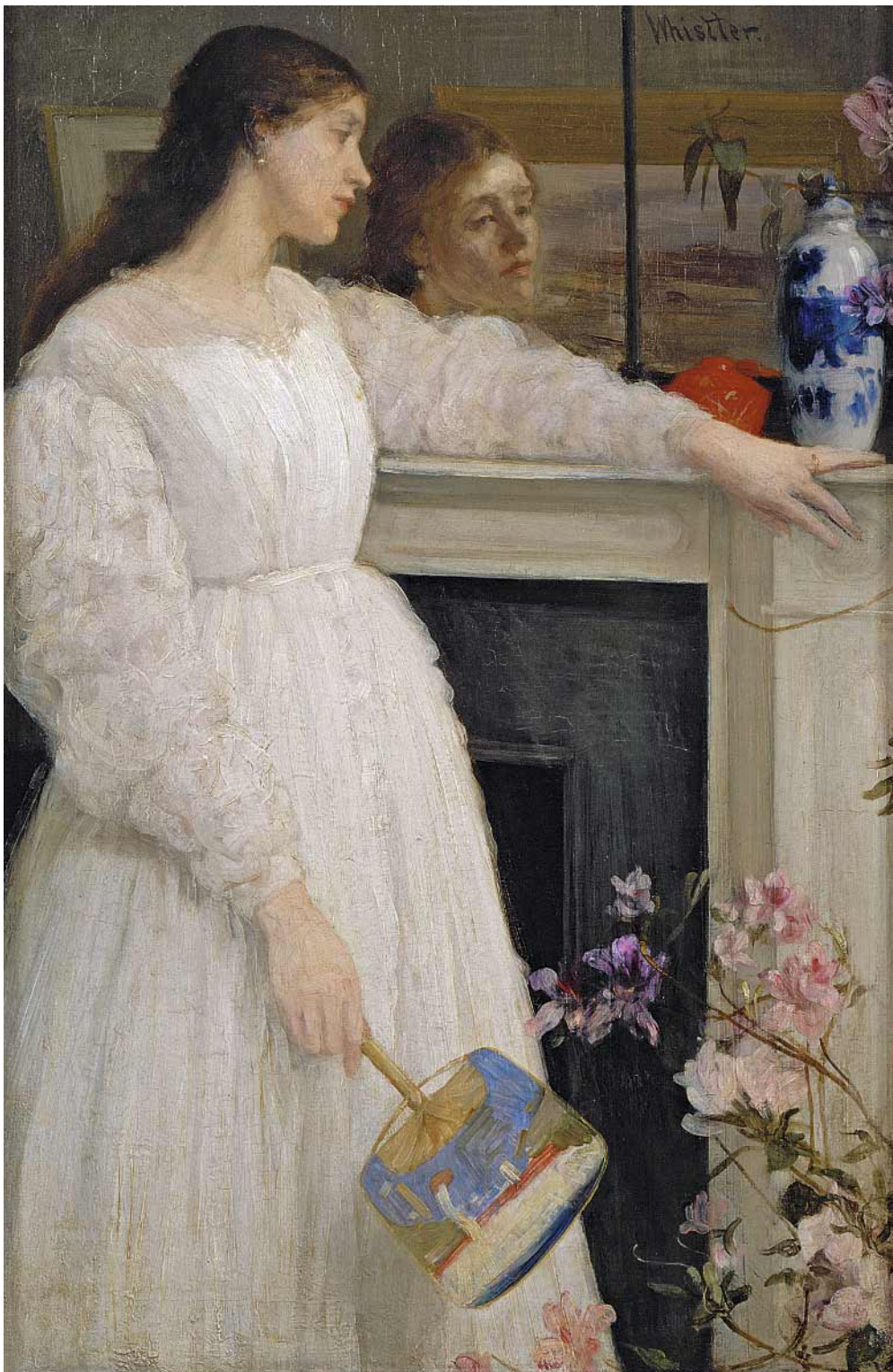
Later, in England, Whistler increasingly moved away from realism. He was particularly interested in Japanese art, a fashion that became widespread in Europe beginning in 1860. One of the high points of that period of his career is the painting *Variations in Violet and Green*, which demonstrates a new kind of landscape picture developed under the influence of the Far East. In many of his works, he reduced the landscape to almost empty panoramas, thereby coming close to abstract representation. This made Whistler an important model for British printmaking, which he helped revitalize in the second half of the 19th century.

Whistler also established a reputation as a portrait painter; one of his best-known works is *Arrangement in Gray and Black No. 1*, also called *Portrait of the Artist’s Mother*. At the end of the 1870s, he did a series of nocturnal views called Nocturnes, including numerous views of the Thames, generally in monochromatic coloration. The subject matter recalls the Impressionist preference for urban landscapes and watercourses, but unlike those artists Whistler was mainly concerned with the harmony and aesthetics of color. In the *Nocturne* series, he attempted to render music in painting. To emphasize purely aesthetic functions, he had already begun to give his works musical designations such as “symphony” or “harmony.” The linking of art and music was not without influence on subsequent painters. Even Whistler’s design for the Peacock Room in a private London house was of art-historical importance. The decoration he did there for art collector Frederick Richards Leyland is considered a precursor of Art Nouveau.

Whistler had a certain combative streak. The personalities in French or British cultural life with whom the eccentric artist struck up an acquaintance or friendship—before ultimately dropping them—were legion. He made headlines in 1878 with his libel suit against art critic John Ruskin. Although Whistler won his case, the derisory damages and high court costs bankrupted him.



Arrangement in Gray and Black No. 1, also called Portrait of the Artist's Mother, 1871, oil on canvas, 144.3 x 165.2 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris



Symphony in White, No. 2: The Little White Girl, 1884, oil on canvas, 76.5 x 51.1 cm, Tate Gallery, London

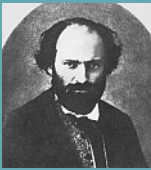


Nocturne in Blue and Gold: Old Battersea Bridge, 1872–77, oil on canvas, 68.3 x 51.1 cm, Tate Gallery, London

02

PAUL CÉZANNE

Paul Cézanne is considered the uncontested master of Post-Impressionism, and at the same time the crucial innovator to whom the Cubists, Fauves, and Expressionists owed the essential features of their art.



PAUL CÉZANNE

- 1839 Born on January 19 in Aix-en-Provence, France
- 1852 Makes friends with the future novelist Émile Zola
- 1861 Cézanne moves to Paris
- 1869 Meets his lover, Hortense Fiquet
- 1870 Lives in the fishing village of L'Estaque during the Franco-Prussian War
- 1872 Cézanne's son Paul born
- 1886 Breaks off contact with Émile Zola; marries Hortense in April
- 1895 Cézanne's first major exhibition held in Paris
- 1900 His pictures are also shown in Germany
- 1906 Dies on October 22 in his birthplace, Aix-en-Provence

After going to the lycée and art school in his hometown of Aix-en-Provence, in the south of France, Cézanne attended law school. He soon gave this up, however, to move to Paris in 1861 and enroll as a student at the Académie Suisse, an independent atelier that constituted an alternative to the official academy of art. His encounter there with Impressionists associated with Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, and Edgar Degas proved all-important. Cézanne changed his palette completely, and instead of the dark tones he had used to that point, he now experimented with light, brilliant colors. Unlike the Impressionist painters, however, he was not trying to record transitory visual moments, but rather to render the essence and permanence of visual phenomena. His application of paint was also less spontaneous than that of the Impressionists. Evolving a picture was much more of a persevering struggle for Cézanne, involving a decidedly time-consuming process.

From the 1870s, Cézanne focused on landscapes and still lifes in which he sought to reduce visual objects to their basic geometric forms. In 1877, he abandoned Impressionist techniques in order to go his own way in the seclusion of Provence. Among his most famous subjects is Mont Sainte-Victoire, an impressive limestone ridge close to his hometown, which he painted directly from nature in drawings, oil paintings, and watercolors. Like his still lifes, the landscape paintings manifestly strive for a progressive simplification of elements, as Cézanne depicts houses as cubes, trees as cylinders, and the mountain as shapes layered on top of each other.

He produced the impression of depth not, as was customary, through lines and contours, but rather through the contrast between warm and cool colors. He defined objects with color, then gave them firm outlines.

Cézanne's painting *Les Grandes Baigneuses*, done shortly before his death, may be considered his intellectual legacy. The purely abstract approach adopted by artists later in the 20th century can already be discerned in the structure of facets and shapes in this work. For Cézanne, works of art were independent worlds of color and shape, "harmony parallel to nature"; he sought not to imitate his subjects but rather to represent them, so as to bring out their internal essence. This conviction would become an essential basis of modernism.