





Impressionism
13 Artists
Children Should Know

Florian Heine

PRESTEL

Munich · London · New York

Contents



4 • Édouard Manet



8 • Claude Monet



12 • Auguste Renoir



14 • Gustave Caillebotte



16 • Edgar Degas



20 • Berthe Morisot



24 • Camille Pissarro

“Impressionist” is the name we give to a special kind of painter. The Impressionists first began painting in France during the late 19th century. They had new ideas about the way we should paint. Nowadays, their pieces are world famous and priceless. Yet in the 19th century, virtually nobody wanted to own them, and art critics made fun of them. We look at Impressionist pictures very differently today. These paintings often amaze us, and they show how much the Impressionists changed the way we see art.

In the 19th century, the Académie des Beaux-Arts (or Academy of Fine Arts) in Paris controlled what and how art should be made. Paintings at that time had to have a central theme: ancient gods, figures from the Bible, or something on the subject of history. The pictures had to be painted precisely, and hardly a brushstroke was allowed to be seen. The Impressionists, on the other hand, were aiming to do something completely different when they staged their first exhibition in 1874 ...

In this book, you will get to know 13 Impressionist painters who went on to revolutionize the world of art with their creations.

See
where the
Impressionists
painted

44 • Where
Impressionism
Made its Mark



42 • John Singer Sargent



38 • Paul Signac



34 • Childe Hassam



26 • Mary Cassatt



28 • Max Liebermann



32 • Georges Seurat

1805

1810

1815

1820

1825

1830

1835

1840

1845

1850

1855

1860

1830s First railroad
appears in France1846 The first looping
roller coaster in Paris**Born**

January 23, 1832
in Paris

Died

April 30, 1883
in Paris

Manet was a bad pupil at school. That's why he wanted to become a naval officer at the age of 16 and then travel by ship for half a year to South America.

Édouard Manet

During Manet's lifetime, his hometown of Paris changed a great deal. Many of the old buildings and streets were replaced by new, broad boulevards and attractive houses.

People enjoyed their free time in the new cafés and bars. Manet sought to capture this modern lifestyle. He was of the opinion: "You have to live and paint life as you see it." And that's why he painted his friends, for example, in a big open air café, where a huge number of people were spending a fine afternoon. Surprisingly, this picture got some people extremely upset. They believed such scenes should never be depicted in art. For Manet, however, they should.

What Manet aimed to avoid was to paint things in an orderly fashion, where barely a brush stroke could be seen. In those days, artists used to paint in a studio with very even light. The pictures they produced often showed all the figures in a clearly defined and well-lit way.

Outside in the cafés, however, the light was totally different.

It was bright in some places and dark in other places,

and not every person could be easily

recognized. This explains why

Manet did not paint each

person in exactly the

same manner. Some of

his figures appear hazy;

and if you look at them

from quite close up, you

will see that they were



1865 American
Civil War ends

1912 Sinking of the Titanic

1865

1870

1875

1880

1885

1890

1895

1900

1905

1910

1915

1920



Édouard Manet,
Music in the Tuileries Gardens,
1862, National Gallery, London

Painted with only daubs of color. When you are in a café yourself, you too won't be able to spot every person there. And that is how Manet wanted to paint – showing simply what his eyes perceived.

Many of Manet's friends can be seen in this painting, such as Jacques Offenbach, the famous composer. Manet, too, can be seen in the far left corner.



Édouard Manet, *Bunch of Asparagus*, 1880, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne

In 1880, Manet painted a still-life of a bunch of asparagus stems. Even this picture was not "orderly" and exact. And though you recognize the artist's thick brush strokes, the asparagus stems still look good enough to eat.



Quiz Question
Why did Manet paint a single asparagus?
(Solution on page 46)

Manet was not permitted to show his art at many important exhibitions because so many people got upset at his style. This criticism definitely annoyed him. But he still stood by his modern way of painting.

Manet was friends with most of the Impressionists, but he never exhibited with them. They admired him because he went against the rules and painted just as he found things. Manet's daring attitude about art encouraged the younger painters to try out their own ideas.

Édouard Manet,
Asparagus, 1880,
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Still-lives often seem a bit boring, but this single asparagus stem is really quite charming.



1818 Mary Shelley publishes *Frankenstein*

1863 The first subway train travels in London

1805

1810

1815

1820

1825

1830

1835

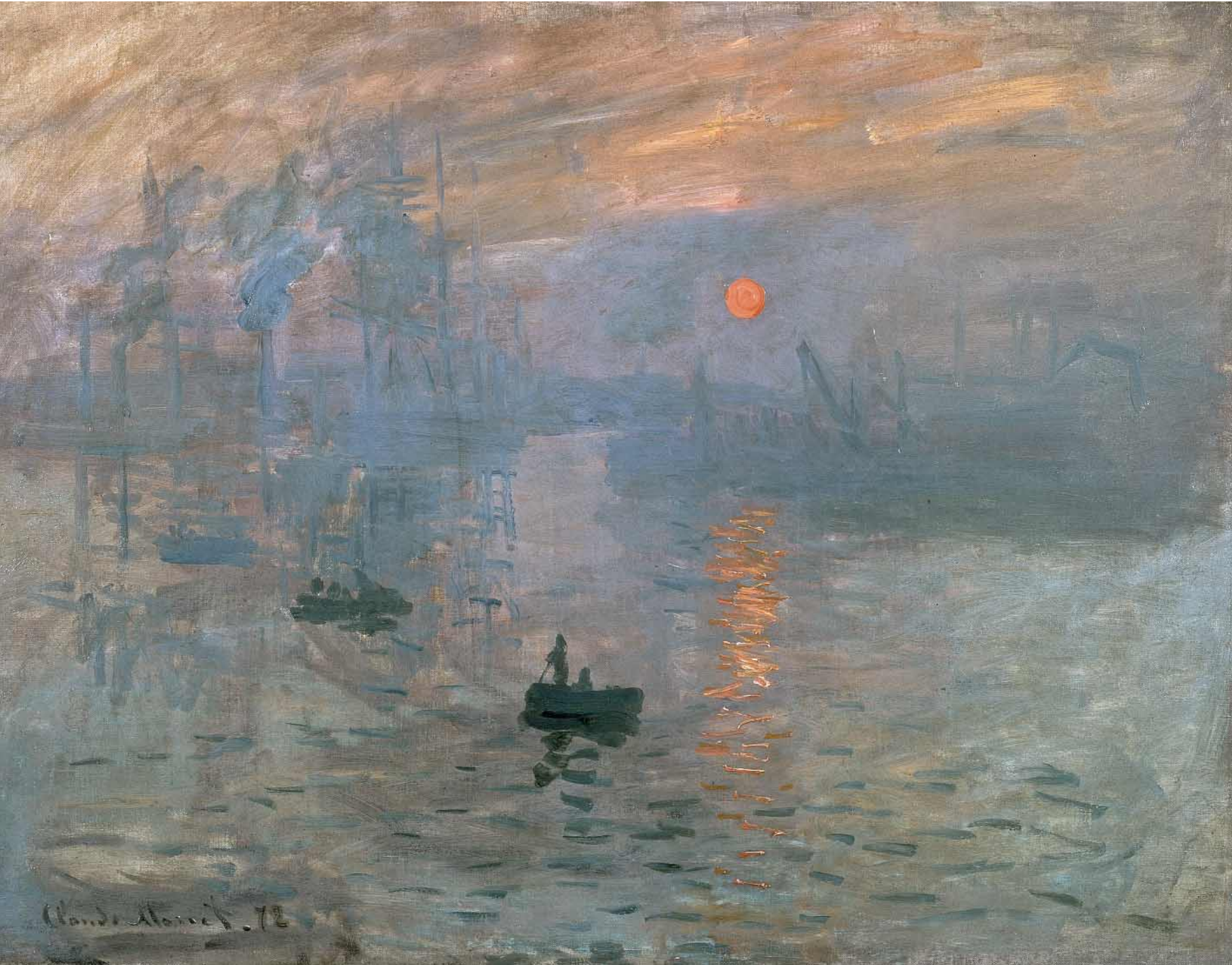
1840

1845

1850

1855

1860



Claude Monet, *Impression Sunrise*,
1872, Musée Marmottan, Paris

Armed robbers stole this and 8 other paintings from the museum in 1985. It was not recovered until 5 years later.

1872 British artist Eadweard Muybridge is the first to photograph a galloping horse.

1865

1870

1875

1880

1885

1890

1895

1900

1905

1910

1915

1920

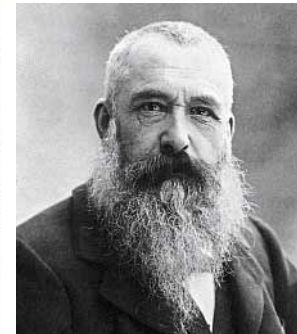
Claude Monet

Claude Monet preferred to paint landscapes, and he often did so when out of doors. Painting outside makes complete sense to us today. But back then, artists painted landscapes in the studio, basing their pictures on a drawing or on their own imagination.

Monet recognized that colors in nature were different from those seen in paintings by the Old Masters. These pictures often showed nature in an even light and with grey or black shadows. But in nature, colors of objects vary depending on their settings and on the way light falls upon them. And shadows are not simply grey or black, but can be colorful. For example, on a sunny day and in a snow-covered landscape, shadows have a bluish hue because of the blue sky. This is what Monet and his friends recognized.

Monet wished to paint outdoors no matter what. Given that outside light could change at any moment, he needed to adopt a completely different method of painting. Monet's solution was to apply paint on the canvas with quick, short strokes of his brush. Details did not interest him as much as the overall effect, and the impression one got from seeing the picture.

For these reasons, he called his best known painting *Impression, Sunrise*. It shows a harbor scene in the morning mist. Monet focused not on the dock workers or the ships, but on the atmosphere of the sunrise through the fog. When he exhibited the painting at a show in 1874, there was a great commotion. People argued that Claude simply could not paint well, and that this picture was not really a painting at all. For Monet, though, it was.



Born

November 14, 1840
in Paris

Died

December 6, 1926
in Giverny

Monet fell in love with his model, Camille Doncieux. She also became his wife and they had two sons together. Camille died in 1879 at just 32 years of age. Monet lived until he was 86.

Quiz Question

How long do you think it took Monet to paint *Impression, Sunrise*?

(Solution on page 46)